

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: February 20, 2024

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**To:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
**From:** City Administration  
 Deborah Muchmore, Human Resources Consultant/Administrative Services  
**Subject:** Report out/Recommendation on City of Sebastopol Garbage Franchise Agreement

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that the Council: Authorize the City Manager to Revise the Classification Specification, Fire Chief and make future non-substantive changes.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The City of Sebastopol recognizes the value in recruiting and retaining a well-qualified workforce toward promoting long-term stability of the City’s workforce and to ensure the City has qualified staff working to provide services to serve and protect the residents, visitors, and businesses of this community. Every vacancy provides an opportunity to review City needs and the duties, responsibilities, and requirements of each position. It is appropriate to review and amend job descriptions as it becomes necessary.

On July 25, 2023, the Sebastopol City Council updated the City’s Fire Chief job classification specification in preparation for recruitment. That recruitment did not prove successful. No qualified local candidates were identified, and all successful out-of-state candidates were not able to transfer due to the high cost of housing. When the original job description was revised, there was considerable focus on the duties of Fire Marshal and Emergency Operations management. Atypical minimum qualifications for a Fire Chief were added to the job description to ensure a successful candidate would have the qualifications to serve as the Fire Marshal and the City’s Assistant Emergency Operations Manager. Since then, staff has learned that there are other ways in which the responsibilities of Fire Marshal and Emergency Operations Manager can be met and that requiring things such as an ICC certificate at hire may have caused an unintended impediment to hiring a qualified candidate.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:**

Since 2023, the City has provided fire department leadership by appointing an Acting or Interim Fire Chief. The City’s current Acting Fire Chief is Todd Derum, a CalPERS Retired Annuitant. Retired Annuitant employment is governed by California Government Code Sections 7522.56 and 21224 which, among other things, require that the appointment be served during the active recruitment of the position being filled.

Therefore, the City must reopen the recruitment for Fire Chief. The revised job description increases the potential to attract qualified applicants. While the City is considering consolidation of the Fire Department with a neighboring District, the City Council has not made a decision on that issue.

To ensure that the requirements for entry to the job of Fire Chief in the classification specification clearly and accurately reflect the minimum requirements of the position to entry, staff recommends revising the specification to remove additional duties added on 7/24/2023 related to Fire Marshal and Emergency Operations service to remove barriers to entry and allow for the opportunity for an improved hiring pool.

The current minimum qualifications require:

- Five years of municipal fire suppression, supervisory, management, and administrative experience equivalent to Battalion Chief or above.

- The equivalent to a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university
- Major coursework in Fire Science, Fire Administration, Public or Business Administration or a closely related field.
- Possession of a valid CA Drivers License and satisfactory driving record
- A valid Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification is required and must be maintained throughout employment
- Fire Plans Examiner Certification from the International Code Council (ICC) or equivalent training, or experience within 6 months of appointment.

Additional desired qualifications include:

- Possession of a California State Fire Marshal’s Office designation as Chief Fire Officer or the predecessor, Chief Officer or equivalent
- Coursework in Fire Command and EOC operations
- A valid advance first aide certificate

Human Resources consultant and City staff reviewed job descriptions from similar sized cities and found that some of the above requirements are greater than those sought by comparable municipalities. The Fire Plans Examiner certification from ICC, CPR, and First Aide certifications are not required or desired by any of the comparable entities. A bachelor’s degree is not required by three of the seven comparable entities reviewed.

Therefore, staff recommend easing the educational requirements to require a two-year degree such as an associate degree and removal of the ICC Fire Plans Examiner, CPR, and First Aide certifications from the minimum qualifications of the position. The updated job description that reflects these changes is included with this staff report as Exhibit A to the Resolution.

Staff recommend the City Council authorize the City Manager to revise the classification of Fire Chief and any future non-substantive changes due to clerical or typographical errors that may be necessary in the future.

A revised job description is included as Exhibit A of Attachment 1 – Resolution to this report.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH:**

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date. The City has also used social media to promote and advertise the City Council Meeting Agenda Items.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact with this item tonight other than staff time.

