

MOTION BUDGET & FINANCE

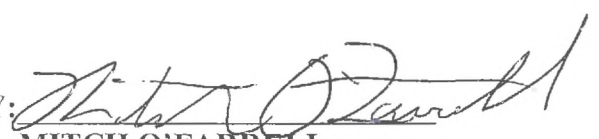
After a five-year hiring freeze, the Fire Department recently initiated the process to hire three classes of firefighters. The first class graduated in June 2014 and the new firefighters were assigned to stations throughout the City, however, the second class was canceled as a result of controversy surrounding the hiring of the first class.

This topic was the subject of a series of news articles by the *Los Angeles Times* and subsequently analyzed in a report by the Fire Department's Independent Assessor and a study conducted by the Rand Corporation. The reports addressed challenges faced by the department in ensuring that the City's hiring practices were fair to all applicants and the most qualified candidates were selected. According to the reports, the make-up of the first class did not reflect the demographics of the City, in particular Latinos and African-Americans were underrepresented, and the graduating class did not include any females. The second class of recruits, which were hired after changes to the hiring process, has made little progress in terms of furthering minority recruitment and hiring. Recently, all four female recruits did not complete the training class set to graduate on May 14, 2015, thus graduating its second consecutive all-male class. While female representation is less than 3% of LAFD firefighters, the Fire Chief has indicated his intent to fund a Firefighter Recruitment Section and double the number of female firefighters and increase diversity in the department.

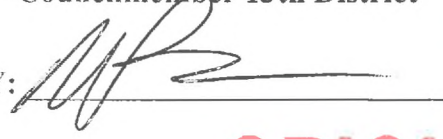
These new classes initiated after the FY 2011-12 hiring freeze were needed as the number of City firefighters has been significantly impacted by budget reductions and attrition since the economic recession. These budget cuts and staffing reductions have strained department operations and personnel, including increasing its response times. Eleven engine companies and seven truck companies were closed throughout the City and only two have been restored since.

Given the issues surrounding firefighter recruitment and hiring, and staffing and budget reductions, staff should report to Council with appropriate actions and resources necessary to overcome the challenges faced by the department, including ensuring both fairness in its hiring practices and diversity among its selected recruits.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Personnel Department and Fire Department, in consultation with the United Firefighters of Los Angeles City, be instructed to report to Council relative to recruitment and hiring challenges of firefighters, including staffing and budgetary resources required to overcome those challenges, and any changes to the department's recruiting, sustainable hiring, and training practices implemented in recent months.

PRESENTED BY: 
MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember 13th District



SECONDED BY:  MAY 3 2015

ORIGINAL