

INDIAN WELLS CITY COUNCIL

June 20, 2024



To: City Council
From: City Manager's Department
Prepared by: Kristen Nelson, Senior Management Analyst
Subject: **Five-Year Fire Services Agreement with Riverside County Fire Department**

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

Council **APPROVES** Five-year Cooperative Agreement with Riverside County Fire Department to provide fire protection, fire prevention, rescue, and medical emergency services for the City of Indian Wells from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2029; and

AUTHORIZES and **DIRECTS** the Mayor to execute Agreement for same; and

FINDS the action exempt from CEQA review under CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3).

DISCUSSION:

The City contracts with Riverside County Fire Department for fire protection and emergency medical services for a three-year period, expiring on June 30, 2024. This service is provided by the State of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire). Staff is presenting a Five-year contract extension beginning July 1, 2024 and ending on June 30, 2029.

The new Agreement reflects the current staffing levels that CalFire provides the City of Indian Wells, including: Fire Captains, Engineers, and Firefighter II Paramedics. This is consistent with the City Council's support to provide the Advanced Life Support (ALS) Fire Engine, ALS ambulance, and Fire Marshall services, and includes all support positions to service Fire services in the City. In 2019, the City upgraded the Fire Engine to ALS level of service. This added the Paramedic to the Engine with the capability of administering life-saving medications. This significantly increased the level of service the City receives by enabling the Engine to immediately provide treatment to a patient when a rescue ambulance is not immediately available.

From July 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024, the Fire Department has responded to a total of 1,072 calls for service. This includes:

- Medical: 770
- False Alarms: 169
- Public Service Assists: 64
- Traffic Collisions: 69

The Public Safety Committee is currently discussing a possible enhancement to commercial fire inspection services. This would provide additional inspections for businesses in the City to ensure compliance with the State Fire Code. This enhancement is currently not in the attached agreement. Once the Public Safety Committee has a recommendation, it would then come to the City Council for discussion and direction.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The projected cost for Contract Fire Services for the fiscal year 2024-25 is estimated at \$4,610,000, reflecting an approximate 1.3% increase from the previous year. This rise is primarily attributed to inflationary pressures. Historically, budget allocations for CalFire services have anticipated a 5% increase, aligning with the City's 10-year Forecast, last updated in February 2024.

Beyond the Contract Fire Services, Indian Wells is part of a collaborative agreement with the cities of Palm Desert and Rancho Mirage (the Cove Cities) for ladder truck services. The City's annual contribution to this shared service is approximately \$630,000. Additionally, administrative services, which include allocated labor, utilities, maintenance, insurance expenses, and the Cove Cities partnership for the Emergency Response Manager, amount to \$640,000 annually. The City is also slated to remount Medic Unit 55 this year, with an associated cost of \$400,000. Consequently, the total expenditure for Fire Services is projected to be \$6,280,000.

Revenues to cover these Fire Service costs are sourced from the Fire Services Fund. For the fiscal year 2024-25, the City anticipates generating \$6,523,000 in total revenues. This includes \$5,143,000 from County Fire Tax credits, \$610,000 from special assessments, \$120,000 from interest income, and \$650,000 from ambulance billing fees.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA):

The action is not a project within the meaning of Section 15378 of the State of California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") Guidelines, because it has no potential for resulting in physical change in the environment, directly or indirectly; and that the action is nonetheless exempt from the requirements of CEQA in that the activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. (15061(b)(3).)

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Cooperative Agreement