



STAFF REPORT

DATE: February 19, 2019
REGULAR

TO: City Council

FROM: Greg Malmquist, Fire Chief

AGENDA ITEM: Approval of the expansion of the Paid on Call Duty Crews to include weekends.

REVIEWED BY: Kristina Handt, City Administrator

BACKGROUND:

This proposed staffing change addresses the Responder shortage we are experiencing Friday evenings through Monday am. This proposal is directed at the time not covered by our PT FF's, but rather when we rely on our POC (Paid on Call) personnel only. Due to our low number of POC's, 16 + Chief, staffing continues to be our biggest challenge. In recent months we have experienced an increase in emergency calls where we either had a delayed response, had only one Responder or were unable to respond at all and relied on Mutual Aid.

The Officers of the dept. have discussed this at great length and are proposing a solution we feel will help us in the short term and will hopefully have an immediate impact. This proposal has been presented to the personnel of the department with favorable feedback. This weekend proposal is strictly on a voluntary basis. We are optimistic that it will also help with the retention of our current POC FF's by offering an alternate means for them to meet their obligation for response percentages. We also believe this will encourage our Officers to sign up for shifts, thus increasing the chance of an Officer responding as we now handle weekends on a voluntary, if available manner.

Given our current staffing levels, we believe this is a good option to help improve our response.

ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL:

Should the Council approve the expansion of POC Duty Crews to include weekends?

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

Staff is recommending the Council approve this action to allow staff to implement this change.

Upon approval, staff will implement the change, by presenting the information, in detail, to the dept. as well as the process to sign up for shifts.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Projected cost of \$13,404.48 is made with the assumption that all shifts are filled.

OPTIONS:

- 1) Approval of the expansion of the Paid on Call Duty Crews to include weekends.
- 2) Do not approve.

RECOMMENDATION:

Motion to "Approve the expansion of the Paid on Call Duty Crews to include weekends".

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Stand alone proposal
2. Revised Policy 03-204, DUTY CREWS/SHIFTS (revisions highlighted)
3. Cost analysis

WEEKEND STAFFING PROPOSAL

POC personnel can sign up for available shifts on the weekends, maximum of two personnel, signed up per shift. Personnel would not be required to be at the stations during shift, but rather be available per the same requirements as stated in Policy #03-204 DUTY CREW/SHIFTS. One Duty Officer per shift would be eligible to sign up as well, and would be compensated in the same manner. The Duty Officer may or may not respond in the Duty Vehicle.

Shifts are 6 hours in duration and are as follows:

- Friday evening from 1800 – 2400 hrs., (midnight)
- Saturday 0000 – 0600 am, 1800 – 2400 hrs., (midnight)
- Sunday 0000 – 0600 am, 1800 – 2400 hrs., (midnight)
- Monday 0000 – 0600 am

For each FULL 6 hour shift covered, POC personnel would be compensated at the current rate as specified in Policy #03-103 COMPENSATION, and under DUTY CREW/STANDBY PAY and would earn one Call Credit. In the event that they are unable to cover a complete 6 hour shift, they would receive the per hour compensation, but would NOT earn a Call Credit.

Because this coverage period is paged as All Call, additional POC personnel will be expected to respond and would receive normal compensation. POC personnel providing voluntary shift coverage would also receive the normal compensation for responding.

Personnel would need to sign up for shifts on IAMRESPONDING on a first come basis. Shift Sign Up will be on a weekly basis. Sign up for shifts will open on Monday at 1800 hrs. for the following weekend only. This schedule will repeat every week.

When signed up for a shift, all additional department requirements such as, but not limited to, “zero tolerance”, “response requirements”, etc., as specified in department and City Policies and Guidelines are to be followed.



LAKE ELMO FIRE DEPARTMENT POLICY



POLICY #03-204	TITLE: DUTY CREWS/SHIFTS	
		2/1/19
CITY ADMINISTRATOR	FIRE CHIEF	DATE

GENERAL:

1. Duty Crews will be classified as follows:

DAYTIME DUTY CREW - Saturday - Friday, 0600 - 1800 hrs.

