

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date:	October 12, 2015
	Agenda Item No.	36
	Roll Call No.	<u>15-1709</u>
	Communication No.	<u>15-556</u>
	Submitted by:	John F. TeKippe, Fire Chief

AGENDA HEADING:

Approving application for Registered Agency status with the Commission of Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) for the Fire Department.

SYNOPSIS:

Approve application for Registered Agency status with the CFAI, Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE), 4501 Singer Court, Chantilly, VA 20151, for the Fire Department. The Registered Agency status fee of \$560 is valid for three (3) years.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$560.00

Funding Source: Fire Department Administration, G001 FD001000, Adopted Budget FY2016, page 98

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Fire Department accreditation was recommended (Recommendation 8-1) in the Fire Station Placement Review and Recommendations for Expansion, Des Moines Fire Department (station study). Accreditation is also consistent with the anticipated City of Des Moines Strategic Plan, Action Agenda Goal 3, High Performing City Organization, Management in Progress action items for 2015-2016.

Accreditation is a comprehensive self-assessment and evaluation model that enables the department to examine past, current, and future service levels and internal performance and compares them to industry best practices. This process leads to improved service delivery. CPSE’s Accreditation Program, administered by the CFAI will allow a fire department to compare their performance to industry best practices in order to:

- Determine community risk and safety needs and develop community-specific Standards of Cover;
- Evaluate the performance of the department; and
- Establish a method for achieving continuous organizational improvement.

The CFAI accreditation process provides a well-defined, internationally recognized benchmark system to measure the quality of fire and emergency services. This system utilizes criteria to assess

professional performance and efficiency and assists decision makers by demonstrating a direct link between current services and improved or expanded services.

The CFAI is committed to assisting and improving fire and emergency service agencies around the world in achieving organizational and professional excellence through its strategic self-assessment model and accreditation process that provides continuous quality improvement and enhancement of service delivery to the community and the world at large. CFAI provides fire department training to assist departments with the tools necessary to begin and maintain the self-assessment process.

A task force of highly qualified and dedicated chief fire officers, trainers, city/county administrators, and academic professionals worked together to create the self-assessment model – the basis for CFAI accreditation. The goals that guide the model assures that the process is:

- Applicable across the broad spectrum of the fire service industry;
- Challenging Contemporary, not revolutionary;
- Able to evolve over time;
- Achievable;
- Useful for a comprehensive organizational evaluation; and
- A practical management tool for fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies.

CFAI Accreditation Benefits

The Fire Department and the City can use the accreditation model in setting goals, crafting strategic and action plans, and continuously evaluating and improving services provided to the public. The CFAI comprehensive self-assessment process promotes excellence and encourages quality improvement by enabling fire and EMS agencies to:

- Assure colleagues and the public that they have missions and objectives that are appropriate for the jurisdictions they serve;
- Provide a detailed evaluation of the services they provide to the community;
- Identify areas of strength and weakness within the department;
- Create methods or systems for addressing deficiencies while building organizational success;
- Encourage professional growth for both the department and its personnel;
- Provide a forum for the communication of organizational priorities;
- Foster national recognition by colleagues and the public; and
- Create a mechanism for developing strategic and program action plans.

The self-assessment process demands the largest portion of time to achieve accreditation. Although there is a substantial commitment of time and resources, departments nationwide have realized the value of the self-assessment process and accreditation model because it requires documenting policies and procedures that should be in place already. The accreditation process results in the development of planning documents, including short-term action and long-term strategic plans, important tools in the budgeting process and a basis for justifying department programs and services. Accreditation has the potential to dramatically improve a department, its services, and its vision for the future.

Performance Evaluation Categories

The CFAI accreditation model includes these performance evaluation categories:

- Assessment and Planning;
- Essential Resources;

- External Systems Relations;
- Financial Resources;
- Goals and Objectives;
- Governance and Administration;
- Human Resources;
- Physical Resources;
- Programs; and
- Training and Competency.

Each category includes a measure or index on which a judgment or division can be based, as well as indicators that define the desired level of ability to perform a particular task. The accreditation model includes a comprehensive research and information collection guide with checklists, exhibits, benchmarks, references, and activities broken down by category. Several appendices address additional topics including defining the elements of response time, creating standards of response coverage, and developing master or strategic plans.

