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COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

November 5, 2013

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

**RE: Department of Emergency Services, Division of Fire Safety
Establishment of Fees for Fire Training Courses**

Dear Honorable Members:

Enclosed please find an accompanying memorandum and a proposed resolution from the Department of Emergency Services, Division of Fire Safety allowing local volunteer fire departments to reimburse the Department of Emergency Services for County Fire Instructors to teach the New York State Firefighter 1 course and other training programs. In addition, this proposal will allow the Department of Emergency Services to generate revenue from outside sources for classroom usage, instruction and hands-on training for unaffiliated businesses, organizations and other government agencies. All revenues received will be utilized within the Department of Emergency Services for firefighter training.

Should your Honorable Body require further information, I encourage you to contact Department of Emergency Services Commissioner Daniel Neaverth Jr. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Mark C. Poloncarz
Erie County Executive

MCP/bb
Enclosure

cc: Daniel Neaverth Jr., Department of Emergency Services

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Department of Emergency Services
Re: Establishment of Fees for Fire Training Courses
Date: October 22, 2013

SUMMARY

It is recommended that the Erie County Legislature approve the attached resolution for the Department of Emergency Services, Division of Fire Safety to:

- Create a framework that will allow volunteer fire departments to reimburse the Department of Emergency Services for County Fire Instructors to teach the State's Firefighter 1 and other training programs.
- Allow the Department of Emergency Services to generate revenue from outside sources for classroom usage, instruction and hands-on training for unaffiliated businesses, organizations and other government agencies.
- Reinstate a no show/no call penalty assessment for fire departments that reserve Erie County Training Facilities and County Fire Instructors but fail to show up, or cancel the scheduled training without reasonable notification or just cause.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Positive. This resolution will allow the Department of Emergency Services to generate revenue for usage of its facilities from unaffiliated businesses and from fire departments that reserve the facility but do not show. Provision of the Firefighter 1 and other training programs will be budget neutral.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Erie County Department of Emergency Services and our county's volunteer fire department have been successful in recruiting volunteer fire fighters. Unfortunately, the volume of new volunteers exceeds the ability of New York State Office of Fire Prevention & Control to train the new recruits in a timely manner. The new volunteers must be trained before they can participate in firefighting operations. This resolution will allow Erie County to offer the mandatory Firefighter 1 course, which it does not currently offer.

The Erie County Emergency Services Training & Operations facilities are in demand by both fire departments and outside sources. Erie County does not currently charge either for use of its facility or instructors. This resolution will implement a fee for unaffiliated businesses, organizations and other government agencies who wish to use the facility or instructors. In addition, many times the facility and instructors are reserved by a fire department that does not end up using it and do not give adequate notice for their cancellation. This resolution will allow the Department of Emergency Services to have a cancellation fee in order to recoup the costs they incur and discourage cancellations.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Without this legislation, the Department of Emergency Services, Division of Fire Safety will be unable to provide the additional State Firefighter 1 courses and other training programs that are needed by local fire departments. Our successful recruitment efforts have created an unacceptable backlog and delay in our ability to train new recruits. If unable to facilitate additional classes, these new fire department recruits will not be able to get the necessary training and will therefore be unable to participate in firefighting operations. This has a direct and negative impact on their personal safety, safety of their fellow firefighters and the community they serve.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

The Department of Emergency Services, Division of Fire Safety will begin to offer the Firefighter 1 course and other training programs according to the schedule of fees.

**A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES**

RE: Establishment of Fees for Fire Training Courses

WHEREAS, the Erie County Department of Emergency Services and our county's volunteer fire department have been successful in recruiting volunteer fire fighters; and

WHEREAS, the volume of new volunteers exceeds the ability of New York State Office of Fire Prevention & Control to train the new recruits in a timely manner; and

WHEREAS, the new volunteers must be trained before they can participate in firefighting operations; and

WHEREAS, Erie County does not currently offer the mandatory Firefighter 1 course; and

WHEREAS, use of the Erie County Emergency Services Training & Operations Center and instructors are in demand by both fire departments and outside sources; and

WHEREAS, Erie County does not currently charge either for use of its Emergency Services Training & Operations Center and instructors from unaffiliated businesses, organizations and other government agencies; and

WHEREAS, many times the Emergency Services Training & Operations Center and instructors are reserved by a fire department that does not end up using it and does not give adequate notice for their cancellation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Legislature, by two-thirds affirmative vote, hereby authorizes the Erie County Department Emergency Services, Division of Fire Safety to collect the following fees, effective on and after November 1, 2013, with all revenue remaining within the budget of the Department of Emergency Services:

Fee Name	Proposed Fee
Firefighter 1 course and other training programs	\$5,000 per class
Rental of Emergency Services Training & Operations Center	\$100.00 per hr.
Instructors fee as applicable not to exceed \$50.00 per hour.	\$50.00 per hour
No Show/No call/penalty fee within 2 hours of training will be \$50.00 per instructor	\$50.00 per instructor

and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Division of Budget and Management is hereby authorized, upon receipt of said fees, to make required budgetary adjustments in the Department of Emergency

Services in order to increase expense in the amount of reimbursement received as needed, to properly fund the training programs; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to the County Executive's Office, the Division of Budget and Management, the Department of Emergency Services, the County Comptroller and the Department of Law.