



City of Saint Paul
Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

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March 14, 2016

Dear Council President Stark and City Council Members:

I am writing in response to Council Resolution 16-353 that you passed on 02/24/2016, which requested that an amendment to the 2016 operating budget be presented for a public hearing on March 16, 2016 per Section 10.07.1 of the City Charter. Section 10.07.1 references revenues available for appropriation. Or, in the alternative, you asked that I report on my efforts to identify revenues for this purpose and offer alternatives to the Council.

By this letter, I am reporting that my office has worked with Fire administration and calculated it would cost an additional \$700,000 in annual ongoing spending to add the eight FTEs required for super medic 5. At this point, two months into the current fiscal year, there are no new ongoing revenues that are available for appropriation for this new long term operating spending. Nor do I anticipate additional revenues at that level that would be available for appropriation later in the year.

As you know, the Council adopted a carefully balanced 2016 budget on December 16, 2015, where all available ongoing operating revenues were addressed and appropriated in a manner consistent with City priorities. In the absence of new ongoing revenues in the amount of \$700,000, the alternative would be to look at cutting General Fund spending in other departments like Police or Parks to shift funds into Fire. The Administration is unwilling to make such a drastic cut to other essential services to increase EMS resources.

The 2017 budget process will begin soon, and exploring opportunities for new spending, including possible expansion of paramedic service, is appropriate to occur during that process. Please keep in mind that each year we enter the budget process with inflationary pressures that typically exceed \$10 million dollars.

Also, there will be an opportunity at the Council's Organizational Session on April 27 to discuss the overall fire service delivery system and better understand the Chief's rationale for considering the re-deployment of one of the "super medic" units. Chief Butler has proven to be a thoughtful administrator and this session is an excellent opportunity for him to walk through his thought process with you. He will not be taking any action with respect to the "super medic" units before the April 27 session.

Finally, as has been their practice, Deputy Mayor Kristin Beckmann and Mayor Coleman will meet with each Councilmember early in the summer to understand the priorities you bring to the budget process. Knowing where this expansion ranks among your collective concerns would be very helpful as we begin to shape a budget for your review this fall.

Cordially,


Todd Hurley
Director, Office of Financial Services

TH/bm