NIGHTTIME DUTY CREW - Monday - Thursday, 2200-0500 hrs. (ending Friday AM)

WEEKEND DUTY CREW - Shifts are 6 hours in duration and are as follows:

Friday evening from	1800 - 2400 hrs., (midnight)
Saturday 0000 - 0600 am,	1800 - 2400 hrs., (midnight)
Sunday 0000 - 0600 am,	1800 - 2400 hrs., (midnight)
Monday 0000 - 0600 am	

2. No Duty Crews will be scheduled on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday	3 rd Monday in January
President's Day	3 rd Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4 th
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Columbus Day	Second Monday in October
Veteran's Day	November 11 th
Thanksgiving Day	4 th Thursday in November
Friday after Thanksgiving	4 th Friday in November
Christmas Eve	December 24 th
Christmas Day	December 25 th

(Only shifts that START on the Holiday will be cancelled) All events will be toned as ALL CALLS on these days.

3. Paging/Compensation During Duty Crew Shifts:

- Monday - Friday Daytime Duty Crew - Duty Tone - Covered by Part Time Shifts
- Monday - Thursday Nighttime Duty Crew - Duty Tone - No Credit, Pay Only
- Weekend Duty Crew - All Call Paging, All available personnel respond, Credit and Pay.
- All Call Tone - All available personnel respond. Credit and Pay.

For the purpose of paging, the following criteria will be used to determine the proper page. The call types listed below are designated as ALL CALL, all other responses will be categorized as DUTY CREW. The OIC/Duty Officer has the ability to request an ALL CALL at any time. In the event of an incorrectly paged event due to a Dispatcher error, this ALL CALL will be a non-credit, pay only event.

- Report of Any Fire whether confirmed or not. This does not include fire alarms.
 - All accidents (MVA, 10-52's) that are paged as requiring extrication.
 - Tones paged out as an "All Call".
 - Mutual Aid
4. The Lake Elmo Fire Department maintains a "zero tolerance" regarding the use of alcohol and/or drugs by personnel assigned to a duty crew/shift. (See Alcohol and Drug Policy)
 5. Duty Crews will respond in the appropriate vehicles (see Incident Response SOG).
 6. POC personnel providing shift coverage "not in the station"

SPECIFIC TO EACH:1. Daytime Duty Crew - Saturday - Friday, 0600 - 1800 hrs.

A. Primary Staffing by PT FF's (Part Time Firefighter's) with Substitute Firefighters filling open shifts.

B. Only POC personnel designated as "Daytime Responders" will be required to sign up for a daytime Duty Crew shift and be required to respond to all calls during their shift.

C. Paging Monday - Friday, 0800 - 1630 is Duty Page, all other shift time is All Call Paging.

2. Nighttime Duty Crews Monday - Thursday.
 - A. All qualified Paid on Call personnel will be assigned to a duty crew.
 - B. Paid on Call shift coverage: If for any reason a member is not able to cover their assigned shift, it will be their responsibility to get another qualified employee to cover their shift. It shall also be the responsibility of the original crew member to notify the Duty Crew Officer in charge of their crew of the change and who the replacement will be. The member making the change must also complete a Duty Crew Change Form and place the form in the mailbox of the Officer in Charge (OIC) of overseeing the Duty Crews. Traded shifts will not be spaced more than 30 days apart.
 - C. In case of illness the OIC of that shift shall be notified as soon as possible in order to permit a replacement to be found. Notification must be made no later than 2 hours prior to the beginning of the shift. In the event a member is unable to complete a shift due to illness, the member must make up the shift within a 30 day time period of the missed shift. The member must also complete a Duty Crew Change Form noting the date of the missed shift due to illness and also noting in advance the date of the make-up shift and place the form in the mailbox of the Officer in Charge (OIC) of overseeing the Duty Crews.
 - D. Open duty crew shifts will be posted at each station, and can be picked up by any qualified member of the department with priority given to personnel who normally respond to the station where the open shift exists.
 - E. No Show/No Call, two unexcused absences within a 12 month rolling calendar, may be grounds for dismissal. 12 month rolling calendar will roll backwards from last instance. A member who has an unexcused absence must do the following;
 1. The member must provide a written explanation of why they missed the call and submit the explanation to the Officer in Charge of overseeing the duty crews within 24 hours of the missed shift. The Duty Crew OIC of the member who missed the call must notify the Officer in Charge of the Duty Crews about the missed call.

