

Item Title: Acceptance and Appropriation of Federal Fiscal Year 2018 SAFER Grant Award

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners accepts and appropriates \$354,650 from the 2018 Federal Fiscal Year Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant program for the purpose of supporting volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention activities in Wake County into the Fire Services Department of the Grants and Donations Fund.

Item Summary:

Purpose: The Board of Commissioners must appropriate all sources of funds, including federal grants.

Background: FEMA provides annual opportunities to apply for grant funding to support firefighter recruitment and retention of career and volunteer firefighters. Wake County Fire Services submitted a grant application for funding under the volunteer recruitment and retention category.

This grant award will provide funding for full protective equipment and travel costs (from their home to the Wake County training facility) for minimum firefighter training requirements for fifty (50) new volunteer firefighters. Additionally, the grant will fund two duty crew stipend payments per week for station shift coverage per participating fire department to provide more opportunity for volunteer participation. This grant has a two-year period of performance, which begins on December 1, 2019.

Board Goal: The SAFER grant directly supports the Board of Commissioner's Public Safety goal initiative 4.1, "Implement best practices for volunteer recruiting, retention and utilization in emergency services".

Fiscal Impact: The SAFER grant provides an additional \$354,650 for volunteer firefighter recruitment and retention. There is no County match required.

Additional Information:

The Wake County Fire Commission's Volunteer Recruitment and Retention subcommittee was established in response to decreasing numbers of volunteer firefighters throughout Wake County. This subcommittee was tasked to develop best practices and strategies to increase volunteer participation in county fire departments. In May 2018, Wake County Fire Services was awarded a service grant through the North Carolina Fire Chiefs Association (NCAFC) to develop a Wake County GIS Tapestry report, which identified demographic areas to target volunteer recruitment efforts, as well as, provide customizable recruitment materials and multimedia support.

The FY18 SAFER grant builds upon these efforts by providing equipment and training cost funding, which are associated with recruiting new volunteers. The duty crew stipend funding portion of the grant will provide for increased opportunity for volunteers to work at fire stations and increase their experience and retention. There are eleven participating county fire departments represented by this grant award. They are Eastern Wake Fire and Rescue, Fairview Rural Fire Department, Garner Fire and Rescue, Hopkins Fire Department, Northern Wake Fire Department, Rolesville Fire Department, Swift Creek Rural Fire Department, Wake Forest Fire Department, Wake New Hope Fire Department, Wendell Holmes Rural Fire Department and the Western Wake Fire Department.

Attachments:

1. FFY2018 SAFER Grant Award Documents
2. 2018 SAFER Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
3. Budget Memo – FY 2020 Grants and Donations Fund