Four (4) Steps to Accreditation

The process of achieving accreditation includes four (4) steps or levels:

1. **Becoming a Registered Agency -**
Any fire or rescue agency may become a Registered Agency. This status allows a department to be involved with the Accreditation process at a low cost for three (3) years. Registered Agencies gain access to the CFAI network, receive the CPSE monthly newsletter, and obtain a copy of the latest edition of the Fire & Emergency Service Self-Assessment manual, the resource on which self-assessment and accreditation is based. This is the time for an agency to send its fire chief and accreditation manager to the CFAI workshop training.
2. **Becoming an Applicant Agency -**
Agencies that are ready to make the commitment to accreditation use the Applicant Agency Status to notify the CFAI program manager and submit the appropriate fee. The agency then receives an Applicant Agency packet of the materials needed to proceed. While holding this status (18 months for career agencies) an Applicant Agency is assigned a volunteer mentor via the CFAI SharePoint website to serve as a resource. A SharePoint site is created for the agency so the mentor can review document drafts and offer feedback and advice.
3. **Becoming a Candidate for Accreditation -**
Following the self-assessment process (including the community risk analysis, standards of cover, and strategic planning components) a Candidate Agency's completed documents are uploaded to the CPSE SharePoint site for peer review. When the Candidate Agency's completed documents are approved, an on-site peer assessment is conducted. The peer assessment team submits a final report on its recommendation for accreditation to the agency and the commission.
4. **Commission Hearing -**
The commission hears the candidacy report from the peer assessment team leader in the presence of the Candidate Agency's representatives during the commission's spring or fall meeting. At this point, the commission grants, denies, or defers accreditation. Accreditation is valid for five (5) years.

Maintaining Accreditation – At least 45 days prior to the anniversary date of accreditation, an Accredited Agency must submit to the commission an Annual Compliance Report (ACR) with the annual fee.

Renewing Accreditation – To renew accreditation, an agency follows the process outlined in Steps-3 and 4 in accordance with current CFAI policy and procedure.

Special Challenges

CFAI Accreditation Costs:

Registered Agency Status (Valid up to three (3) years) – The nonrefundable fee is \$560 for agencies of every type and size. Fees for Registered Agencies that make Applicant Agency status within one (1) year are applied to the Applicant Agency status fee.

Applicant Agency Status (Valid up to 18 months for career agencies) – The nonrefundable fee for Applicant Agencies is based on the population served within the jurisdiction (except approved Department of Defense Fire Departments), using the latest U.S. Census figures documented with the agency's application. This fee must be paid prior to the agency's change of status to applicant agency. Agencies that are unable to complete their self-assessment and move to Candidate Status with their original application period may elect to pay one-half of their original fee for a 12-month extension, which may be repeated up to three (3) times. This fee for extension is nonrefundable.

<u>Population/Agency Type</u>	<u>Fee</u>
200,000 – 499,000	\$9,000

Candidate Agency Status – There is no fee for Candidate Agency status when a department completes the self-assessment, but in this phase of the process the department is responsible for the cost of travel and expenses for the on-site peer assessment team visit and its peer assessor team leader's expenses for traveling to the commission's accreditation hearing. It is recommended that agencies budget approximately \$6,000 for the on-site visit and \$1,000 - \$1,500 for the team leader's travel to the commission meeting.

Accredited Agency Status – The annual maintenance fee for Accredited Agencies is equal to one-fifth of the current Applicant Agency fee.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S):

Date: January 12, 2015

Roll Call Number: [15-0074](#)

Action: [Receive](#) and file [report](#) regarding the Fire Station Placement Review and Recommendation for Expansion Report from Public Safety Solutions, Inc. ([Council Communication No. 15-002](#)) Moved by Gatto to receive and file the report, and refer to the City Manager and Fire Chief to review and develop an action plan with a report back to Council within 90 days. Motion Carried 7-0.

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

The application for Registered Agency status the CFAI is Step-1 of 4. As outlined in Additional Information, there are three (3) additional steps in the accreditation process (Applicant Agency, Candidate for Accreditation, Commission Hearing). In addition, once accredited, there is a maintenance and renewing accreditation process to be adhered to. The Fire Department will ensure Council is appraised of progress through all of these steps.

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