2. The member who missed the call must make up the call within 30 days of the missed call. In the event a member misses a call close to the end of the year, the member should try to make up the call prior to the end of the year rather than waiting 30 days. The member missing the call must complete a Duty Crew Change form noting in advance when the make up date will be completed and place the form in the mailbox of the Officer in Charge of overseeing the Duty Crews.

Failure to comply with the above could result in disciplinary action.

- F. Failure by a department member to maintain a 100% duty crew percentage at the end of the year could result in disciplinary action or affect the member's good standing with the department.
 - G. A member making up a call due to illness or unexcused absence doesn't have to switch with a member in order to make a shift up. The member can be an addition to a shift in order to make up the missed shift.
 - H. Personnel unable to cover their scheduled shifts due to work conflicts, will be required to fill a scheduled shift during daytime hours. The number of hours scheduled will not exceed those required. This schedule will be set up on a case by case basis, and will be approved by the Chief.
3. Weekend Duty Crews
 - A. POC personnel can sign up for available shifts on the weekends, maximum of two personnel, signed up per shift. Personnel would not be required to be at the stations during shift, but rather be available per the same requirements as stated in Policy #03-204 DUTY CREW/SHIFTS. One Duty Officer per shift would be eligible to sign up as well, and would be compensated in the same manner. The Duty Officer may or may not respond in the Duty Vehicle.
 - B. For each FULL 6 hour shift covered, POC personnel would be compensated at the current rate as specified in Policy #03-103 COMPENSATION, and under DUTY CREW/STANDBY PAY and in addition would earn one Call Credit. In the event that they are unable to cover a complete 6 hour shift, they would receive the per hour compensation, but would NOT earn a Call Credit. They must also meet the response and availability requirements of this Policy.

- C. Because this coverage period is paged as All Call, additional POC personnel will be expected to respond and would receive normal compensation. POC personnel providing voluntary shift coverage would also receive the normal compensation for responding.
- D. Personnel would need to sign up for shifts on IAMRESPONDING on a first come basis. Shift Sign Up will be on a weekly basis. Sign up for shifts will open on Monday at 1800 hrs. for the following weekend only. This schedule will repeat every week.
- E. When signed up for a shift, all additional department requirements such as, but not limited to, "zero tolerance", "response requirements", etc., as specified in department and City Policies and Guidelines are to be followed.

DUTY CREW/SHIFT RESPONSES:

- ~~Paging criteria will be the same for all Duty Crews/Shifts.~~
- Assigned Duty Crew/Shift personnel will respond to all calls during their shift.
- All Non Duty Crew/Shift personnel shall respond to ALL CALLS only.
- The Duty Crews/Shifts will be staffed as follows:
 - Daytime/Weekend will be two PT FF's and/or Substitute FF's personnel in the station and Duty Officer if available.
 - Nighttime will minimally consist of a Duty Officer (see Duty Officer SOG) and two additional personnel from one station with no more than 2 from each station, for a maximum total of five personnel.

COST ANALYSIS FOR WEEKEND VOLUNTARY DUTY CREWS

COSTS

This is assuming every shift is filled.

Based on current rate of \$2.28/hr.

6 hour shifts = \$13.68/shift/person.

Maximum of 3 personnel (2-Firefighters and 1-Duty Officer) per shift = \$41.04

6 shifts per weekend = \$246.24

Annual cost of \$12,804.48

Payroll taxes \$600.00

Total \$13,404.48

REDUCED STAFFING COSTS

Due to low POC staffing levels, we reduced our weeknight staffing from 4-Firefighters to 2 to ensure coverage every night. This was implemented in late October. While our goal of 5 personnel on weeknight's remains, during this time of reduced staffing, we are experiencing a savings in staffing costs.

2 Firefighters x \$2.28/hr. x 7 hr. shift = \$31.92/shift

\$31.92/shift x 4 nights/week = \$127.68/week

Approximate 14 week savings to date of \$1,787.52

These figures are based on our current staffing and assuming all future weekend shifts are fully staffed.