

City of Piedmont
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

DATE: March 5, 2018

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Paul Benoit, City Administrator

SUBJECT: Consideration of the Establishment of a Part Time Fire Prevention Officer for a Period Not to Exceed Two Years.

RECOMMENDATION

By motion, authorize the hiring of a Fire Prevention Officer as a part time, non-benefited position for a period not to exceed two years.

BACKGROUND

As a result of budget cuts following the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, the position of Assistant Fire Chief/Fire Prevention Officer was eliminated. Since that time the department has relied upon line officers to perform the duties of a Fire Prevention Officer, which generally include fire inspections, code enforcement, code review and continuing education of department personnel.

Piedmont Fire Department officers have received fire prevention training at the company officer level, however, none are trained at the expert level that a Fire Prevention Officer position requires. As a result, Piedmont Fire Department's fire inspection and code enforcement programs have been maintained at a basic level. To better serve the residents of Piedmont, reduce the City's liability, and to increase the training capabilities of line personnel, the services of an expert are required.

Should Council authorize hiring a part time Fire Prevention Officer, the person selected will be responsible for establishing and organizing a professional program which include, but is not limited to creating a public education program for residents, such as, home fire & safety inspections, exit drills in the home in the event of a fire or disaster, fire extinguisher and smoke detector inspections, code enforcement, retail & commercial inspections, assembly & school inspections, inspection of wildland/urban interface hazard zones, and inspections of water delivery and fire protection systems in multi-family dwellings. Most importantly, this position will provide training and continuing education to our fulltime staff, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain an ongoing Fire Prevention program at the expiration of the two-year period.

The Fire Prevention Officer position is projected to cost the City approximately \$75,000 for the two year trial period. The position is proposed to be funded by surplus revenues collected from the California Office of Emergency Service for mutual aid supplied by our Department that responded

to wildfires (Strike Team). The revenue consists of reimbursements for labor costs incurred, as well as administrative and equipment usage fees. This surplus revenue, Net of City staffing expense, is projected to be approximately \$115,000 in the current fiscal year. .

ATTACHMENT

1. Job Description

By: Warren (Bud) McLaren, Fire Chief

CITY OF PIEDMONT
Fire Department
120 Vista Avenue, Piedmont, CA 94611



FIRE PREVENTION OFFICER (Part-Time Non-Sworn)

Definition:

Under the supervision of the Fire Chief, the Fire Prevention Officer inspects for fire and life safety hazards and enforces all applicable codes, regulations and ordinances for the prevention of fire and the protection of life and property against fire and panic. In addition, the FPO will establish an efficient and sustainable Fire Prevention Program to be administered by the existing, fulltime Fire Department personal.

Example of Duties:

Duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assumes responsibility for a wide variety of fire prevention activities of the Department.
- Inspects commercial buildings, schools, other related structures and facilities for fire hazards, proper operation of suppression devices, adequacy of fire escapes and exits, hazardous processes, public assemblies and general compliance with fire code provisions.
- Issues correction notices and citations.
- Conducts follow-up inspections to insure corrections have been made.
- Conducts hazardous materials inspections, issue hazardous materials permits and research technical resources concerning hazardous materials.
- Issues permits for public assemblies and all occupancies listed in the fire and building code.
- Investigates complaints from private citizens and other City departments relating to fire and safety hazards.
- Assists in preparing public education programs and participates in fire safety training throughout the City involving structures and open areas.
- Speaks before school groups and other organizations on fire prevention matters.
- Oversees the hydrant inspection program.
- Oversees the weed abatement program as needed.
- Assists officers with overall departmental fire prevention and inspection programs.
- Instructs Department personnel on inspection procedures and problems.
- Conducts continuing education classes for all personnel emphasizing fire code enforcement, inspection techniques, and plan review
- Reports violations of laws, ordinances, and safety standards to the Fire Marshal.
- Maintains required records and prepares reports.
- Assists the Fire Marshal in reviewing existing fire prevention policies and regulations, and recommends new fire prevention ordinances and revisions to existing ordinances.
- Monitors and reacts to changes in California Fire Code as applicable to Piedmont Municipal Code

- Participates in other administrative or special projects as assigned.

Qualifications:

Knowledge of:

- Principles, systems, procedures, practices and methods employed in fire prevention, inspection and investigation.
- Local, state and national codes and laws that are related to fire prevention.
- Operation and capabilities of different types of fire department apparatus and the ability to apply this knowledge to fire prevention situations.
- Building materials and construction and the principals of heat travel and combustion.
- Fire fighting methods and equipment.
- Fire engineering principles and the systems and equipment used in detecting and suppressing fires.
- Water systems and roadways.
- The Incident Command System.
- Rules and regulations of the Fire Department.
- Geography and major target hazards in the City.
- Principles and practices of business computer applications.

Ability and Skills to:

- Make independent decisions in emergent and non-emergent situations based on applicable codes and established procedures.
- Investigate complaints, make recommendations or corrections, write letters or citations and monitor cases until they are closed.
- Work with other city and state agencies in making inspections and assisting them with investigations as necessary.
- Conduct inspections of a variety of facilities.
- Be firm yet tactful in enforcing compliance with plans, specifications, ordinances, and codes.
- Understand, explain and apply policies and procedures.
- Conduct educational programs and respond to a variety of questions relating to fire prevention.
- Analyze fire protection problems and develop objective solutions by applying innovative approaches to problem solving.
- Conduct research related to codes, regulations and laws and make effective recommendations.
- Prepare and present oral and written reports.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both orally and in writing.
- Maintain cooperative working relationships with engineers, developers, contractors, and the public.
- Establish and maintain cooperative relationships with citizens, business owners, schools and other organizations.
- Work with a minimum of supervision in an efficient, well-organized manner to meet deadlines.
- Prepare clear and concise reports.
- Operate a personal computer and software programs to include word processing, spreadsheets and databases at a level sufficient for successful job operations.
- Continue to pursue education necessary to remain current with all aspects of the position.
- Meet the physical standards established by the City.

Education and Experience:

Any combination of education and experience that would likely provide the required knowledge, abilities and skills is qualifying. A typical background that would likely provide the required knowledge, abilities and skills would consist of the following:

Education:

- Possession of a high school diploma or GED.

Experience:

- Possession of five years of experience as a full-time Fire Safety Inspector, Company Officer, or the equivalent, preferably with a municipal fire agency.

License/Certification:

- Possession of a valid California Driver's License and a satisfactory driving record is required at time of appointment and as a continuing condition of employment.
- Possession of ICC Fire Inspector 1 certification at time of employment
- Possession of CEFSTES Fire Prevention 1, 2, and 3 highly desirable

Working Conditions:

This position performs inspections and other activities on all types of terrain in a variety of weather conditions; walks over rough, uneven or rocky surfaces; tolerates hot and cold temperatures; works at heights greater than ten feet; climbs ladders or steps to reach objects; hears alarms and other auditory warning devices; works in small, cramped areas; occasionally crawls through small spaces; bends or stoops repeatedly or continually over time; uses stomach and lower back muscles to support the body; stands or walks for extended periods of time with the inability to rest at will; uses arms above shoulder level; uses common hand tools; uses sight including color vision, depth perception and peripheral vision in order to match colors of wiring systems and color-coded valves and piping; and, relies on senses of sight/hearing/smell/touch to help determine nature of fire cause, maintain personal safety, and make critical decisions. When not performing duties in the field, this position works in an indoor office setting and enters data into a terminal, PC or keyboard device; produces written documents using proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling; uses graphic instructions, blueprints and layouts when checking for code compliance; and, sits for extended periods of time with the ability to move at will.