



Office of the City Manager

ACTION CALENDAR
June 25, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From:  Christine Daniel, City Manager

Submitted by: Gil Dong, Interim Fire Chief, Fire Department

Subject: Referral of Alameda County FRALS Reimbursement to City Auditor Staff Report

RECOMMENDATION

Continue to account for the Alameda County First Responder Advanced Life Support (FRALS) Reimbursements in a separate fund in accordance with Resolution No. 65,493–N.S.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

At the March 27, 2013 regular meeting of the Disaster and Fire Safety Commission (DFSC), the commission voted to recommend that the City Council “refer to the City Auditor reimbursements from Alameda County to the City of Berkeley under the Emergency Medical Services First Responder Life Support Services Agreement dated February 1, 2012, and prior agreements approved by the City Council on May 31, 2011 (Resolution No. 65,296-NS) and July 19, 2011 (Resolution No. 65,393-N.S.) to confirm that those FRALS reimbursements should be returned to Measure GG funds and not diverted to the General Fund.” (Ayes: Flasher, Sorgen, Goldstein, Zummo, Mitchell, Gage Noes: none, Absent: Henry, Abstain: none).

The City Council adopted Resolution 65,493-N.S. on November 8, 2011 to enter into a successor agreement and any amendments, to accept related funding and equipment from Alameda County (ALCO) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) for First Responder Advanced Life Support (FRALS) services for the period of February 1, 2012 through October 31, 2016.

As part of the resolution, Council adopted staff’s recommendations to create a separate fund (Fund 457) for revenue collection and expenditures. In addition, the resolution states that FRALS reimbursements provided by ALCO EMS is subject to meet and confer in accordance with the 2010-2012 Memorandum of Understanding between the

City of Berkeley and the Berkeley Fire Fighters Association, I.A.F.F. Local 1227. The City and Local 1227 are currently in contract negotiations.

As of May 30, 2013, the balance in Fund 457 is \$830,748. There have been no expenditures from Fund 457. The fund can only be used for FRALS related costs. Staff is projecting an expenditure of \$400,000 for replacement electrocardiogram monitors in FY 2016.

BACKGROUND

In November 2008, the citizens of Berkeley supported the passage of Measure GG, the Fire Protection and Emergency Response and Preparedness Tax. Measure GG provides funding in five (5) service/program areas. The tax proceeds are used 1) first to eliminate rotating closures of operating fire stations, and 2) to provide advanced life support personnel (paramedics) and equipment on all first responder vehicles (ambulances, fire engines and ladder trucks). The funds are also used to 3) hire a training officer to provide Emergency Medical Service training for first responders; 4) hire staff to conduct Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) and other similar public disaster training and preparedness efforts and for neighborhood emergency preparedness caches, and emergency operations center enhancements; and, 5) to acquire and maintain equipment to enhance emergency preparedness, including equipment to allow compatible radio communications throughout the City and with outside public safety agencies (interoperability).

The Berkeley Fire Department has been designated as the sole emergency ambulance transport provider for the City of Berkeley since 1977. This level of service was increased in 1984 to include paramedics who render advance life support interventions enhancing patient survivability. ALCO EMS has limited funds available for agencies that have a FRALS program in place. In order for the City of Berkeley to take advantage of FRALS funding from the County, the Fire Department had to establish a FRALS program by training and re-accrediting EMS personnel, as well as purchase County required medical equipment and supplies.

The FRALS program can place a paramedic on scene for 911 medical emergencies sooner than an ambulance paramedic since there are nine (9) strategically located fire apparatus throughout the City. Funding for the FRALS program was made possible by the passage of Measure GG, Fire Protection and Emergency Response and Preparedness Tax, which was supported by the citizens of Berkeley in November 2008.

As a result, in February 2010, paramedic services were increased whereby paramedics were placed to respond from every fire engine and truck throughout the City. The response from an engine and a truck is more immediate than an ambulance because there are nine (9) pieces of apparatus strategically located within the City versus three (3) ambulances.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Fund 457 (FRALS) is a non-tax revenue account. Fund 456 (Measure GG) is a tax revenue account. Financial accounting procedures and best practices do not combine tax revenue accounts with non-tax revenue accounts. The Alameda reimbursement cannot be placed into Fund 456 because Measure GG is a tax revenue account.

The meet and confer process with Local 1227 must conclude prior to expending any 457 funds.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CONTACT PERSONS

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