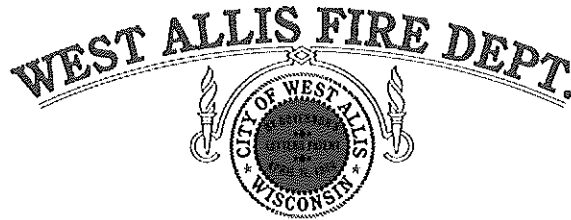




STEVEN J. HOOK
CHIEF



CITY of WEST ALLIS
FIRE DEPARTMENT

To: Mayor Devine and members of the West Allis Common Council
From: Steven J. Hook, Fire Chief
Date: September 27, 2011
Re: Notification of Transfer of Funds from Salary to Capital

At the regular meeting of the West Allis Board of Police and Fire Commissioners on September 15, 2011, Commissioners approved my request to transfer \$170,000 from the fire department's salary to capital budget to help prepare for a year-end carryover into our accumulative account for fire apparatus. This transfer was made possible by the efforts of responsible fire department staff officers and line personnel working to control personnel expenses while providing quality service. I have explained the efforts of our personnel below, as well as my intended use for the funds we transferred.

As you review this memo, please keep in mind that I have had increased difficulty in securing funds for the purchase of fire apparatus. Expenses continue to escalate while our budget has very little room to grow. By accumulating transferred funds, we can lessen the burden on taxpayers while continuing to provide service. Hopefully you will support our efforts as we prepare to replace aging fire apparatus and prepare for the future of our department.

Summary:

Over the course of 2011, my staff and I have explored various strategies in an effort to help the fire department serve the city as a more efficient and cost effective unit of government. Budgetary challenges require that we consider changes in our delivery system to assure that we maintain our current level of service, while limiting costs.

Our strategic initiatives have focused on the redeployment of our paramedic resources. We've been able to reduce staffing, increase the skill level and credentialing of our employees, reduce the number of units responding to alarms, and improve patient care, all while saving a significant portion of our salary budget.

While doing so, we've intentionally delayed filling positions vacated by retirements and resignations, and taken advantage of the savings to set aside funding in support of improving our capital improvements.

Over the course of several PFC meetings, I reported how hiring delays, coupled with our paramedic redeployment could result in funding that could be shifted to capital with PFC approval, and Council administration. I've been preparing this with City Administrator Paul

Ziehler, who's been helpful in assuring that city policy is not circumvented and that Council members would be able to assess any requests for funding changes. In previous years, we've been able to carry excess year-end salary funds into successive years to help with special projects in the past. This request is similar, but more proactive and aggressive.

After careful consideration of our budgetary projections and our immediate needs, I requested Commission's approval to transfer \$170,000 from the fire department's salary to capital budget to help prepare for a year-end carryover into our accumulative account for fire apparatus, and the PFC approved the transfer on September 15, 2011.

While Council approval for this level of transfer is not required, you will have an opportunity to refuse the carryover, or redirect the funds in the spring of 2012 when I request the line-item carryover into our accumulative account. In addition, the Common Council can remove funds from our accumulative account any time at their discretion, if necessary for critical city operations.

This memorandum is provided for your information only, and no action is required. I will reassess our financial resources in the spring of 2012 when I prepare my carryover requests. In the meantime, please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Thanks for your continued support of the fire department and our public safety efforts.