



CITY OF CONCORD

REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Daniel L. Andrus, Fire Chief

DATE: April 27, 2016

SUBJECT: Report from the Fire Chief on an Evaluation of a Trial Period for 24 Hour Shifts for Fire Department Personnel in the Suppression/EMS and Communications Bureaus

Recommendation

The Fire Department requests that the City Council accept this report.

Background

On September 8, 2014, the City Council authorized the City Manager to negotiate with the Concord Fire Officers Association, IAFF Local 3195, and the Professional Firefighters of Concord, IAFF Local 1045, for the implementation of a trial period for 24 hour shifts for employees working in the EMS/Suppression and Communications Bureaus. Those negotiations resulted in letters of agreement with both locals which were signed on September 29, 2014 authorizing a year long trial period which began on October 19, 2014.

City Administration, Fire Administration, and the executive boards of both locals met regularly throughout the evaluation period to review costs and impacts. The trial period was a very strong success for both the City and the employees. When compared with averages for the preceding three years, decreases were noted in sick leave use for both Suppression and Communications employees. Overtime for minimum staffing also decreased in both bureaus. Overtime for meal hours for Suppression personnel was reduced as well. There was an increase in overtime for the normal work week for Communications personnel, but this was balanced by an agreement to completely eliminate meal hour overtime pay for these employees. There was a continuing sense that productivity had been increased by eliminating the need to stop activities to prepare stations, equipment, reports, and personnel for an evening shift change. That impression was confirmed by a review of training records which showed an increase in the number of training events and hours when compared with the prior years. That is a particularly important point as increasing call volumes make it difficult to conduct effective on duty training. Employees also reported that there was considerably less fatigue with the new schedule compared with the former schedule, which required consecutive night shifts. Fire Administration noted an improvement in communications and coordination with field units, as all personnel now work at least one day period during the conventional work week.

At the end of the trial period, all parties agreed that it had been a very resounding success and the schedule was made permanent. Fire Administration and the executive boards of the locals wish to express their appreciation to the City Council and to the City Manager for their support of this trial period and the benefits it has identified.