



Fire Department

William Wentlandt
Chief
Mark A. Sain
Assistant Chief

TO: News Media
FROM: Office of the Chief
DATE: September 23, 2004
RE: *Mayor Barrett's 2005 Proposed Budget*

The 2005 Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) budget, as proposed by Mayor Barrett, will decrease fire suppression and emergency medical service personnel by 18 positions. These reductions in staffing eliminate the department's ability to continue basic life support (BLS) transports, and further reduces staffing on companies, which will challenge our ability to support public safety education, special team response, and critical training needs of personnel.

By reducing personnel, this budget will minimize opportunities to maintain value-added programs previously implemented in our community, including recruitment efforts, community outreach, and special operations services.

The proposed reductions limit the department's response capabilities when a major incident occurs. It is critical to the safety of our personnel and the citizens of this city that the MFD is able to respond quickly and with an appropriate level of resource. The proposed staffing reductions will challenge our ability to meet this directive.

While the Milwaukee Fire Department understands the challenging financial times that the City is facing, we concur with Mayor Barrett that public safety is the primary budgetary need of our community, and should be supported to maintain a safe and healthy city.

We look forward to working with the Common Council and Mayor's Office to openly discuss the public safety impacts of this budget.

WW/SJR/jb

FILE NAME: CITY BUDGET 2005

PAY RATES BATTALION CHIEF
PAY RANGE 863

RECRUITMENT AT STEP 4

| | ANNUAL | | 2003 AVERAGE ANNUAL |
|----------|----------|----------|---------------------------|
| STEP 4 | STEP 5 | STEP 6 | |
| 71150.56 | 73972.86 | 76904.88 | 74009.43 |

REDUCTION OF 10 BATTALION CHIEFS \$740,094

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| PAID OF DAYS PER CHIEF/YEAR | 13 |
| VACATION DAYS PER YEAR | 10 |
| SICK DAYS PER YEAR | <u>1</u> |
| TOTAL DAYS OFF/CHIEF/YEAR | <u>24</u> |

REDUCTION OF 10 CHIEFS DAYS SAVINGS
240 DAYS PAY

| | BIWEEKLY | | |
|---------------------|----------|---------|---------|
| STEP 4 | STEP 5 | STEP 6 | |
| 2736.56 | 2845.11 | 2957.88 | 2846.52 |
| | | | 99.6 |
| AVERAGE HOURLY RATE | | | 28.58 |
| AVERAGE DAILY RATE | | | 685.91 |

TIMES 240 DAYS \$164,618

TOTAL SAVINGS \$904,712

SAVINGS WILL FUND

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----|------------------|--------|
| FIREFIGHTERS | 18 | \$711,971 | |
| SPECIAL DUTY (22DAYS) | | <u>\$192,741</u> | 486.72 |
| | | <u>\$904,712</u> | |

FILE NAME: ESTIMATED 2003 MANAGEMENT OVERTIME

PAY RATES DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF
PAY RANGE 865

RECRUITMENT AT STEP 4

| STEP 4 | BIWEEKLY STEP 5 | STEP 6 | 2003 AVERAGE BIWEEKLY | DAILY RATE |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 3075.23 | 3197.23 | 3324.11 | 3198.86 | \$770.81 |
| PAID OF DAYS PER CHIEF/YEAR | | | 13 | |
| VACATION DAYS PER YEAR | | | 12 | |
| SICK DAYS PER YEAR | | | <u>1</u> | |
| TOTAL DAYS OFF/DEPUTY/YEAR | | | <u>26</u> | ANNUAL O.T. COST |
| TOTAL DAYS FOR 3 POSITIONS | | | 78 | \$60,123.09 |

PAY RATES BATTALION CHIEF
PAY RANGE 863

RECRUITMENT AT STEP 4

| STEP 4 | BIWEEKLY STEP 5 | STEP 6 | 2003 AVERAGE BIWEEKLY | DAILY RATE |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 2736.56 | 2845.11 | 2957.88 | 2846.52 | \$685.91 |
| PAID OF DAYS PER CHIEF/YEAR | | | 13 | |
| VACATION DAYS PER YEAR | | | 12 | |
| SICK DAYS PER YEAR | | | <u>1</u> | |
| TOTAL DAYS OFF/CHIEF/YEAR | | | <u>26</u> | ANNUAL COST |
| TOTAL DAYS FOR 18 POSITIONS | | | 468 | \$321,004.77 |

TOTAL COST FOR OVERTIME AND RELIEF CHIEFS

\$381,128

not be construed as being part of the employe's base salary and shall not be included in the computation of any fringe benefits. The lump-sum payment shall not have any sum deducted for pension benefits nor shall it be included in any computation establishing pension benefits or payments. When authorized by the fire department administration, an employe may elect to carry over into the next succeeding calendar year any remaining unused holiday off time that the fire department administration was unable to reschedule by the end of the calendar year, instead of the lump-sum payment provided for above. The scheduling of carried-over holiday off time shall be subject to availability of the dates requested by the employe, require prior approval by the employe's supervisor and in no way affect the scheduling of other employe holiday off time. The provisions of this subsection shall become effective on January 1, 1984, for holiday time occurring on or after that date. Prior to that date, existing departmental practices shall apply.

