

AGENDA REPORT

DATE March 15, 2005

ITEM: Great Falls Fire Rescue Service Fee Increases

INITIATED BY: RANDY MCCAMLEY, FIRE CHIEF

ACTION REQUESTED: APPROVE FIRE SERVICE FEE CHANGES

PRESENTED BY: RANDY MCCAMLEY, FIRE CHIEF

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Commission approves the Great Falls Fire Rescue Service revised Fee schedule.

MOTION:

“I move the City Commission approve the revised Great Falls Fire Rescue Fee Schedule as submitted.

SYNOPSIS:

It has been two years since the service fees have been revised for Great Falls Fire Rescue. The cost of equipment and apparatus maintenance has steadily increased while the fire service fees have not commensurately increased. This action will bring these service fees more in line with the associated costs to run them.

The revisions to the fee schedule will increase general fund revenue approximately \$6,400.00. This figure is based on FY 2003/04 fire service revenues and the commensurate fee increases.

BACKGROUND:

As noted on the Fee schedule the use of equipment and services in most cases has increased. The GFFR Staff examined the actual cost, analyzed fair local market value through cost comparison and analyzed the actual cost to the department. After gathering this information revisions to the May 2003 were made based on the findings.

Three new fire engines were put into service this year. They were equipped with state of the art compressed air foam systems that quickly knock down fires, suppress flammable vapors and more effectively protect other structures from fire exposure. That technology must be compensated for through increased service fees.

Also, GFFR staffs and equips Advanced Life Support (ALS) engines, which in the revised fee scheduled has been identified with a commensurate charge assigned. This compensates for the additional costs of ALS tools and equipment.

The equipment and extinguisher maintenance and inspection fee schedules have all increased because of the increased cost of supplies and staffing hours. We were under charging for extinguisher testing and servicing, self contained breathing apparatus testing, and the testing of ladders and hose. The revisions would bring these fees more in-line with local market value.

Significant improvements have been made at the Great Falls Fire Training Center. There has been new video and audio equipment installed. Additionally, new floors, cupboards, sinks and paint have significantly improved the functionality of this facility. The market value for this facility can not be compared since it is the only one of its kind in the area. The staff did compare local hotel conference and meeting rooms of comparable size.

Finally, Great Falls Fire Rescue has not been in offering these services to make money. These modest fees help us continue these worth while services. Additionally, a fee schedule must be in place for billing purposes for permissible expenses incurred at emergencies.