



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

First Reading for the City Council Meeting June 14, 2022
Second Reading for the City Council Meeting of June 28, 2022

DATE: June 14, 2022
TO: Peter Zanoni, City Manager
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Recommended Fees for Outside City Limits Fire Protection Services

CAPTION:

Ordinance amending Corpus Christi Code to adopt Outside City Limits Fire Protection Service fees and rate schedule for persons outside of the Corpus Christi city limits who receive fire service and to set forth collection mechanisms to recover such fees if not paid.

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes an amendment to the Corpus Christi Code for the adoption of Fire Protection Service fees for the Corpus Christi Fire Department response outside of the Corpus Christi city limits.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

The Corpus Christi Fire Department (CCFD) occasionally responds to emergency calls for service outside the city limits of Corpus Christi. Traditionally, these calls are related to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) calls for service or single fire unit responses to support a neighboring jurisdiction or in response to a mutual aid request. For EMS calls outside of city limits, CCFD bills the patient(s) directly as it would for residents of Corpus Christi. Additionally, Nueces County is invoiced annually based on costs associated with providing response to EMS calls multiplied by the number of calls outside of the city limits. The "cost per call" billed to Nueces County varies depending on personnel costs for that fiscal year. While calls for fire protection in these areas are infrequent, CCFD does not have an identified methodology for calculating all-inclusive costs for services rendered when responding outside city limits.

The proposed fees will be calculated utilizing four components:

- a. **Response Readiness Fee** - Made in lieu of traditional taxation and based on total cost of providing service divided by the number of taxed parcels within the City limits.
- b. **Fee for Service** - Based on personnel costs of responding compliment which is dependent on the call type which dictates the type and number of responding units. These personnel costs will be multiplied by the number of hours engaged in the response.

- c. **Cost of equipment** - Based on the cost of equipment as listed on the FEMA schedule for equipment rates. Like the assessment of personnel costs, the apparatus and equipment, costs will vary depending on the call type. The hourly cost of equipment will be multiplied by the number of hours engaged in the response.
- d. **Mileage** - The fee will be based on the annual IRS rate for mileage combined with a set cost identified to off-set the annual cost of maintenance for the responding apparatus. The mileage rate will be multiplied by the travel distance for each responding unit.

These calculations will be made considerate of call type, number and type of resources responding including personnel and equipment costs, duration of incident, and distance travelled by responding units. False alarms or responses in which “no incident is found” would not result in a fee. This is consistent with inside the city limits fire response customers.

The City will invoice the homeowner/responsible party within 30 days of the incident. A second and third invoice will be provided at approximately 60 and 120 days respectively from the date of incident. At 180 days, the invoice will be considered delinquent and will be referred to a third-party collection service following notification of the homeowner/responsible party. The homeowner/responsible party will then be liable for both the underlying debt and for the costs incurred by the City to effectuate collection by the third-party collection services to the extent allowed by State and Federal laws.

ALTERNATIVES:

The alternative to amending the current City code is to continue to respond to calls outside the city limits as is, leaving CCFD positioned not to receive fire protection service fees for fire responses made outside city limits.

FISCAL IMPACT:

CCFD will experience a revenue increase if/when responding to fire calls outside city limits. Staff is apprehensive to indicate a specific value for potential revenue due to the department’s lack of experience/ call volume to this area as the primary responding agency. CCFD has been requested to areas outside of the city limits, but traditionally the responses have been for mutual aid requests, single unit responses, and EMS calls.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approving the adoption of these fees, as presented.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Ordinance