


## Fire Department Hiring Update

Neha Singh <nsingh@somervillema.gov>

Wed 8/21/2024 6:37 PM

To:Neha Singh <nsingh@somervillema.gov>

Cc:iga <iga@somervillema.gov>

 1 attachments (64 KB)

Lateral Memo.pdf;

Dear Honorable City Council,

I write with an update regarding Fire Department hiring. Mayor Ballantyne and Mike Jefferson, President of the SFD Union, met on Monday and the conversation included the following hiring update which we also wanted to share with you.

As you are aware, the City needs to hire 15 or more firefighters in the next year and the Ballantyne Administration is focused on solutions available within Civil Service. As we communicated in February, we are continuously evaluating the situation and have determined at this time to expand the list. Due to the ties on the list we already have 15 candidates to interview for the 3 vacancies. We have decided to expand the current call for names on the certification list to an additional 19 candidates.

This decision does not come without a cost. The HR department itself has current vacancies and will now have to reprioritize other work in order to expand the Civil Service list. This is a big ask that will have repercussions for other City Department hiring processes. Please note, expanding the list will require a minimum of 35 interviews and 53 hours of interviewing by HR staff. Expanding the list *may* allow us to hire all 12 for the station and our 3 current vacancies, but it may not, given there are almost always candidates that opt to not begin or complete the process.

Hiring off the list is *one* tool, as we laid out in the previously circulated memo which is also attached for reference. We are preserving the option to utilize lateral hiring given the high volume of vacancies at one time. The Administration and the Union will revisit the conversation with the City Council in the Fall. Our priority is public safety and supporting our firefighters. There are numerous uncertainties in any hiring process, and we will not delay filling positions if we don't have candidates ready in time.

Thank you,

**Neha Singh**

**Director of Intergovernmental Affairs**

Office of Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

City of Somerville

(*she/her/hers*)

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