



City of Killeen

Legislation Text

File #: OR-16-022A, Version: 1

Consider an ordinance to amend the Fire Department Classification Plan and Rank Structure.

AGENDA ITEM

Amend the Fire Department Classification Plan and Rank Structure

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT

Fire Department

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On August 13, 1977, the voters of Killeen adopted the civil service law for the police and fire departments of the City of Killeen. State law required that the City Council, upon the recommendation of the Civil Service Commission, adopt a classification plan for each department. The classification plans set forth the positions within the departments by classification (known commonly as rank) and by authorized number in each classification. Ordinance No 77-58 established the City's first classification plan for the police and fire departments.

In 1994, the Killeen City Council passed resolution #94-29R that changed the structure of the Killeen Fire Department. The then-current classification plan and pay grade resulted in a bottleneck in the promotional plan at the position of Fire Prevention Officer (FPO) for two reasons: (1) the pay of the rank of FPO was between the Lieutenants (now Captains) and FRO rank and (2) there were a limited number of authorized positions in the FPO rank. To eliminate this bottleneck, separate career ladders for members of the Fire Prevention and Suppression Divisions were established. Under this change, there is one entry level classification of Fire Rescue Officer (FRO). From that position, a choice is exercised by the individual officer as to whether he/she would prefer advancement into Fire Suppression or Fire Prevention. Under this structure, Fire Prevention essentially becomes a limited career ladder because the only career opportunity above it is the sole position of Fire Marshal.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

Today, the two issues that created the bottleneck in the promotional system no longer exist. First, the issue of pay has been resolved; the pay of the FPO rank is equal to the pay of the Captain rank, thus making the FPO and Captain equal on the career ladder under civil service law. The issue of authorized positions still exists with the number of authorized positions at three (3) FPOs; however, allowing the FPO classification to be merged with the Captain classification will allow for the lateral transfer of the FPOs to the Captain rank and would eliminate this issue.

The Fire Chief is requesting that the City Council eliminate the two-career-ladder promotional system by merging the separate career ladders in the Fire Department into one, creating a seamless promotional

progression through the Fire Department rank structure. This can be accomplished by: (1) merging the Fire Marshal classification with the current Deputy Chief classification, as the two positions are already equal in pay; (2) merging the Fire Prevention Officer classification with the Captain classification as they are already equal in pay; (3) assigning a Deputy Chief to the Fire Marshal's Office as an assignment; and (4) assigning three (3) Captains to the Fire Marshal's Office as an assignment. This internal restructuring does not involve any changes in existing staffing salaries or duties.

This action does not create any new classifications, nor does it create any new positions in any existing classifications. The intent of merging is to transfer positions from one classification to another within the same grade level; this action does not constitute a promotion or demotion of a person occupying any position affected.

These changes will allow the Fire Department FROs to promote to Captain, Captains to promote to Battalion Chiefs, and Battalion Chiefs to promote to Deputy Chief, and allow all personnel equal opportunity to progress through the Fire Department career ladder. All Fire Marshal's Office personnel will be assigned by the Fire Chief to their duties in the Fire Marshal's Office.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impact to the City of Killeen will be the cost of badges and insignia for the classification changes. The impact will be more than offset by the elimination of the \$3,500 to \$7,800 expense for each FPO and Fire Marshal test when there is a vacancy in that rank. This internal restructuring does not involve any changes in existing staffing salaries or duties. The cost of the badges and insignia will be covered by the current FY 17 Fire Department budget, not causing the budget cap to be exceeded.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the changes to the Fire Department structure by changing the Fire Department to a single career ladder.