



---

---

**MEMORANDUM**

---

---

**TO:** CITY COUNCIL  
**FROM:** BILL HEWETT, FIRE CHIEF  
**CC:** MAYOR LUND  
**SUBJECT:** BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR 2023-2024 BUDGET  
**DATE:** OCTOBER 21, 2024

---

Throughout 2023 and 2024 the Fire Department continued to struggle to reach full staffing levels. While we have continued to hire and train personnel as quickly as we can, our attrition rate continues to be high (24 people this biennium), and our sick leave rate has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. This has led to approximately \$3 million in overtime that was unbudgeted. We have also experienced higher than budgeted salary costs due to the use of training pool positions (trying to pre-hire to keep up with the attrition) and both the increased wages and overtime have led to higher than budgeted costs for benefits.

While these personnel costs make up the bulk of the need for the budget amendment, we have also had approximately \$500,000 higher than anticipated fleet costs and approximately \$100,000 under budgeted for fuel costs.

Looking forward to 2025, we do expect to start 2025 at a full staffing level in operations. We also anticipate only having one recruit academy with fewer recruits than our recent academies. This will reduce some of our training overtime costs as well as the costs associated with the hiring and onboarding processes.