



EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA

AUGUST 01, 2022, AT 5:15 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
101 WEST 4TH STREET SOUTH

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approve July 05, 2022 Employee Relations Committee Meeting Minutes
4. Discuss Temporary Firefighter/Paramedic position in the Fire Department
5. Motion to Approve Recommendation to Full City Council
6. Adjourn

Members: Randy Ervin-Chair, Melissa Dalton, Craig Trotter

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EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JULY 05, 2022, 5:30 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
101 WEST 4TH STREET SOUTH

The Employee Relations Committee Meeting of Newton, Iowa met at 5:30 P.M. on the above date in the Council Chambers located at 101 West 4th Street South. Present Committee members: Dalton, Ervin, Trotter. Absent: None.

Moved by Dalton, seconded Trotter to approve the June 06, 2022 Employee Relations Committee Meeting Minutes. AYES: Three. NAYS: None. Motion passed.

Erin Chambers, Community Development Director spoke regarding the proposed changes to the organizational structure for the Community Development Department. On June 6, 2022, City Council approved the creation of the part-time Administrative Office Assistant (not on Pay Matrix) position within the Community Development Department. The Administrative Specialist Position (Range 5) was reduced to 50% time.

Since June 6th, the current employee in the Community Development Administrative Specialist Position has submitted a letter of resignation. This decision by the employee was not impacted by the reorganization which was recently approved, but rather for personal reasons. The current employee has indicated a willingness to continue to work through the end of August.

With this upcoming change, it would be better for the organization to hire a single full time employee rather than two part-time employees. This will provide for continuity of service, both internally and externally.

Moved by Trotter, seconded by Dalton to recommend the changes to the full council. AYES: Three. NAYS: None. Motion passed.

Moved by Dalton, seconded by Trotter to adjourn the meeting. By unanimous voice vote the meeting adjourned at 5:41 P.M

Respectfully Submitted by,
Katrina Davis CMC, Newton City Clerk

City of Newton Council Report

Item: Resolution to approve creating a temporary Firefighter/Paramedic position in the Fire Department

Summary: This resolution proposes to add one temporary Firefighter/Paramedic to the Fire Department.

Financial Impact: Increase in revenue from transfers and reduction of an estimated \$7,855 in salaries and benefits from the General and Employee Benefit Funds.



Report Number: 22-

Date: August 1, 2022

Lead Department:
Fire Department

Recommendation:
Approve

Background:

Attached to this Council Report is a memorandum with background information regarding the proposed change in staffing at the Fire Department. The change in staffing level is summarized in the following table.

Department	Position	Current Authorization	Proposed Authorization
Fire	Fire Chief	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Assistant Fire Chief	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Fire Captain	3 FTE	3 FTE
Fire	Firefighter	18 FTE	18 FTE
Fire	Volunteer Firefighter	BY BUDGET	BY BUDGET
Fire	Administrative Specialist	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Administrative Assistant	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Administrative Assistant	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Temporary Firefighter/Paramedic	0 FTE	1 FTE

RECOMMENDATION

City Staff recommends Council approve the addition of one temporary Firefighter/Paramedic to staffing at the Fire Department.

Matt Muckler
City Administrator
Attachment



Memorandum

To: Matt Muckler
From: Chief Jarrod Wellik
Priority: High
Date: July 25, 2022
Re: Request for Temporary Firefighter/Paramedic Staff

The purpose of this memo is to provide background information regarding the request for temporary firefighter/paramedic staff. The fire department currently has a shortage of staffing in the operations department. We have one staff member on light duty who is currently waiting for final determination on permanent disability. We have another employee who is out on injury and has recently found out they will not be returning to work anytime soon. This has led to shortages in staffing resulting in vacation calendars being locked down, occasional mandatory hold for overtime, and reduced staffing levels resulting in loss of transfer revenue. This has been ongoing since February. In addition, we have a firefighter leaving for a department in the Des Moines metro area. We have made an offer to a new employee which will exhaust our current hiring list. It will take approximately 90 days to certify a new candidate list through the Civil Service process.

