



**DATE:** June 19, 2018

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Fire Chief

**SUBJECT** Amendment to the First Responder Advanced Life Support (FRALS) Agreement

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council adopts the attached resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute a third amendment to the First Responder Advanced Life Support (FRALS) Agreement with the County of Alameda, which extends the Agreement through June 30, 2019.

### **SUMMARY**

The current FRALS Agreement between Alameda County and the City of Hayward is set to expire June 30, 2018. The Agreement took effect November 1, 2011. The County has proposed a third amendment to the Agreement, to take effect July 1, 2018, with an extension through June 30, 2019. The proposed amended Agreement includes a significant change that eliminates FRALS payments to municipal fire departments. This change would cost the City approximately \$400,000 annually in revenue. The performance metrics and penalty fines for the Fire Departments would remain the same. Staff is recommending that the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute this Amendment so that the City has an active agreement that authorizes the City to provide paramedic services. Staff continues to work with the County Health Care Services Agency to identify other sources of funding for the paramedic services provided by the City.

### **BACKGROUND**

*EMS Coordination in Alameda* – In 1984, the County created the Alameda County Emergency Medical Services District (ALCO EMS) to oversee and coordinate the county’s EMS system. The State of California has designated ALCO EMS as the local Emergency Medical Service Agency (LEMSA) responsible for implementing State regulations. One of the primary functions of ALCO EMS is to establish policies and procedures for the designation of paramedic and ambulance service providers within the county.

*Operationalization of FRALS* - In 1998, ALCO EMS made a major change to their ambulance provider contract to include fire department First Responder Advanced Life Support (FRALS) units as part of the EMS response. This change allowed the ambulance company to staff their transport vehicles with one less paramedic. The ambulance company paid the money saved

through this change to ALCO EMS, who then disbursed the money to the fire department for each FRALS unit. This has been the arrangement up until now.

Currently, ALCO EMS has designated city fire departments to provide first-responder paramedic services in most cities, including Hayward. As the governing board of ALCO EMS, the County has FRALS agreements with each of these municipal fire departments. The goal of the FRALS Agreement is to standardize and set performance metrics for first responder paramedics in cooperation with private ambulance company paramedics to enhance the effectiveness and timeliness of EMS delivery.

*Voter-Passed EMS Funding* - In 1982, county voters passed the first measure to establish paramedic services countywide. In 1997, voters passed Measure C, a special tax that remains the current funding source for ALCO EMS. Measure C specifies that the tax is to “continue emergency medical services including paramedic, ambulance, and trauma services.” The 2018 special tax amount is \$31.73 per benefit unit, which generates approximately \$19.2 million annually in revenue for ALCO EMS. Currently, approximately \$9.3 million of this revenue source goes to trauma care centers, \$3.4 million goes to dispatch centers, and \$7.4 million goes to ALCO EMS salaries and operating expenses.

## **DISCUSSION**

The original FRALS Agreement between Alameda County and the City of Hayward took effect July 1, 2004. The current Agreement took effect November 1, 2011 and is set to expire on June 30, 2018. The County has proposed a third amendment to the Agreement, to take effect July 1, 2018, which would extend the current Agreement through June 30, 2019. Staff is recommending that the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute this amendment so that the City retains an active agreement with the State-recognized LEMSA. Legally, it is unclear whether such an agreement is required to allow the City to provide paramedic services.

The proposed amendment includes a significant change from the previous Agreement that eliminates the FRALS payments to municipal fire departments. This change would cost the City approximately \$400,000 annually in revenue. According to ALCO EMS, the reason for the change is that their current ambulance provider is losing money. Therefore, ALCO EMSA intends to remove the requirement for the ambulance company to pay for local paramedic response in the Request for Proposals (RFP) for their new ambulance contract.

The performance metrics and penalty fines for municipal fire departments remain the same in the proposed amendment as in the previous Agreement. The Agreement requires the Hayward Fire Department to, among other things, maintain paramedic units capable of first response to emergency calls within specified response times, provide 24-hour, 7-day per week staffing for the paramedic units, and maintain on staff an EMS Coordinator who holds a license as a certified paramedic or who is licensed as a Registered Nurse or Medical Doctor.

## FISCAL IMPACT

As mentioned above, the County is proposing eliminating the FRALS payment to the City in the amendment to the Agreement. This would result in a loss of approximately \$400,000 of revenue annually for the City's General Fund. The table below shows the City's FRALS revenue for the past five years.

FY 2017	FY 2016	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2015
\$385,592	\$630,887	\$370,619	\$407,436	\$476,543

Staff continues to work with the County Health Care Services Agency and other fire departments in the County to identify other sources of funding for the paramedic services provided by the City.

## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

This agenda item is a routine operational item and does not relate to one of the Council's Strategic Initiatives.

*Prepared by:* Mary Thomas, Management Analyst

*Recommended by:* Garret Contreras, Fire Chief

Approved by:



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Kelly McAdoo, City Manager