**OPTIONS:**

That the City Council not approve the amendments to the job description and authorize re-recruitment based upon the existing job description; this would require removal from the consent calendar for Council discussion.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 - Resolution

Exhibit A - Amended Job Description – Fire Chief

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval:

Approval Date: 2-15-2024

CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 2-14-2024

The proposed action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Administrative Services (Financial) Approval Date: 2-15-2024

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget:  Yes  No  N/A

Account Code (f applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 2-14-2024

City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 2-15-2024

RESOLUTION NUMBER: XXXX-2024

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO REVISE THE CLASSIFICATION SPECIFICATION, FIRE CHIEF

**WHEREAS,** The City of Sebastopol maintains a classification plan that includes the titles, duties, and responsibilities of all City positions, and

**WHEREAS,** The classification specification for the position of Fire Chief, updated on July 25, 2023 contained the duty to serve as Fire Marshal and minimum qualifications not common in regional comparable entities and the most recent recruitment for a Fire Chief was unsuccessful, and

**WHEREAS,** The City desires to update the classification specification consistent with best practices in the industry to improve inclusivity and minimize barriers to entry.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City Council of the City of Sebastopol hereby authorizes the City Manager to revise the classification specification, Fire Chief and make future non substantive changes to the specification attached as Exhibit A and incorporated herein by this reference.

The above and foregoing Resolution was duly passed, approved, and adopted at a meeting by the City Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of February 2024.

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the City of Sebastopol City Council by the following vote:

**VOTE:**

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

APPROVED: Diana Gardner Rich, Mayor

ATTEST: Mary Gourley, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk, MMC

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
Larry McLaughlin, City Attorney

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL  
JOB DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Fire Chief  
**Division:** Management  
**Department:** Fire  
**Location:** Fire House  
**Shift:** As Required  
**Reports To:** City Manager  
**Prepared By:** HR Advisor, MTC  
**Prepared Date:** 02/14/2024  
**Approved By:** City Council  
**Approved Date:** 2-20-2024  
**Revised Date:** 2-20-2024  
**FLSA Status:** Exempt

**PURPOSE**

Under administrative direction, the Fire Chief performs complex technical, administrative, and supervisory work in planning, organizing, directing, and implementing fire prevention, suppression, investigation, disaster preparedness, and emergency medical services to prevent or minimize the loss of life and property by fire and emergency medical conditions. The Fire Chief reflects a demonstrative cultural competency working with all community members regardless of cultural differences or circumstances including race, ethnicity, religion, language, gender identity, age, marital and familial status, sexual orientation, diverse physical and learning abilities, socioeconomic status, and other identities. May act as the City Manager or Assistant City Manager during the absence of either manager and perform related duties, as assigned.

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS** This is an individual classification that is responsible for the management and supervision of all Fire Department services, programs and policies. Reporting to the City Manager, the incumbent manages emergency response, fire prevention, public education, hazardous materials, municipal code enforcement, disaster response and other related public safety services. The responsibilities include direct and indirect supervision of management, technical, clerical and other support staff and command of emergency incidents.

**SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED**

General administrative direction is provided by the City Manager; responsibilities include the direct and indirect supervision of management, supervisory, technical, and/or support staff.

**TYPICAL DUTIES:** *To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. Depending upon assignment, duties may include, but are not limited to, the following:*

- Plan, direct, coordinate, and organize all City fire service functions including fire suppression and prevention, emergency medical services, disaster preparedness, hazardous materials response, emergency operations center (EOC), and associated programs, services, and operations.
- Plans, organizes, directs and coordinates the activities of the Fire Department; selects, trains and has general responsibility for the discipline of volunteer personnel.
- Prepare and recommend long range plans for fire programs and develop proposals for action on current and future needs of the City.
- Advise City Council, City Manager, and others on departmental issues impacting the City.
- Coordinate the provision of departmental support services of station, equipment maintenance, in-service training, and fire inspection, maintaining departmental efficiency and effectiveness.
- Supervise and participate in the development and administration of the Fire Department budget; direct the forecast of additional funds needed for staffing, equipment, materials and supplies; monitor and approve expenditures; implement mid-year adjustments.

- Manage subordinate supervisors (Asst. Chiefs and Fire Captains) who supervise a total of 27 volunteers and employees in the Fire Teams.
- Maintain departmental records; evaluate volunteer staff; prepare suggested revisions to City Fire Ordinances.
- Coordinate the development, administration, and maintenance of records for organized training programs.
- Develop policies, goals and objectives for the Department.
- Develop, review, manage, and administer the Departmental budget, fees, stipend programs, and controls expenditures.
- Represent the Fire Department as its spokesperson before the media, community groups, professional organizations, other City departments and divisions, and outside agencies.
- Requisitions supplies, equipment and materials needed for department operations.
- Develop, maintain, disseminate, and administer operating procedures manuals and policies.
- Coordinate responses to emergencies, enforce City fire codes, State building regulations, and State Fire Marshal regulations.
- Foster an environment that embraces diversity, integrity, trust, and respect.
- Provide advice and consultation to the City Council and City Manager on fire ordinances and policies.
- Perform regular inspections of buildings and structures; investigate causes and origins of fires, respond to fires and takes charge of major fires, prepare reports regarding department operations and activities.
- Serve as Assistant Emergency Services Director for the City; develop disaster and general emergency plans; coordinates emergency planning with all City departments, develop plans for evacuation shelters, warming/cooling centers, and first aid stations, coordinate hazardous material response planning, train other City staff on hazardous material handling.
- Be an integral team player, which involves flexibility, cooperation, and communication.
- Responsibilities include interviewing, hiring, and training employees; planning, assigning, and directing work; appraising performance; rewarding and disciplining employees; addressing complaints and resolving problems.
- Perform related duties as assigned.