350-147. Fire Company and Battalion Staffing.

1. **DEPUTY CHIEF STAFFING IN THE FIREFIGHTING SERVICE DIVISION.** When the chief engineer, fire, determines that there is an operational deficiency in the normal on-duty staffing for deputy chief, fire, in the firefighting service division command on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday, he or she may assign a deputy chief, fire, from any bureau to fill the vacancy. Compensation for such assignment shall be at the employe's base rate of pay.

2. **BATTALION CHIEF STAFFING.** When the fire chief determines that there is an operational deficiency in the normal on-duty staffing for battalion chief exceeding 2 positions, the first such assignment shall be underfilled by a captain, the 2nd assignment to be filled by a battalion chief and the 3rd assignment underfilled by a captain. These assignments are only as designated, assigned or authorized by the fire chief. Compensation for such assignment shall be at the employes' base rate of pay.

3. **ASSISTANT CHIEF DISPATCHER OF FIRE ALARM AND TELEGRAPH.** When the chief engineer, fire, determines that there is an operational deficiency in the normal on-duty staffing for assistant chief dispatcher of fire alarm and telegraph, he shall correct such deficiency as follows:

a. If less than 5 personnel are available for duty, by assigning an off-duty assistant chief dispatcher of fire alarm and telegraph.

b. If 5 or more personnel are available for duty by an assignment for no more than one work shift from the ranks of fire alarm dispatcher. Such an assignment shall be made from the current eligible list or, if no such list exists, from the most recently expired eligible list for assistant chief dispatcher of fire alarm and telegraph. If such an assignment cannot be made from either list, it shall be made from fire alarm dispatchers who have requested such assignment in the order of their seniority in the fire department. Compensation for such assignment shall be at the fire alarm dispatcher's next higher increment, provided that the fire alarm dispatcher so assigned serves for a full work shift.

4. **PAYMENTS.** Any payments earned under the provisions of this section shall not be considered in computing pension or other employe benefits. Members of the department on trade shall not be eligible for such assignment; except that the chief or a designee may permit an employe on trade to perform such an assignment when the chief deems it appropriate.

5. **ADMINISTRATION.** Administration and control of the provisions of this section shall be under the chief engineer, fire, who may, as he sees fit, in an emergency situation, suspend these provisions.

6. **EFFECTIVE DATE.** The terms and conditions set forth in subs. 1 to 5 shall be deemed to take effect and be in force from and after December 30, 1973.

350-149. Fire Department: Educational Program. 1. POSITIONS ELIGIBLE. Employees in active service and in the following position

classifications shall be eligible for annual educational program payments provided under this section in accordance with the terms and conditions established, as long as they are in active service and in such classifications:

- a. Chief dispatcher of fire alarm and telegraph.
- b. Battalion chief classifications.
- c. Deputy chief, fire.
- d. First assistant chief engineer.
- e. Fire chief.



FROM INANE TO INSANE, COAST TO COAST

Editor's Opinion

BY BILL MANNING

The wildfire season has begun in the western United States, and it's evident that at least one of the critical lessons from last year's catastrophic fires in the Southern California wildland-interface has yet to be learned, or employed. The Associated Press reported that, as the fires in Lincoln National Forest grew to 25,000 acres, the U.S. Forest Service failed to deploy C-130 air tankers for fire retardant drops. New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson said, "I was shocked to be told this fire could have been held to a single acre if the heavy air tankers had been available at the beginning." Of course, the major issue here is not that the fire burned 12 summer cabins in the mountains, or even that it burned so many acres of forest, but that 300 firefighters were put at risk unnecessarily. There continues to be a major disconnect between operational forces on the ground and the bureaucracies entrusted with supporting those forces.

