

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting: August 23, 2018

Item Number: **074**

Management Services

Discuss and take appropriate action regarding the proposed Meet and Confer Agreement between the City of Austin and the Austin-Travis County EMS Employees Association relating to wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment for medics employed by Austin-Travis County Emergency Medical Services.

Lead Department	Management Services.
------------------------	----------------------

Additional Backup Information:

ECONOMIC PROVISIONS

Base Wage Pay Increases

FY 2018-19: 2.0% increase
 FY 2019-20: 2.0% increase
 FY 2020-21: 2.0% increase
 FY 2021-22: 1.0% increase (effective April 2022)

Retains Step Pay Increases

Step Pay Adjustment - Year 2 of agreement certain portions of the pay scale for Clinical Specialist rank will be adjusted to bring entry pay up to the Texas average.

Additional Pays:

Bilingual Pay: Year 1 - Increase by \$25 per month to \$175 per month
Education Pay: Year 4 - Increase by \$70 per month to \$220 per month Bachelors degree
Education Pay: Year 4 - Increase by \$100 per month to \$300 per month Masters degree
Paramedic Certification Pay: Year 4 - Add new stipend for \$200 per month
Shift Differential Pay: Year 4 - Add new 12-Hour shift and/or nights for \$100 per month

BUDGET COST:

FY 2018-19: \$913,006
FY 2019-20: \$2,404,610
FY 2020-21: \$3,330,596
FY 2021-22: \$4,839,596

Total Contract Cost: \$11,487,809

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS:

The proposed agreement has significant changes from state civil service law regarding the hiring and promoting of medics within the EMS department. While state law only provides for a written scoring exam, this proposed agreement allows for significant deviations from that process for the next four years.

Under the proposed agreement, for entry level hiring, the department is not mandated to conduct a written exam at all. The department may, at its discretion, simply conduct oral interviews and place candidates on a list based on their interviews. Additionally, successful interns are placed at the top of the hiring list to promote diversity, and the Chief has the power to place interns directly into positions at his discretion. Regarding promotions, at the lowest rank, it allows less time in rank prior to taking a promotional test - that way a paramedic who is hired will have the opportunity to promote almost immediately, making the department more attractive for the recruitment and retention of paramedics. The department has the authority to conduct assessment centers at the higher ranks, and at the division chief rank, the department can appoint up to 6 people to fill those spots (no written or assessment center is required).

The disciplinary article is very similar to the disciplinary article in the current agreement, except the parties agreed to eliminate the language that automatically reduced suspensions of 3 days or less to written reprimands after an allotted amount of time.

The City of Austin conducted a pay study for the EMS employees, and the results indicated that the max pay for the paramedic rank for ATCEMS employees was approximately 5.3% above the second highest study participant. The compensation philosophy in this contract was to maintain the City's status in that 5% range. However, the study also showed that the entry pay for paramedics was significantly lower than even the Texas average pay. The proposed agreement brings up the beginning pay for paramedics while not inflating the maximum pay differential.

The City recognizes there is a national shortage of paramedics, and the City looked at other incentives to try to recruit and retain paramedics. For that reason, the parties agreed to add a paramedic stipend for

employees that have a paramedic certification from the state of Texas.

Finally, the final year of the agreement will allow the department to institute a 24 hour “on”/72 hour “off” schedule for a significant number of our ambulances in the jurisdiction. This new schedule allows for a better and more consistent rest schedule for our employees and is also easier to manage from a management perspective. The new schedule maintains a 42 hour a week work week over 4 weeks; however, due to FLSA rules, there is an increase in which of those hours constitute overtime.