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To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: City Administration
Subject: Consideration of Council Approval to Initiate the Recruitment Process for Fire Captain Positions

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

The City Council approve the recruitment of two (2) full-time Fire Captains, which is to be paid for from Measure H sales tax revenues.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Hiring Fire Captains strengthens fire station operations by providing skilled leadership, supervision, and critical decision-making during emergencies. Captains coordinate resources, mentor less experienced firefighters, and uphold safety protocols, ensuring rapid, efficient responses and a structured approach to incident management. Their immediate response leadership enhances operational effectiveness and reduces delays in waiting for a volunteer Captain during critical situations.

For Fiscal Year 24/25, the City of Sebastopol anticipates receiving approximately \$810,000 in Measure H funds. Initiating the recruitment and hiring of two Fire Captains aligns the use of these funds with their intended purpose of enhancing public safety. Additionally, addressing this staffing need now begins to better align the City's staffing model with the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

The Sebastopol Fire Department (SFD) is staffed by a contracted Fire Chief from the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District, two full-time 40-hour Fire Engineers supported by a stipend volunteer firefighter to provide day-time coverage, and one-half of an Administrative Assistant. The contracted fire chief provides supervision as there is no first-line supervisor beyond five volunteer captains. The department provides emergency response, fire inspections, fire prevention, fire investigation, and community support services to the citizens and businesses of Sebastopol.

Fire Captains are mid-level managers responsible for both operational and administrative tasks. This rank serves as the designated company officer on emergency response units by leading firefighting teams during emergency operations and ensuring their response's safety, efficiency, and effectiveness. Additionally, the Fire Captain position will provide direct supervision and accountability for both volunteer and paid firefighters, enhancing coordination, adherence to protocols, and overall performance within the department. These Captains will strengthen its leadership structure and improve operational readiness.

The Fire Captains are anticipated to be hired in April 2025, depending on the recruitment process, or potentially sooner. The City's Measure H funds will cover the costs associated with this process.

The City is negotiating an agreement to reorganize, or consolidate, with Gold Ridge. We anticipate that the reorganization could take effect as soon as July of this year. The reorganization will include economies of scale and other benefits that will likely allow for the hiring of a third captain. However, because the reorganization is not completed, there is the possibility that Sebastopol will retain an independent Fire Department for some time. In that case, it is less clear that funding will be sufficient to hire three captains on a permanent basis, and fund other needs (such as capital expenses and debt service). Thus, we are recommending retaining some of the

Measure H funds until the future of reorganization becomes clearer. One of the reasons we face this situation is the Sebastopol is not receiving funding from Measure H comparable to most local agencies. When Measure H was being developed, Sebastopol requested funding for two full time staff to always be available, assuming that one volunteer firefighter would always be available. Other agencies obtained funding for three full time firefighters, leaving Sebastopol at a disadvantage. The General Fund is not in a financial position to fund these enhanced fire services, so the primary source will have to be Measure H funds.

As of this writing, the Fire Ad Hoc Committee and Budget Committees have not had the opportunity to review this proposal in detail. Staff anticipate having their comments available before or at the Council meeting.

STAFF ANALYSIS:

Measure H funds are designated for Sebastopol to support full-time staffing and to meet other fire-related needs. Adding two career Fire Captains is a significant step toward meeting the intent of these funds. Local governments are expected to receive Measure H revenue in early February 2025. Staff recommends proceeding with the hiring of two Fire Captains currently to meet this goal.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been noticed per the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Sebastopol is projected to receive \$1.08 million annually from the county-wide sales tax Measure H, with an estimated \$810,000 allocated for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. The Sebastopol Fire Department is under contract for a new Type-1 fire engine, scheduled for delivery in 2026, which will be funded using Measure H proceeds. This fiscal year's budget includes a payment of \$238,050 toward the fire engine and \$60,000 for the Fire Station Assessment, leaving a balance of \$511,950.

This remaining balance is sufficient to fund two Fire Captains for the fourth quarter of FY 24/25 at \$117,217. This calculation is based on their total compensation of \$203,856 annually plus 15% overtime (\$30,578) for a total cost of \$234,434, for each position, divided by four quarters (\$58,608.50 per position per quarter) or \$117,217. The remaining balance in FY24/25 Measure H funds would be \$394,733.

