



City of Biggs

Agenda Item Staff Report for the Regular City Council Meeting: November 21, 2011 6:00PM

DATE: November 8, 2011
TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Pete Carr, City Administrator
SUBJECT: Code Enforcement Staffing (Discussion/Action)

Council is asked to provide direction on how to staff the code enforcement position going forward.

Background

The code enforcement officer position has for several years been combined with the planning secretary role, and more recently has been utilized to back up customer service functions at City Hall and assist with various special tasks as needed. The position recently became vacant; the City Administrator is presenting options and seeking direction from the Council on how they see the position being filled.

In the current environment of reduced demand for planning/development services, a dedicated planning secretary is not needed. With the elimination of the finance director position, however, back-up for customer service and administrative and clerical services has become increasingly necessary. Unlike planning-related activity, the volume of customer service transactions is not in a state of decline and, if anything, has become more intense with more housing vacancies and turnover.

Weekly code enforcement tasks include inspections which can consume 4-8 hours weekly, administration to address and follow-up on inspections which takes 4-10 hours per week, and interaction with residents and other City staff which occurs as needed and typically takes 2- 4 hours per week. Customer service backfilling has been occurring at a rate of 2-8 hours per week, generally being necessary in the 11:30am-2:00pm timeframe.

Whether the city employs an in-house code enforcement officer or not, some level of involvement is required by PMC to provide technical guidance and professional consistency. PMC's work comes at a significantly higher cost (\$70/hr) to the city than entry-level code enforcement hourly labor, although PMC is generally more effective with each hour than could be expected of entry level help.

Pension and health insurance obligations are incurred at 20 hours per week.

Options

- A. *Recruit and hire a part-time code enforcement person at entry level wage, 15-19 hours per week.* A temporary employee is currently filling this role. \$1175/mo.
- B. *Same as Option A but for 25 hours per week as was approved in Fiscal Year 2012 budget.* Maximizes availability to assist other staff, is higher cost than Option A due to # hours + benefits. \$2250/mo.
- C. *Contract with PMC exclusively for the full service.* This option provides the greatest proficiency in service but is most expensive and does not address the need for backfilling customer service. \$2350/mo.
- D. *Utilize one or more unpaid interns and/or community volunteers to provide the code enforcement inspection and customer service back up.* This option likely presents the least amount of proficiency, reliability and consistency; also potentially the least cost, offset to some extent by undetermined higher costs of likely more frequent recruiting and training as well as more intensive supervising.
- E. *Seek a code enforcement shared services agreement with another agency such as Gridley or the County.* This option can be expected to present high proficiency and high cost, does not address the customer service function.

Attachments: None

Recommendation:

Option A – Recruit and hire a part-time code enforcement officer, with the understanding that this position also backfills customer service as required, and is scheduled for 15-19 hours per week of total time. PMC would provide training and minimal off-site functional guidance.

Fiscal Impact of Recommendation:

Option A results in a cost reduction of \$25,200 annually, approximately \$12,600 this fiscal year, due to reduced cost of salary and benefits. Budget assumed 25 hours per week at advanced salary scale + benefits for this position (total \$42,692 per year).