

Wilmington, Delaware
October 20, 2022

#0240

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Darby**

WHEREAS, firefighters are among the oldest and most critical occupations a municipality needs to maintain functionality. The Wilmington Fire Department (WFD) requires expertise to increase its capacity to attract and retain capable, reliable candidates for these important roles; and

WHEREAS, fire safety responsibilities involve physical endurance, skill, and dedication that only a select group of individuals can achieve. Special expertise is required to enable the WFD to identify appropriate candidates who are willing to make long-term contributions to their organizational mission; and

WHEREAS, retention of fire professionals is a nationwide concern to the extent that it was made a priority in the Department of Homeland Security's budget and approximately \$4.8 billion has since been granted to assist local fire departments in maintaining minimum industry standards and adequate staffing for fire and emergency response; and

WHEREAS, the WFD has instituted outreach programs like the Fire Explorer Program to give youth hands-on experiences learning about emergency services careers, over the past years, the WFD has hired six Explorers into the Department; and

WHEREAS, the Explorer Program has not been able to realize its participation targets recently. The WFD has also experienced ongoing difficulties in hiring and retaining a diverse staff that mirror the demographic composition of the City. Additional methods for attracting quality candidates, hiring talented individuals who are residents of Wilmington, and fostering diversity within the ranks of the WFD should be prioritized; and

WHEREAS, professional recruiters possess specialized knowledge of the current trends and tactics for attracting quality candidates. They can not only pinpoint exceptional individuals with the skills for today’s fire emergency needs but also prepare the WFD for future demands of the work; and

WHEREAS, designating the WFD recruiter role as a mid-level officer position demonstrates a commitment to addressing hiring challenges. The estimated costs of having an individual in the WFD dedicated to recruiting include the FTE (full-time equivalent) salary of \$65,000 to \$75,000, an additional \$20,000 for benefits, \$3,000 for professional development, and miscellaneous expenses associated with traveling to local and regional career fair events to engage with potential candidates for WFD positions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that this Legislative body supports the acquisition of a professional recruiter for the WFD.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Council urges the Administration to make the necessary fiscal appropriations to actualize this goal in the Fiscal Year 2024 budget allocation.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution is in support of the acquisition of a professional recruiter for the Wilmington Fire Department.