In Fiscal Year 2025-26, after accounting for the final fire engine payment of \$238,050, \$841,950 in Measure H funds would be available. This would fully cover the annual cost of the two captain positions at \$468,869, including a 15% overtime margin, leaving \$373,081 available for other uses. The following table illustrates the estimated Measure H fiscal activity for Fiscal Years 2024-2025 (partial year of Measure H) and 2025-2026 (first full year of Measure H) with **two captain positions** and the other assumptions discussed previously.

Note: Measure H funding for Sebastopol is based on the assumption of 2.0 paid staff and 1.0 volunteer firefighters, with limited and likely insufficient funding for capital expenses and debt service, which could be significant. Other Fire agencies were allocated Measure H funds sufficient to fund higher levels of paid staff.

The following tables compare the fiscal impacts of hiring two or three fire captains this Spring:

Hire Two Fire Captains			
Items	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	Cumulative Total
Estimated Measure H Proceeds	\$810,000	\$1,080,000	\$1,890,000
<i>Estimated Measure H Allocations:</i>			
Type 1 Fire Engine Lease Payment	\$238,050	\$238,050	\$476,100
Fire Station Assessment	\$60,000	\$-0-	\$60,000
Fire Captain Total Cost for two positions (FY 25 cost for fourth quarter only)	\$117,217	\$468,869	\$586,086
Remaining Measure H proceeds to address building and capital needs	\$394,733	\$373,081	\$767,814
Total Estimated Measure H Allocations	\$810,000	\$1,080,000	\$1,890,000
Unallocated Measure H proceeds	\$-0-	\$-0-	\$-0-

Hire Three Fire Captains			
Items	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26	Cumulative Total
Estimated Measure H Proceeds	\$810,000	\$1,080,000	\$1,890,000
<i>Estimated Measure H Allocations:</i>			
Type 1 Fire Engine Lease Payment	\$238,050	\$238,050	\$476,100
Fire Station Assessment	\$60,000	\$-0-	\$60,000
Fire Captain Total Cost for three positions (FY 25 cost for fourth quarter only)	\$175,826	\$703,304	\$879,130
Remaining Measure H proceeds to address building and capital needs	\$336,124	\$138,646	\$474,770
Total Estimated Measure H Allocations	\$810,000	\$1,080,000	\$1,890,000
Unallocated Measure H proceeds	\$-0-	\$-0-	\$-0-

As the preceding table reflects, while the anticipated Measure H funds would cover the costs of a third permanent captain position, at this point staff is concerned with the sustainability of using funding for a third captain position given that the funds will also be to cover debt service and capital expenditures, which could be significant and potential timing issues that could arise relating to the pending reorganization.

The open recruitment of these positions has an estimated fiscal impact of \$8,000 - \$10,000.

Note that funding for the positions is available in the Measure H budget. Staff may later request Council approval to move the funds to the Fire Department operating budget once reporting requirements for Measure H are finalized.

OPTIONS:

The City could hire a third fire captain at an estimated cost of approximately \$58,600 for the fourth quarter of the current Fiscal Year, and approximately \$234,500 per year for FY 2025-26 and for future years, depending on

the recruitment market. This would, however, reduce funding available for capital and other fire-related needs. The benefit is that a third fire captain would improve fire services.

The City could also approve opening recruitment for three positions, with the plan to hire two until the fiscal situation for the Fire Department becomes more clear in the coming months as reorganization proceeds.

ATTACHMENTS: Fire Captain Job Description

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval:

Approval Date:

CEQA Determination (Planning):

Approval Date:

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

Administrative Services (Financial)

Approval Date:

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

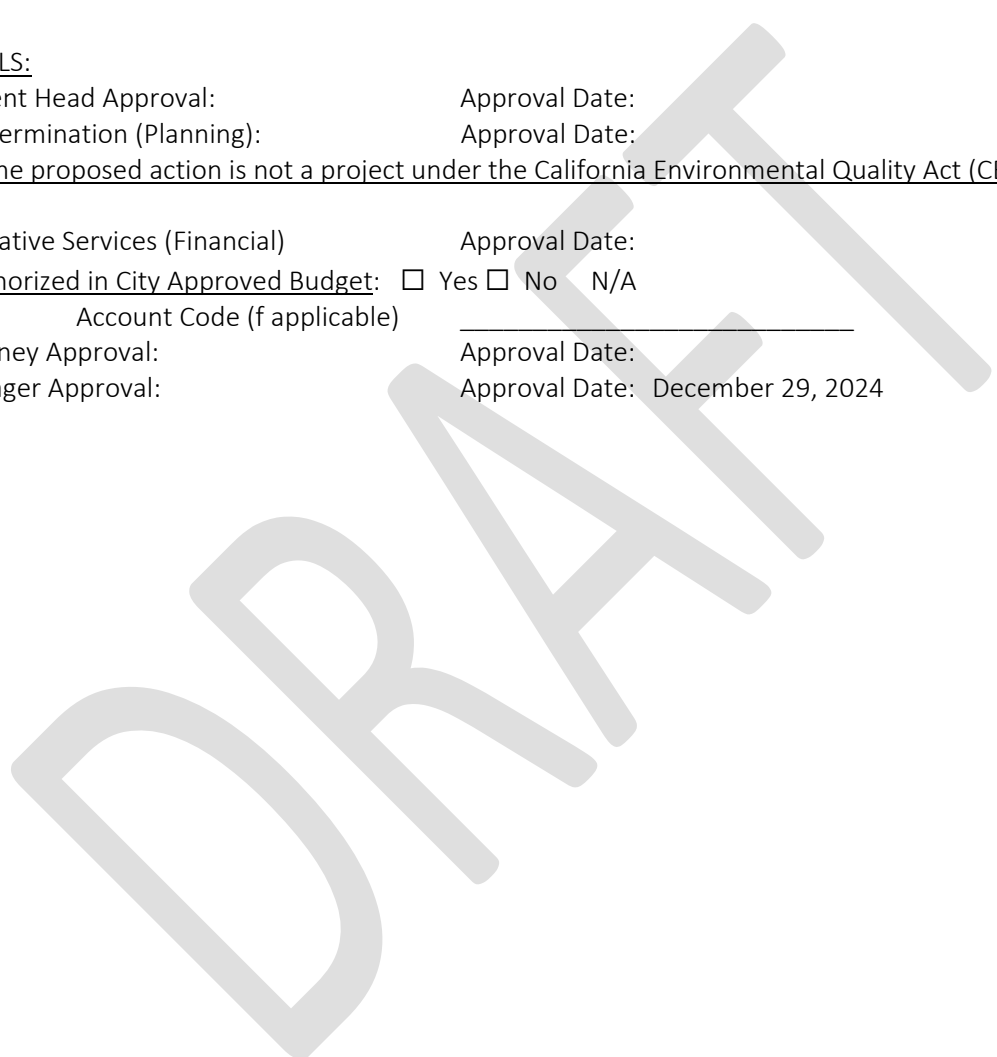
Account Code (f applicable)

City Attorney Approval:

Approval Date:

City Manager Approval:

Approval Date: December 29, 2024



Attachment 1: City of Sebastopol Job Description – Fire Captain

City of Sebastopol Job Description

Job Title:	Fire Captain
Division:	Management
Department:	Fire
Location:	Fire Department
Shift:	As Assigned
Reports To:	Fire Chief
Prepared By:	Human Resources Advisor and Fire Chief
Approved By:	City Council
Approved Date:	12/XX/2024
FLSA Status:	Non-Exempt

PURPOSE

Under general direction of the Fire Chief, performs a variety of administrative, supervisory, technical, and operational duties involved in fire suppression, emergency medical care, hazardous materials response, rescue, fire prevention and inspection, fire investigation, fire personnel training, public education, and related services and activities of an assigned event, incident, engine, or program; ensures that all assigned activities are carried out effectively, efficiently, safely, and according to department guidelines and policies; and performs related work as required.

The Fire Captain demonstrates a 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

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Fire Captains are first line supervisory positions and may be assigned by the Fire Chief to any FLSA compliant shift (40, 42, 48/96, or 3:4/12) approved and budgeted by the City of Sebastopol. Fire Captains are expected to exercise a high degree of good judgement and initiative while making critical fire and life safety-related decisions under high pressure, adverse conditions, and are responsible for directing both emergency and non-emergency activities of a fire company. The Fire Captain is distinguished from the Firefighter/Engineer by the Captain's responsibility for oversight, supervision, training and leadership for assigned incidents, activities, and programs. The Fire Captain is distinguished from the higher-level Fire Chief in that the latter is responsible for the overall performance of all operations and administration of the Fire Department.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED AND EXERCISED

Receives general direction from the Fire Chief. Exercises direct and general supervision over assigned fire personnel.

EXAMPLES OF ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS (Illustrative Only)

Management reserves the right to add, modify, change, or rescind the work assignments of different positions and to make reasonable accommodation so that qualified employees can perform the essential functions of the job.