We are in a unique situation. We currently have a firefighter/paramedic that was part of the department for a little over two years. As part of our offer of employment, we require that all new employees complete the paramedic certification within two years of starting employment. This person completed the paramedic class and by their own admission "was not a good test taker." Their performance here was acceptable and they were given ample opportunity to complete the required testing. Once we passed the time allowed to complete the certification, this person stayed on the department to help fill in until a new certified list was created. At the time the certified list was completed an offer was made to a replacement employee. We let the other person go and they later passed the examination and received their certification. Later discussion with this person revealed they wanted to come back and be part of our team. The path for them to come back to our team is to apply for the upcoming certified testing and

pass the written testing, physical ability testing, and oral interview. They have done so in the past and will likely be certified on the new list. In casual conversation, I asked this person if they would be interested in this temporary position and they confirmed they would be “very interested.”

I am requesting a temporary Firefighter/Paramedic position for the standard 56 hours per week until such time our new certified list is completed. I am currently working on the certified list development schedule and expect our hiring process to be complete in early October with final approval of the list from City Council on 10/17/2022. At the time this list is developed and the new candidate is approved by the Municipal Fire and Police Retirement System of Iowa this temporary position will be eliminated. There will not be any overlap of the temporary and full-time employee salaries. My goal is to bring staffing levels back to a level that allows employees to schedule vacation and provide relief from risk of mandatory hold over. This will improve employee morale and provide for consistent staffing of operations.

Financially, we project this position to be in place for a minimum of two to three months. I propose we use the contract amount Entry Level Paramedic as the basis for the hourly wage calculation. Below are the two pay ranges included in the Labor Agreement with the Newton Association of Professional Firefighters (Contract):

Position:	Annual Salary	Hourly Wage
Entry Level EMT	\$50,091	\$17.20
Entry Level Paramedic	\$56,298	\$19.33

If the person we are expecting to put in this position works out, there would be a seamless transition due to his previous time with us and the short duration of time that has passed since their departure. This would allow us to place them directly on a 24/48 schedule with all needed orientation completed during standard work times. The hourly pay is based on a 56-hour work week resulting in a 2,912-hour year. (56 hours/week X 52 weeks = 2,912 hours/year) This position would be eligible to receive overtime in excess of their standard 24/48 hour shifts. No other benefits are included for this position. Any time off would be unpaid. A reduction in expenses in the General Fund and Employee Benefits Fund would be realized. It is estimated this position would be utilized through the end of October. Savings in salaries from the General Fund are estimated at \$2,855.04. Savings in the Employee Benefits Fund are estimated at \$5,000. This would be a total savings of approximately \$7,855.04. The temporary employee would not receive any benefits therefore the entire amount of benefits earned

by the firefighter/paramedic leaving Newton will be realized as savings.

This position would be posted on the City website for 10 calendar days and open to any candidate that meets the requirements. We are requiring paramedic certification to apply. In addition, we are requiring thorough knowledge of ImageTrend record management systems and the Jasper County Emergency Medical Services Patient Care Protocols. This position is very short term and will likely be eliminated within two to three months. There is no benefit to having this employee complete our orientation process which is a minimum of three weeks. To utilize this position as proposed, it will require knowledge of the Newton Fire Department operations. I would estimate there is not a large candidate pool for this position.

Summary:

Operations staff are in need of this temporary position. With the injuries described earlier and reduced staffing levels, they have experienced difficulty in scheduling time off and stress related to the unknown of mandatory hold over. The reduced staffing levels have also reduced the number of transfers we were able to perform. This plan for bringing a temporary position on board until a new certified list is created will provide some much-needed relief.

Jarrold Wellik
Fire Chief

RESOLUTION NO. 2022 – _____

**RESOLUTION APPROVING CREATING A TEMPORARY
FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC POSITION IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

WHEREAS, the Fire Department is currently authorized with 26 full-time-employees.; and

WHEREAS, turn over, injuries, and a long-term disability process have led to increased overtime and decreased ability to perform existing levels of output.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of Newton, Iowa that a temporary Firefighter/Paramedic position be created.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the temporary Firefighter/Paramedic position will be eliminated after successful replacement of the Firefighter/Paramedic position pending completion of certified firefighter hiring list.

Department	Position	Current Authorization	Proposed Authorization
Fire	Fire Chief	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Assistant Fire Chief	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Fire Captain	3 FTE	3 FTE
Fire	Firefighter	18 FTE	18 FTE
Fire	Volunteer Firefighter	BY BUDGET	BY BUDGET
Fire	Administrative Specialist	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Administrative Assistant	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Administrative Assistant	1 FTE	1 FTE
Fire	Temporary Firefighter/Paramedic	0 FTE	1 FTE

PASSED this _____ day of August, 2022.

