

**Memorandum  
City of Lawrence  
Fire Medical**

**To: David Corliss, City Manager**

**From: Mark Bradford, Fire Chief**

**CC: Cynthia Boecker, Assistant City Manager  
Diane Stoddard, Assistant City Manager  
Jonathan Douglass, Assistant to the City Manager  
Casey Toomay, Budget Manager**

**Date: April 17, 2009**

**Re: FY 2010 Operating and Capital Outlay Budget Request**

Please find enclosed the FY 2010 Fire Medical Operating and Capital Improvement Budget request. We have identified the challenges that the City has in operating within its revenue picture. The total operating budget requested for the department is \$13,239,165. We strive to provide prevention, fire suppression, hazardous materials, water rescue, high angle rescue, confined space, and emergency medical services. Last year, we responded to 9,800 calls for service and more than 300 public appearances with an estimated 10,000 citizen contacts. Our missions are vital to the overall comfort, safety and quality of life for our community. The services that we provide fundamentally support the goals established by the City Commission.

Although we attempt to continue to provide the expectations of our citizens, we have been met with fiscal challenges that are limiting our overall operational efficiency. Below are areas of concern and programs that will see significant reductions in service level in 2010.

**Professional Development**

We are challenged to provide the state and federal mandated training required for various levels of employee certification. Mandates require employee training or certification in the service areas of emergency medical services, driver operator of fire apparatus, fire officer, hazardous materials, technical rescue, Confined Space and High Angle – Rope. It is estimated that \$27,000 is required to meet the minimum requirements. In 2007, we were attempting to meet these requirements with a reduced budget of \$10,175, which in 2009 was reduced to \$8,000.

**Facility Maintenance**

Fire Medical is responsible for maintaining ten locations: five stations within city limits, a Training Center, an Investigations Center (19th & Mass), former Station No. 4 on Stonebarn Terrace, former Station No. 6 (Training Center) at LMH and a portion of the Planning and Development Services in the Riverfront offices. Fire Medical's budget for facility maintenance in 2006 was \$62,000 and in 2007 was cut to \$22,207; in 2008 this

figure was \$36,620 and in 2009 it was \$55,500. This is insufficient funding for the number of buildings Fire Medical is responsible for maintaining. It averages out to approximately \$4,233 per building per year for maintenance (\$353 per station per month). Additionally, the oldest station in operation, Station No. 1, continues to need significant maintenance just to keep it functioning. We will need to increase funding in this line item or remove the non-used facilities from our responsibility.

### **Annual Equipment Replacement Programs**

In 2005, we instituted an annual equipment replacement program where we began to replace small quantities of equipment annually so that we would not be burdened with a large cost in any one year. These programs include uniforms, fire hose, station furnishings, fire equipment, radio communications, protective clothing and technological equipment. It should be noted that a majority of our workstation computers are "hand-me-downs" from other departments and are in excess of seven years old. Reducing these areas will affect our service level, firefighter safety and long-term budget impact.

### **Staffing**

I would be remiss if I did not reflect on the need for additional firefighters to staff the ladder. As you know, the National Fire Protection Association suggests the ladder trucks be staffed by a minimum of four firefighters. Currently, our ladder is only staffed with three firefighters at minimum staffing. In addition, we presently cannot assemble enough firefighters at two simultaneous structure fires to conduct interior search and fire suppression.

### **Utilities**

During an audit of facility electric charges, it was discovered that the Parks and Recreation department had been paying for the electrical service for Station No. 5 and Administration since it was opened in 2006. This expense has not been included in our department's past budgets, and therefore will significantly impact us maintaining our 2009 expenditures or the request to provide a five percent reduced budget.

### **Technology**

Information Technology has updated our licenses, maintenance and replacement accounts, indicating that we will be required to pay an additional \$53,955 over 2009 costs.

### **Summary**

In order to remain consistent with the 2009 authorized budget as directed by the City Manager's office, the department had to reduce our 2010 budget needs by \$93,043. This reduction impacts the level of service provided to the community in the following ways:

- The budget for the Smoke Alarm Campaign for at-risk residences was reduced by 50%.
- The fire hose replacement budget was reduced by 50%. Reductions in the amount of fire hose we are able to purchase increases the possibility of fire hose failure at a critical fire scene and extends the operational life beyond department standards.

- The department's technology request was reduced by 50% which will reduce department efficiencies. Many of the department's computers were "hand-me-downs" from other departments and are nearing the end of their usefulness.
- The CPR program was eliminated; public requests will be directed to the Douglas County Chapter of the American Red Cross.
- The Capital line item was reduced by approximately 40%, which includes two thermal image cameras and two mobile data computers. The elimination of these critical operational tools will reduce the department's overall efficiency.
- Other miscellaneous line items were reduced to account for the needed reductions.

We will continue to seek opportunities to overcome our challenges and look for supplemental financial assistance through regional and federal grants. Our budget requests fall within the design requirements. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss our requests as they relate to increasing our efficiency and meeting the current and new demands on the City's Fire Medical services.