- Plan, prioritize, assign, and supervise the work of an assigned fire company or personnel responsible for providing fire services, including fire suppression, emergency medical care, special operations, including hazardous materials, technical rescue response, and general fire prevention; implement and enforce policies and procedures; meet with staff to identify and resolve problems
- Respond to emergencies and calls for assistance as a company officer, supervising the performance and safety of assigned firefighting personnel, and determining the necessity for additional resources at the scene of an emergency incident
- Source, coordinate, or deliver staff training and drills in effective fire suppression, the use of fire equipment an apparatus, emergency medical, special operations, and general fire prevention methods, techniques, and related subjects
- Evaluate assigned employee performance; coach, mentor, and work with employees to correct deficiencies; and recommend remedial training or disciplinary action, as necessary.
- Respond to alarms involving fire, medical aid, hazardous substances, and rescue work; assume incident command as required and conduct assessment tactics, strategy development, and implementation; direct, and participate in firefighting duties, equipment, and apparatus operations, search and rescue services, rendering first aid and basic life support, and the control and cleanup of hazardous materials spills and releases.
- Conduct, supervise, and participate in fire cause and origin determinations; determine preliminary origin and cause of fire at emergency scenes; obtain and preserve evidence.
- Conduct, supervise, and participate in fire and life safety inspections; supervise and participate in the routine inspection of commercial, industrial, residential, and other buildings; supervise and participate in fire sprinkler, alarm, and hydrant flow tests; supervise proper maintenance of hydrants in assigned areas.
- Supervise and participate in public education and public relations activities; coordinate public relations activities and interact with various news media; design; develop, supervise, and participate in public education programs; may be assigned to make presentations to schools, service clubs, or other public gatherings on fire and burn prevention.
- Serve as a liaison for the fire service to other City departments, divisions, and outside agencies; attend assigned meetings; provide staff support to commissions, committees, and task forces, as necessary; negotiate and resolve significant and controversial issues.
- Develop and review staff reports related to assigned activities and services; may present information to the City Council and various commissions, committees, and boards; perform a variety of public relations and outreach work related to assigned activities.
- Supervise and assist in rendering emergency medical services at an emergency incident; analyze and take command of patient care with full responsibility for the patient(s) until relieved by proper medical personnel.
- Assist in coordinating the maintenance and repair of fire equipment and apparatuses such as hydrants, engines, and support equipment; test apparatus and equipment; ensure proper maintenance of station facilities; maintain station supplies.
- Prepare reports, forms, recommendations, and other required administrative documentation.
- Supervise and conduct fire prevention inspections and public education presentations.
- Assist other management staff in maintaining and improving the operation of the company, perform a wide variety of general staff work as assigned.
- May participate in preparing and administering the assigned budget, submitting budget recommendations, monitoring expenditures, and initiating and managing projects.

- Ensure an accurate and efficient inventory of equipment and supplies, including purchasing necessary equipment and submitting equipment requests accordingly.
- Direct and participate in fire station buildings and grounds maintenance; direct the cleaning of quarters, equipment, and apparatus.
- Maintain skill levels and relevant certifications, familiarization with new equipment and procedures; attend and participate in professional group meetings; stay abreast of new trends and innovations in the field of fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency medical response, hazardous material response, and technical rescue.
- Participate in the development and implementation of emergency plans; prepare and present staff reports and other correspondence as necessary; perform a full range of other departmental administrative duties.
- Administer, oversee and supervise assigned programs and special projects.
- Establish positive working relationships with representatives of community organizations, state/local agencies and associations, City management and staff, and the public.
- Foster an environment that embraces diversity, integrity, trust, and respect.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS

Knowledge of:

- Operations, services, and activities of an emergency service operation including fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency medical services, disaster preparedness, hazardous materials response, and related services and activities.
- Principles and practices of supervision, training, and performance evaluation.
- Administrative principles and practices, including goal setting, program development, implementation, and evaluation, and project management.
- Principles, practices, procedures, techniques, and equipment used in fire, medical, and hazardous materials emergency response, including containment and clean-up, technical and confined response situations.
- Principles and practices of budget development and administration.
- Principles and practices of disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.
- Methods and techniques of basic life support and rescue.
- Principles, methods, and techniques used in confined space and rescue operations.
- Principles of combustion and cause of fire.
- Principles of building construction and fire protection systems.
- Geography and street layout of the City and surrounding area.
- Current safety practices as they relate to equipment and procedures involved in the fire service
- Applicable Federal, State, and local laws, regulatory codes, ordinances, and procedures relevant to the assigned area of responsibility.
- Practices of researching operations and maintenance issues, evaluating alternatives, making sound recommendations, and preparing and presenting effective staff reports.
- General principles of risk management related to the functions of the assigned area.
- Record-keeping principles and procedures.
- Techniques for effectively representing the City in contact with governmental agencies, community groups, and various business, professional, educational, regulatory, and legislative organizations.
- Methods for providing a high level of customer service by effectively dealing with the public, vendors, contractors, and City staff.

