THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: June 22, 2021

Subject: Assistance to Firefighters Grant for Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Compressors

Staff Resource(s): Scott Burnette, Asheville Fire Chief; Abigail Riley, Financial Business Manager

Action Requested: Adoption of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for and if awarded accept the Assistance to Firefighters Grant of $130,910.

Background:

- The primary focus of FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant program is to provide assistance in funding for firefighting safety and protective equipment that can reduce the risk of exposure to cancer-causing carcinogens.
- AFD was successful in its last request for $36,000 to fund four sets of personal protective equipment washers and dryers.
- The goal of the current request is to increase the safety and health of our firefighters by increasing the accessibility of breathing air compressors within the Asheville Fire Department.
- The Department requested funds to purchase two SCBA air compressors.
- This equipment would be utilized to support the department's Air Management and Cancer Prevention Policies.
- Due to the prevalence of carcinogenic materials being emitted throughout the duration of a firefighting operation, the department's Cancer Prevention Policy requires SCBA usage at all fires for a minimum of 90 minutes after air monitoring indicates a clear environment in a fire occupancy.
- This policy has significantly increased the usage of breathing air at all of our fires while creating a safer work environment for our firefighters.
- AFD assigns approximately 40 members to every working fire incident.
- To fill bottles for these members, AFD relies upon neighboring fire departments that support a countywide air unit which responds to the incident scene.
- This unit is reliable, but there are times where it is unavailable due to being used by one of the other 21 Buncombe County fire departments or being serviced.
- The additional air compressors would allow greater accessibility to air refill by firefighters.
- This request also supports the SCUBA program which is one of two within the western region of North Carolina and the AFD Hazardous Materials Team which is contracted by NC Emergency Management as a regional resource for the 18 western NC counties.
- The overall request for funding via FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant is to increase the safety for all members by providing increased access to breathing air compressors to support the increased usage of SCBA on firegrounds for firefighter safety.

Council Goal(s):

- Smart City

Committee(s):

- Public Safety Committee - June 22, 2021

Pro(s):

- Firefighter safety would be increased significantly

Con(s):

- The City's one time match would be $13,091

Fiscal Impact:

- Requires a 10% local match.
- The grant amount, if awarded, would be $130,910.
- One time local match would be $13,091
- Asheville Fire Department could absorb this match in its operating funds (from the General Fund) in Fiscal Year 2021-22.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply for and if awarded accept grant funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant.

Attachment(s)

- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 21-_____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY FOR AND IF AWARDED ACCEPT GRANT FUNDS FROM THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY FOR THE ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT

WHEREAS, the City has the authority pursuant to N.C.S.G. 160A-17 to apply for and receive grants from the Federal Government and to enter into contracts with said grants; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), has issued guidelines for the FY 2021 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG); and

WHEREAS, the Asheville Fire Department wishes to apply for the Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) in an amount of $130,091 for the purchase of equipment, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City Manager is hereby authorized to apply for and, if awarded, accept, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Assistance to Firefighters Grant.

Read, approved and adopted this 22nd day of June, 2021.

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City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to form:

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City Attorney