

# BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. E(4)

## AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

**MEETING DATE: April 15, 2003**

**TITLE:** Discussion with the Board Regarding the Requests for Increased Staffing for the Police and Fire Departments

<b>DEPARTMENT:</b> Management Services	<b>PUBLIC HEARING:</b> YES ____ NO <u>x</u>
<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b>	<b>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:</b> Mike Brough, Interim Town Manager Carolyn Hutchison, Police Chief Rodney Murray, Fire Chief

### PURPOSE

Over the recent months, the Board of Aldermen has been presented with information on various town needs, including technology and capital needs. Review of FY03-04 budget requests with departments reveals numerous personnel needs to continue and improve basic services. An emergent issue to be presented in the Manager's Recommended Budget is the need for additional police and fire staffing. Due to the unique staffing schedules and shift issues faced by these departments, a presentation has been prepared for the Board that will provide an understanding of each department's needs.

### INFORMATION

The Police and Fire Department will each make a short presentation outlining the mandated requirements and staff relief factors affecting each department.

The Police Department is requesting additional police officers to achieve a minimum staffing standard. At this time, maintaining sufficient bodies on each patrol shift (4 platoons total) while allowing officers time off for vacation, training, and sick leave has become very difficult without diverting officers away from the community-policing unit and sometimes, the investigations office. In addition, the investigations office, seeing additional calls for assistance, is also in need of additional personnel. The impact is also felt on the caseload of calls and investigations being required by the department and is beginning to affect the morale of the officers. The department is also looking toward the future with growth in population of the Town as well as the expansion of the Town's limits, which may result in less police presence and longer response times. The patrol division is aware of their duty to provide a high level of professional service to the Town; however, the current workload and responsibilities makes this difficult to accomplish as calls for service increases and the population and size of the Town increases.

The Fire Department is requesting one additional firefighter for each shift to guarantee a minimum of a seven-member squad assigned to each shift. With the relief factor issue and the potential violation of OSHA regulations, this has limited the department's effectiveness with the existing staffing levels. At present with current staffing levels, the department can either not provide the staff with opportunities to take leave earned or not meet federal regulations regarding fire ground safety. The Fire Department is also looking at future staffing requests regarding the opening of the proposed second station.

### ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION

The Board is requested to receive the information presented by the Police and Fire Departments. Staff will be available to answer any questions.