



Department of Administration
Budget and Management Division

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April 20, 2001

File Ref: SF-Fire Dept

Alderman Frederick G. Gordon, Chairperson
Committee on Finance and Personnel
City Hall, Room 205

Subject: Safety Equipment Commissary System for Local #215

Dear Alderman Gordon:

Several years ago, the Wisconsin Department of Commerce implemented a regulation that required employers to provide appropriate safety equipment to its employees. This rule change specifically impacted members of Local #215 (firefighters). In order to ensure that the city was in compliance with this regulation, the city and Local #215 negotiated a safety equipment commissary system through collective bargaining.

While this system has not been implemented to date, the city and Local #215 have been working over the past year to determine the specifics of the commissary system, and are now prepared to execute it starting on June 1, 2001. The city will replace the safety equipment of approximately 350 firefighters per year, ensuring that all members of Local #215 will receive new safety equipment over the next three years (2001-2003). The city will also provide new safety equipment for all members who have equipment that was condemned in the last inspection (jackets, helmets, pants and gloves). These replacement items will be provided on an interim basis, until a complete set of equipment can be provided.

The total cost of the commissary system will be approximately \$405,850 in 2001 and \$388,850 per year in 2002 and 2003 (based on current contract prices). The 2001 cost is slightly higher due to the temporary replacement of condemned items in the first-year of the program. The Fire Department will try to absorb the first year costs within their existing 2001 operating budget. However, due to the magnitude of the program costs, the Fire Department's budget may not be able to fully absorb these expenses and a contingent fund appropriation may be needed (initial estimates indicate between \$150,000 - \$250,000). These costs were not included in their 2001 budget because the commissary system was not yet developed and the fiscal impact of the program was not known at the time the 2001 budget was adopted. The Fire Department's 2002 and 2003 budgets will be adjusted to include these costs.

If you have any additional concerns or questions regarding this matter, please call Sandra Rotar of my staff at extension 3182.

Sincerely,

Laura J. Engan
Budget and Management Director

SJR:dmr

Cc: Chief Lawrence Gardner - Fire Department
Greg Gracz - Local #215
Frank Forbes - DER- Labor Relations