

AGENDA ITEM REPORT

DATE: November 7, 2023
DEPARTMENT: Public Safety
REQUESTER: Benjamin Abes
TITLE: Approve Request for 22 New Positions and Two Ambulances for EMS

I. MOTION REQUESTED

- A.) Approve a mid-year position request for the Division of Emergency Medical Services to add twenty-two (22) regular, full-time positions, including twenty (20) Emergency Medical Technicians and two (2) EMS Lieutenants. Net cost (reduction in current overtime allocated to new positions) is \$400,000.
- B.) Approve adding two (2) ambulances to the annual Vehicle Replacement Fund Plan.
- C.) Authorize the Chair to execute Budget Amendments and Transfers as necessary.

II. ITEM SUMMARY

This item ratifies the Board's direction at the November 1, 2023, Workshop to improve EMS coverage and reduce over with the creation of 20 new EMT/Paramedic positions and 2 EMS Lieutenant positions. Eight of the 20 will staff two new 12-hour ambulance stations in Cape Coral and East Fort Myers. The remaining 12 positions are relief staffing to reduce overtime burdens on staff. The net cost of funding the permanent positions and reducing overtime is \$400,000. Two additional ambulances in the amount of \$700,000 will be added to the annual Vehicle Replacement Fund plan, although a separate Board item will be prepared to authorize the purchase of the vehicles.

III. BACKGROUND AND IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A) Board Action and Other History

At the Board's Strategic Workshop on November 1, 2023, direction was provided to staff to prepare an Agenda Item to address overtime use, reinvesting overtime expense into additional funded positions, and the opening of two EMS stations planned for FY22/23.

The two EMS stations will be at Cape Coral Fire Station 12, 2129 Chiquita Blvd S, Cape Coral, FL 33991; and Fort Myers Shores Fire Station 82, 2404 River Hall Pkwy, Alva, FL 33905. Cape Coral has temporarily granted EMS authorization to use the station while an amendment to the lease agreement is finalized. This amendment and a new agreement with Fort Myers Shores Fire District will be brought to the Board for ratification, and the cost will be absorbed in the Department's annual budget.

In Fiscal Year 22/23, EMS experienced call volume growth of over 8 percent, adjusted for the impacts of Hurricane Ian in October 2022. In 2022, sick leave use increased by 13 percent and vacation leave use increased by 40 percent, which has caused a proportional increase in overtime.

Currently, two ambulances are being operated using personnel on overtime to meet response time standards in Lee County Ordinance 08-16. Eight positions, plus 12 positions to address overtime staffing for sick and vacation leave, will be a near direct offset with the overtime expense being incurred against the Department's budget.

Two EMS supervisor positions are requested to assist with the supervision of new staff and the Department's expanding core service areas in Cape Coral and East Fort Myers.

Finally, to ensure vehicles are available for the service expansion, the Vehicle Replacement Fund will add two ambulances to the EMS fleet. This cost is estimated at \$700,000, and a future Agenda Item will be brought forward for the purchase when it is available from Fleet.

B) Policy Issues

C) Back Costs

C) BCCC Goals

D) Analysis

E) Options

IV. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

A)	Current year dollar amount of item:	\$400,000
B)	Is this item approved in the current budget?	No
C)	Is this a revenue or expense item?	Expense
D)	Is this Discretionary or Mandatory?	Discretionary
E)	Will this item impact future budgets? If yes, please include reasons in III(D) above.	Yes
F)	Fund: General Fund Program: Project: Account Strings: KF5260100100	
G)	Fund Type?	General Fund
H)	Comments:	

V. RECOMMENDATION

Approve

VI. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

VII. FOLLOW UP