

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: TEMPORARY ADDITION OF METER READER POSITION

BACKGROUND:

The City's budget includes Council authorization for three Meter Readers and one Senior Meter Reader position. All four positions are currently filled, but one of the incumbents will be off work for an undetermined length of time due to a serious medical condition. The employee would have paid time off available for use in this instance until late summer. In order to maintain the current level of service to utility customers and avoid frequent use of estimates for meter reads, an additional Meter Reader needs to be hired. Completing the meter routes during winter weather takes longer due to the adverse conditions. Another consideration is the importance of having a full staff trained and available prior to the annual turnover of apartment utility accounts next summer, should the incumbent be unable to return to work by then.

City staff has reviewed options for additional help and is recommending that a temporary additional position be added. The amount of overtime required to cover the workload of the open position would be expensive and difficult to sustain over time, and reading meters after dark is much less efficient and less safe than during daylight hours. City staff will follow the regular hiring practices in filling this temporary additional position to ensure that the person hired and trained is fully qualified for the position and could possibly be hired as a permanent Meter Reader if there is a permanent opening in the near future. Should the incumbent Meter Reader be able to resume his position in the near future, the additional position will be eliminated.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize the addition of a temporary Meter Reader position.
2. Do not authorize this temporary position, and direct staff to pursue other alternatives.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Authorization of a temporary additional Meter Reader position will allow the City to maintain current customer service levels at a cost effective rate. This temporary position will be utilized until the incumbent employee's ability to return to work is known.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council approve Alternative No. 1, thereby authorizing the addition of a temporary Meter Reader position.