**QUALIFICATIONS:** The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skill, and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions satisfactorily.

**Knowledge of:**

- Principles and practices of governmental administration and organizational management.
- Modern principles, practices and techniques of Fire Department administration and operation.
- Advanced methods, practices and principles of fire suppression, fire prevention and fire investigation.
- Principles, practices, and methods of investigation, documentation, and investigatory report writing.
- California Building Code, City and California State Fire Codes and California Administrative and Health and Safety Codes, and an understanding of fee and penalty administration.
- Principles and practices of leadership, motivation, team building and conflict resolution.
- City protocol for disaster preparedness and emergency operations.
- Operation and maintenance of the apparatus and equipment used in firefighting and emergency service activities.
- Geography, types of building construction, major fire hazards and water supply problems of the City of Sebastopol.
- Provisions of national, state and local laws, rules, regulations and ordinances affecting fire and emergency service functions.

**Ability to:**

- Plan, organize and coordinate the fire service functions of the City.
- Work weekends, nights, holidays, and long hours in inclement weather.
- Provide supervision and training for volunteer staff.
- Develop and implement department policies and procedures.
- Supervise, train and evaluate assigned personnel.
- Prepare and administer department budget.
- Analyze problems, identify alternative solutions, project consequences of proposed actions and implement recommendations in support of goals.
- Think and act quickly and appropriately in emergencies and assess situations accurately.
- Demonstrate cultural competency and a proven ability to work with people regardless of cultural differences or circumstance including race, ethnicity, religion, language, gender identity, age, marital and family status, sexual orientation, diverse physical and learning abilities, socioeconomic status, and other identities.
- Direct, manage, and oversee the administration and operations of the Fire Department.
- Interpret, explain, apply and enforce a variety of fire-related laws, ordinances and regulations.
- Collect and analyze data, maintain and prepare records and reports, make effective oral presentations, prepare a budget and control expenditures, and establish and maintain cooperative working relationships.
- Select, motivate, and evaluate assigned staff and provide training and professional development.
- Analyze problems, identify alternative solutions, project consequences of proposed actions, and implement recommendations in support of goals.
- Respond to common inquiries or complaints from customers, regulatory agencies, or members of the business community.
- Write speeches and articles for publication that conform to prescribed style and format.
- Effectively present information to top management, public groups, and/or boards of directors.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of the work.

**EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:**

*Any combination of education and experience is qualifying. A typical way to meet qualifications is:*

**Education:** Equivalent to a two year degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in Fire Science, Fire Administration, Public or Business Administration or closely related field. A Bachelor's degree in a related field is desired.

**Experience:** Five (5) years of municipal fire suppression, supervisory, management and administrative experience equivalent to Battalion Chief or above.

**License, Certifications, Registrations:**

- Possession of valid California Class C driver's license and a satisfactory driving record are conditions of initial and continued employment.
- Possession of a California State Fire Marshal's Office designation as Chief Fire Officer, the predecessor, Chief Officer or equivalent is highly desired.
- Coursework in Fire Command and experience in emergency operations is desirable.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee is frequently required to stand; walk; sit; use hands to finger, handle, or feel objects, tools, or controls; reach with hands and arms; climb or balance; stoop, kneel, crouch, or crawl; talk or hear; and taste or smell. The employee must frequently lift and/or move up to 100 pounds and occasionally lift and/or move more than 100 pounds. Specific vision abilities required by this job include close vision, distance vision, color vision, peripheral vision, depth perception, and the ability to adjust focus.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

While performing the duties of this job, the employee frequently works near moving mechanical parts; in high, precarious places; and in outside weather conditions and is frequently exposed to fumes or airborne particles and toxic or caustic chemicals. The employee occasionally works with explosives and is occasionally exposed to wet and/or humid conditions, extreme cold, extreme heat, risk of electrical shock, and vibration. The noise level in the work environment is usually loud.