- Office procedures, methods, and equipment including computers and applicable software applications such as Microsoft Word and Excel.

Ability to:

- Plan, organize, administer, and coordinate the City's fire suppression, prevention services, hazardous materials, and related programs and functions.
- Recommend and implement goals, objectives, and practices for providing effective and efficient services.
- Plan, organize, assign, review, and evaluate the work of staff, train staff in work procedures.
- Evaluate and develop improvements in operations, procedures, policies, or methods.
- Research, analyze, and evaluate new service delivery methods, procedures, and techniques.
- Prepare clear and concise reports, correspondence, policies, procedures, and other written materials.
- Analyze, interpret, summarize, and present administrative and technical information and data in an effective manner.
- Interpret, apply, explain, and ensure compliance with Federal, State, and local policies, procedures, laws, and regulations.
- Conduct complex research projects, evaluate alternatives, make sound recommendations, and prepare effective technical staff reports.
- Effectively represent the department and the City in meetings with governmental agencies, community groups, various businesses, professional, and regulatory organizations, and in meetings with individuals.
- Establish and maintain a variety of filing, record-keeping, and tracking systems.
- Operate a variety of tools, equipment, and apparatus used in fire, medical, and other emergency response.
- Operate modern office equipment including computer equipment and specialized software applications programs.
- Organize and prioritize a variety of projects and multiple tasks in an effective and timely manner; organize your own work, set priorities, and meet critical time deadlines.
- Make sound, independent decisions within established policy and procedural guidelines.
- Use English effectively to communicate in person, over the telephone, and in writing.
- Use tact, initiative, prudence, and independent judgment within general policy, procedural, and legal guidelines.
- Work with various cultural and ethnic groups tactfully and effectively.
- Establish, maintain, and foster positive and effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Any combination of training and experience that would provide the required knowledge, skills, and abilities is qualifying. A typical way to obtain the required qualifications would be:

Education: Equivalent to the completion of the twelfth grade supplemented by college-level coursework in fire science, fire administration, management, business administration, or a related field.

Two years of related post high school coursework in fire science, fire suppression, fire administration and operations, or the equivalent of an Associate's degree in fire science, fire administration, business or public administration, or a related field is desired.

Experience: Two (2) years of increasingly responsible experience in fire suppression, emergency medical response, and fire prevention experience as a Firefighter, Firefighter/Paramedic, Fire Engineer, or similar position, including some demonstrable leadership experience providing technical and functional supervision over assigned personnel.

CERTIFICATIONS, LICENSES, REGISTRATIONS

Certifications:

- Possession of a State of California Emergency Medical Technician I (EMT-I) Certificate
- A valid Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification is required and must be maintained throughout employment.
- Possession of a State of California Firefighter I or II Certificate.
- Possession of Driver/Operator 1A and 1B within one year of appointment.
- Possession and maintenance of a valid Fire Officer certificate from the California State Fire Marshal. (desired)
- A valid advanced first aid certificate (desired)
- Possession of, or ability to obtain Fire Prevention Officer, Fire Investigator, and Fire Instructor certifications are desired.

Licenses: Possession of a valid California Class B Driver's License with air brake and tank endorsements, or a valid California Class C Driver's License with Fire Fighter endorsements, is required at the time of appointment.

Failure to obtain or maintain such required license(s) may be cause for disciplinary action.

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 accommodation 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.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodation 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.

Fire Captain Pay Range

Job Classification	Group	Step	Hourly	Bi-Weekly	Monthly	Annually
Fire Captain - 1.0% Below Market Mean	Unrepresented	A	\$ 51.67	\$ 4,134	\$ 8,956	\$ 107,472
		B	\$ 54.25	\$ 4,340	\$ 9,404	\$ 112,848
		C	\$ 56.97	\$ 4,558	\$ 9,875	\$ 118,500
		D	\$ 59.82	\$ 4,786	\$ 10,369	\$ 124,428
		E	\$ 62.82	\$ 5,025	\$ 10,888	\$ 130,656

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