

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM REPORT

Meeting: October 4, 2022
To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: Ad Hoc Committee – Fire Department Funding & Staffing Committee
Subject: Extension of Ad Hoc Committee
Recommendation: That the Mayor and City Council Approve the Extension of the Ad Hoc Committee for an additional Three Months: Extension to December 31, 2022
Funding: Currently Budgeted: _____ Yes _____ No xxx N/A
Net General Fund Cost: \$
Amount: \$
Account Code/Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: AK (verified by Administrative Services Department)

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE:

This item is to request City Council Approve the Extension of the Ad Hoc Committee – Fire Department Funding & Staffing Committee for an additional Three Months: Extension to December 31, 2022.

BACKGROUND:

The Ad Hoc Committee – Fire Department Funding & Staffing Committee was created and tasked to investigate all viable options for the future reliable funding and staffing with the final task of providing a recommendation to the City Council for consideration of action and final decision.

The options to consider include but are not limited to the following, as directed by the City Council:

- Current Fire Department Budget and review of current funding to include stipend pay as well as projected funding.
- Restructuring of Fire Department as Full Time (Staffed by Employees) Fire Department for City
- Sales Tax Measure to Fund Full Time (Staffed by Employees) Fire Department - City only
- Sales Tax Measure to Fund Full time/Volunteer Department - City only
- Consolidation with Another Fire Department (positive or negative impact)
- Discussion with outside agencies to include LAFCO, County, other Fire Departments
- Discussion with County about supporting / not supporting consolidation
- Processes for consolidation/costs
- Funding to obtain outside counsel/consultants to review budgetary items if support for consolidation
- Funding for financial advisory to create five year projected forecast of Fire Department
- Debt financing information for long-term capital projects or equipment items

Based on the information collected during an in-depth process, the Ad Hoc Fire Committee provided a detailed report to the City Council at the May 17, 2022 City Council Meeting. At this meeting, the City Council directed the Fire Committee to seek an outside consultant to help inform the Council’s decision about the best way to ensure future service and financial stability for Sebastopol fire services.

The RFP primarily focused on comparing the benefits and limitations of two options: (1) a City maintained and funded municipal Fire Department, and (2) consolidation with Gold Ridge Fire Protection District. It was also stated that the City expected any qualified consultant to also briefly explore other methods of fire service delivery (JPA, contract for services, etc.), although those were not the focus of the RFP.

At the August 2, 2022 City Council meeting, the City awarded the contract to Matrix Consulting.

DISCUSSION:

The Ad Hoc Committee – Fire Department Funding & Staffing Committee is currently set to terminate on September 30, 2022. However, the Ad Hoc Committee is proposing an extension to the Ad Hoc Committee for an additional three months to provide for:

- Matrix Consulting to conduct interviews with City Staff, Key Stake Holders, Volunteer Fire Department members and Gold Ridge Fire Department personnel to collect data and conduct community outreach;
- Review of the Final Report from Matrix Consulting and provide the opportunity for the Ad Hoc Committee to provide recommendations to the City Council
- Conduct a special City Council meeting to provide to the Community the Report as prepared by the Consultant that is full and complete and provides clear and concise recommendations supported by facts with the benefits and limitations of any recommendation thoroughly explained.
- Conduct any after action items as a result of the Special City Council Meeting
- Terminate Ad Hoc Committee on December 31, 2022.

CITY COUNCIL AND/OR GENERAL PLAN GOALS:

Goal 5 - Provide Open and Responsive Municipal Government Leadership

5.1.4 - Enhance the use of the City of Sebastopol Committees, Commission and Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

As of the writing of this staff report, the City has not received any public comment. However, if public comment is received from interested parties following the publication and distribution of this staff report, it will be provided to the City Council as supplemental materials before or at the meeting. In addition, public comments may be offered during the public comment portion of the agenda item.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

This item was noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to scheduled meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no impact with this action tonight.

RECOMMENDATION: That the City Council Approve the Extension of the Ad Hoc Committee – Fire Department Funding & Staffing Committee for an additional Three Months: Extension to December 31, 2022.

Attachment(s):

None