...While fire chiefs and city management in some cities, including Houston, San Diego, and Nashville, for example, have worked hard to maintain or even increase fire department life safety services within the concept of an integrated "all hazards" response matrix, other towns and cities have not fared as well. In Milwaukee, the fire chief himself proposed staffing cuts. Smaller towns such as Royal Oak, Michigan, which plans to cut firefighters, are the norm rather than the exception. Berkeley, California, is taking the well-worn company and station closure route. Oakland fire staffing has been slashed. The firefighter staffing tribulations in Florida, from Miami to Fort Lauderdale and beyond, have grown to almost fabled proportions. The Buffalo (NY) Fire Department, which has been beaten up over the past decade with staffing cuts, will now endure losing chief positions in lieu of further cuts to line personnel. Its fire prevention bureau is a shell; but don't worry, says the mayor of this city of 300,000, a battalion chief and a lieutenant will be retained to conduct plan review. In March, in Mt. Healthy, Ohio, a Cincinnati suburb, the fire chief and two of his officers resigned over the city council's demands that firefighters' hours be cut to keep the public swimming pool open seven days a week. In Cincinnati itself, the flashover simulator purchased with FIRE Act grant money sat unused for months because the department didn't have enough training staff to operate it and train their firefighters. Philadelphia Mayor John Street has introduced a slash-and-burn fire department budget plan, calling for reducing staffing by 216 members (nine percent of current firefighting strength), the closure of seven of the department's 29 truck companies and four of its engine companies, and the reduction of truck company staffing from five to four. With quints (read: further staffing cuts) to follow. It's another sad case of lack of leadership combined with the inability to market the mission and deter public officials from using the bogus "structure fires are down" excuse to camouflage their own fiscal ineptitude and lack of creativity.

...Eleven companies of the San Bernadino (CA) Fire Department have been outfitted with new first-aid kits—not for firefighters or citizens, but for pets. The animal first-aid kits include oxygen masks for cats and dogs, and firefighters have received animal first-aid training. Maybe we should add a new "pet rescue" component to the FDIC hands-on training evolutions.

...In a time when some fire departments don't have proper SCBA or PPE or radios that work, why should it surprise us that firefighters are responding in unenclosed cabs and still riding the tailboard? That a firefighter was killed after being thrown from the unenclosed rig? That Pitts-

burgh firefighters had been forced to ride the tailboard? That a Hamburg (NJ) firefighter was riding the tailboard to a wetdown when she was thrown off, narrowly escaping serious injury? In a newspaper report, a Hamburg official said it was "just a plain accident." No, it was just plain stupidity.

...From recent congressional hearings, 9-1-1 Commission hearings, and media reports, it should be clear to everyone (except the perpetrators and perhaps the recipients of pork barrel congressional politics) that the current system for doling out federal terrorism preparedness grants to states needs to change, and now. The guaranteed 0.75 percent to each state and territory leaves only 60 percent of the total federal grant pot for discretionary spending. With this and other ham-handed methods as the basis for distribution, the target-rich states are being shortchanged. According to James Jay Carafano, in a piece published on the Heritage Foundation Web site, California, which makes up 12 percent of the U.S. population, receives less than eight percent of general grant funds. Both California and New York receive grant funds to the tune of \$5 per capita, while Wyoming gets \$38 per capita, the U.S. Virgin Islands gets \$105 per capita, and the North Mariana Islands \$53 per capita. San Francisco, a city of 800,000 people, receives an amount equal to that of Los Angeles, a city of four million. Sioux County, Iowa, population 32,000, receives more than Des Moines, the capital city with a population of 200,000.

...The city of San Carlos, Florida, is considering requiring firefighters to mow the lawns at the fire stations. The firefighter/lawn boy dual function is not uncommon in some departments. No doubt, it helps the budget, and why not cut lawns when you could be training? But Bonita Springs, Florida, stopped the practice altogether. Said the district spokesperson, one Debbi Redfield, "[The firefighters] needed to be a little bit more presentable when responding to calls."

...It doesn't look like New York's new "citywide incident management system" (CIMS) will do much to alleviate the multiagency incident command horror show between police and fire departments that's been featured for years at emergencies throughout the city, including September 11, 2001. Beyond the fact that Mayor Michael Bloomberg seems to have no recollection of the street fights between NYPD and FDNY over who'd make the cut at auto extrications (the primary agency in the new CIMS at these incidents is "first to arrive"), it's unclear for most major incidents requiring multiagency responses as to who's running the show. This not only flies in the face of all IMS principles and practices learned and developed by the fire service over many years, but it forebodes command inefficiencies, miscommunications, and tragedies down the road. Most members of NYPD wouldn't know an incident management system if they tripped over it. However, congratulations are in order to NYPD Commissioner Ray Kelly. Because of his extraordinary leverage in the Bloomberg administration, in conjunction with the leadership vacuum at the highest levels of the fire commission/department, NYPD is to be the lead agency for all CBRN and haz-mat incidents, seeing to it that the city's terrorism response monies will be directed to and controlled by the police department.

Bill Manning

FireEngineering.com