APPROVED this _____ day of August, 2022.

Michael L. Hansen, Mayor

ATTEST:

Katrina Davis, City Clerk

JOB DESCRIPTION - CITY OF NEWTON

TITLE: TEMPORARY FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC		PAY RANGE: Hourly	
DEPARTMENT: Fire		UNION: No	
CIVIL SERVICE: No		FLSA: Non - Exempt	
APPROVAL:			
_____		DATE:	
DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR		DATE:	
_____		LAST UPDATE: 8/1/2022	
CITY ADMINISTRATOR			

DEFINITION: To protect life, property and the environment, under the general supervision of the Fire Captain, participates in general firefighting activities and emergency pre-hospital care of the sick and injured, in response to alarms and emergency calls; drives and operates firefighting apparatus and ambulance vehicles; and performs other duties as required.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS: Position is subject to 24-hour shift assignment, working weekends and holidays, but may be assigned to 8-hour shift, 40-hour week assignment; drives ambulances to medical emergencies, performs pre-hospital emergency medical care functions at emergency scenes and enroute to medical facilities as certified; assesses patient symptoms and determines appropriate emergency medical procedures to be employed; communicates patient symptoms and action taken to hospital emergency room staff using mobile and portable two-way radio equipment; lifts and carries patients; restrains combative patients, assesses presence of physical or sexual abuse and reports evidence to medical and law enforcement officials; completes medical incident reports and prepares patient billing criteria. Drives firefighting apparatus or ambulance vehicles to fire alarms as certified; operates pumping and aerial ladder apparatus; utilizes hand tools and power tools in rescue, forcible entry, ventilation, and salvage work; directs hose streams into and within structures involved in fire; makes preliminary assessment of evidence at fire scenes for fire cause; reports evidence of possible arson to investigate officials; completes written reports describing observations at fire scenes and other emergency sites. Responds to and performs containment operations at hazardous materials incidents, following accepted decontamination practices; performs inspections of building and facilities for pre-incident planning and hazard assessment; records pertinent information on reports and building drawings for emergency reference. Conducts tours of fire station facilities; explains duties and operations; conducts public fire prevention presentations; demonstrates proper use of fire protection equipment and explains maintenance requirements. Performs service tasks on fire extinguishers for the public; performs minor repair and service tasks on vehicles and gasoline powered tools and equipment; receives and records information from dispatcher directing emergency response; participates in training activities; maintains buildings and grounds; performs other duties as required.

NON-ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS: Uses office equipment, computers, copy machines and calculators; answers telephone calls from citizens and refers their inquiries or requests as required.

WORKING CONDITIONS: Wears heavy insulated protective clothing and self-contained breathing apparatus to protect against thermal, chemical and radiation hazards; performs all fire related tasks at elevated heights on ladders and aerial firefighting apparatus as required; performs tasks within confined spaces with limited or no visibility as required; performs tasks in all weather conditions, on all surfaces, lifting and carrying ladders, hoses, tools, rescued people, salvaged furniture and belongings.

QUALIFICATIONS:

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES: Thorough knowledge of city streets and addresses; knowledge of City Code relating to fire and life safety. Skill in use and operation of all tools, equipment and apparatus operated by and for the Fire Department. Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with fellow firefighters and supervisors in a close living/working environment; ability to serve as attendant in charge during emergency and non-emergency ambulance service responses; ability to function effectively to treat the illnesses and trauma suffered by patients; ability to function effectively at elevated heights or in confined conditions with little or no visibility; ability to pass physical examination; ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing; ability to adjust to changing situations, priorities and deadlines, while maintaining efficiency and effectiveness; ability to establish priorities in order to accomplish a variety of duties and responsibilities.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS: For those tasks where a personal or City vehicle is used, individual must be physically capable of operating the vehicle safely, possess a valid Iowa operators license and have an acceptable driving record. Must have Paramedic certification at time of application. Must be proficient in the use of ImageTrend report management software. Must have thorough knowledge of the Jasper County Emergency Medical Services United Patient Care Protocols.

ACCEPTABLE EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING: Graduation from High School or equivalent.