

Budget Deliberations – October 18, 2018

SEATTLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Staff: Lise Kaye, Council Central Staff

Budget Summary (\$ in 1,000s)

	2018 Adopted	2019 Proposed	% Change 2018 Adopted to 2019 Proposed	2020 Proposed	% Change 2019 Proposed to 2020 Proposed
Appropriations by BSL					
<i>Fire Prevention</i>	\$9,111	\$9,982	9.55%	\$10,091	1.10%
<i>Leadership and Administration</i>	\$33,568	\$40,091	19.43%	\$39,184	(2.26%)
<i>Operations</i>	\$169,484	\$169,706	.13%	\$172,050	1.38%
Total Appropriation	\$212,164	\$219,780	3.59%	\$221,325	.70%
Total FTEs	1,158.55	1,167.05	0.73%	1,167.05	0%
Revenues					
<i>General Fund</i>	\$161,600	\$167,091	3.4%	\$150,974	(9.65%)
<i>GF – EMS Levy</i>	\$50,563	\$52,688	4.2%	\$70,351	33.52%
Total Revenues	\$212,164	\$219,779	3.59%	\$221,325	.70%

Background:

The Seattle Fire Department (SFD) provides fire protection and prevention, rescue, and emergency medical services for the City of Seattle. SFD maintains 33 fire stations within the City borders. King County voters will be asked to renew the Medic 1/Emergency Medical Services Levy in November 2019 to fund the regional Medic One/Emergency Medical Services system. The proposed 2019-2020 budget assumes renewal at \$0.27 per \$1,000 assessed value, which would generate approximately \$70.3 million in revenue for Seattle in 2020, compared to anticipated revenue of \$50.6 million 2018 and \$52.7 million in 2019. The Mayor's proposed budget for 2020 would direct these increased revenues to SFD's emergency medical services, while redirecting existing General Fund revenue to other programs, resulting in a nearly flat budget for SFD from 2019 to 2020 (as indicated in the above table showing this as a 0.7 percent increase from 2019 to 2020).

Notable proposed operating changes include the following:

- **Additional Recruit Class - \$2,355,200**

SFD has a high number of firefighter vacancies, which it attributes to retirements from an aging workforce. This funding would supplement SFD's regular spring recruit class with an additional class of 35 in 2019 and in 2020. This additional funding would also provide \$77,710 for Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Certification Training, intended to increase the diversity of the workforce.

- **Recruitment and Professional Development – 1 FTE (funding reallocation)**
SFD will add 1.0 FTE (Strategic Advisor 1) to its Human Resources work unit to identify areas of improvement in recruiting individuals from underrepresented groups and in the professional development of individuals from underrepresented groups working at SFD. The FTE will also develop strategies to improve equity and build a workforce reflective of the city’s demographics.
- **Vault Response Team - \$283,000**
Seattle City Light will provide SFD funding to train, equip, and provide premium pay for personnel who respond to and mitigate facility damage caused by fires in electrical-network vaults.

Issue Identification:

1. Workforce Equity

Council [Resolution 31588](#) supported the Mayor’s Workforce Equity Initiative (Executive Order 2015-02) and requested that the Mayor develop metrics to measure the City’s progress in implementing the Initiative, as well as provide an annual report to the Council. However, according to the July 9, 2018 [Workforce Equity Accountability Report](#), which was presented to the Council’s Gender Equity, Safe Communities, New Americans, and Education Committee on September 18, 2018, “While the changes to the testing process are intended to ensure an equitable and valid testing process, we are concerned that a lack of recruiting resources at SFD may result in a small number of diverse candidates applying to be a firefighter.” Notably, SDHR data for women and person-of-color (POC) applicants shows only a seven percent increase in POC applicants between 2013 and 2018, and only a one percent increase in female applicants over that same period.

SFD Applicants		
	Women	Persons of Color
2013	8%	25%
2015	9%	30%
2018	9%	32%

Options:

- Add 1 FTE tasked with creating a targeted recruitment team within SFD.
- Add 1 FTE tasked with removing or mitigating recruitment barriers identified in the Seattle Fire Hiring Equity Analysis Action Plan that impact one demographic group more than others.
- No action.

2. Low Acuity Response.

The SFD’s Low Acuity Alarm Program (LAAP) seeks to reduce the growth of non-emergency 9-1-1 calls by working directly with service agencies and individuals in high-use areas to better align its needs with appropriate health or social service agencies. The Council included Statement of

Legislative Intent [\(SLI\) 195-1-A-1](#) in the 2018 budget, calling for a report from SFD and SPD on building first responder partnerships with social and health service providers or other resources. During a briefing on the [SLI Response](#) to the Gender Equity, Safe Communities, New Americans, and Education Committee, SFD staff reported that 40 percent of SFD’s medical responses serve low acuity calls, which can include alcohol-related issues and mental health issues, as well as less severe injuries for which the appropriate treatment is something other than a hospital emergency room. The [SLI Response](#) described an alternative response model that provides dispatched firefighter/EMT response and an array of services, support, treatment and transportation necessary for crisis prevention, response, and stabilization.

Options:

- A. Request that the Mayor initiate a decision-making process to recommend multidisciplinary, cost-effective tools to respond to and assist low acuity E-911 callers.
- B. Identify funding to create a multidisciplinary crisis response unit in SFD to respond to and assist low acuity E-911 callers.
- C. No action

3. Special Event Staffing

SFD’s paramedic staff may volunteer to staff special events, in addition to their regular work shifts. SFD’s cost recovery for this work does not include overhead (i.e., central rate charges). In contrast, the 3.5 FTEs proposed to be added to support fire prevention and code compliance initiatives in the Fire Marshall’s office in 2019 are 100 percent fee supported, including overhead charges. SFD’s 2018 billing log (through August) shows a total of 10,314 hours billed, totaling about \$775,000, for special events staffing. In 2017, the special event billing totaled \$1,009,448. First and Goal and the Seattle Mariners together account for about 74 percent of the hours billed. Key Arena, UW Athletics, Seattle Storm and Seattle Reign together account for about 10 percent of the hours billed. Other community fairs and events, and a few corporate events, account for about 15 percent of the hours billed.

Customer	Hours Billed (Jan -Aug 2018)	Payment Received (Jan -Aug 2018)
First and Goal (Century Link Field Operator)	4,218	
Seattle Mariners	3,413	
Key Arena	601	
UW Athletics	138	
Seattle Storm	227	
Seattle Reign	114	
Other (including Bumbershoot, Fremont Solstice Fair, Bite of Seattle, Capitol Hill Block Party, Folklife, Hempfest, U District Street Fair, races, corporate events)	1,603	
Total	10,314	\$774,973

Options:

- A. Request that the Mayor implement 100% cost recovery for SFD's special event staffing.
- B. Request that SFD present Council options and a recommendation for a tiered cost recovery structure for SFD's special event staffing.
- C. No action

Budget Actions Proposed by Councilmembers as of October 10, 2018:

- 1. Low Acuity Response Team (Councilmember Bagshaw)** – Establish and fund a multi-disciplinary low acuity response team that provides individually tailored services and diversion options to people with low acuity and chronic needs.