



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 8/17/2021

File #: 21-1079

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Planning and Building Department

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Allocate One Code Enforcement Investigator Position and Deallocate One Code Compliance Officer Position in Budget Unit 1100269

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the request to allocate one (1) Code Enforcement Investigator and deallocate one (1) Code Compliance Officer in budget unit 1100269.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General Fund (100)

DISCUSSION:

The 2021-22 fiscal year budget allocated two additional Code Compliance Officer positions in the Code Enforcement unit of the Planning and Building Department (budget unit 1100269). Code Enforcement is confronted with many difficult sites that require abatement warrants. Obtaining warrants are in the job description of the Code Enforcement Inspector but are not part of the job of the Code Compliance Officer. In order to provide the resources necessary to address these more complicated cases, an added Investigator and Officer would be a better allocation of resources.

The volume of traditional code enforcement cases is well documented. There are approximately 700 open traditional code enforcement cases with nearly 450 cases yet to be assigned to staff. A full-time case load consists of about 40 cases. Currently the most seasoned staff members have close to 75 cases assigned to them and the newest staff members have a caseload of approximately 40 cases.

Code Compliance Officers and Code Enforcement Investigators are not tiered positions as their titles may imply. The Code Compliance Officer I/II position is a legacy Planning and Building Classification designed to assess compliance with existing land use codes. The Code Enforcement Investigators are Management-Confidential employees whose classifications are based on the commonly understood roles requiring advanced investigative skills, the employment of conflict resolution techniques and compelled compliance through a variety of regulatory processes. The

distinction between the two classifications is a construct of two legacy classifications from different departments, and human resources integration of these positions into more commonly used classifications is addressed in the county class and compensation study. They are still utilized in current Code Enforcement operations by assigning the Code Compliance Officer basic and intermediary functions of the cases. Code Enforcement Investigators perform the more advanced and complex casework.

Since the initial staffing request was developed, further analysis of caseload successes and pending complaints has revealed that many cases require an advanced level of casework. This work includes preparation of inspection warrants which are required to enter property without the consent of the property owner and abatement warrants which authorize the county to perform county abatements. In addition to preparation of the warrants, Code Enforcement Investigators coordinate and oversee county abatements when the county has acquired the jurisdiction to complete this work. The tasks of obtaining a warrant and undertaking an abatement are complex and lengthy and not a function of the Code Compliance Officer.

Code Enforcement has performed more county abatements within the last twelve months than the entire history of code enforcement. The need to staff the higher-level position of Code Enforcement Investigator is necessary and urgent due to the growing number of code enforcement complaints that will result in an increasing need to undertake county abatements in the future. Without the allocation of a Code Enforcement Investigator, it is anticipated that there will be a bottleneck of cases needing inspection warrants or abatement warrants without the staff to prepare them. With approval to allocate one (1) Code Enforcement Investigator and to deallocate one (1) Code Compliance Officer, the Code Enforcement Unit will have a 1:1 ratio of Code Compliance Officers to Code Enforcement Investigators allowing for an improved balance of staffing to better manage the workload.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The additional cost to the Code Enforcement budget unit to allocate one (1) additional Code Enforcement Investigator and deallocate one (1) Code Compliance Officer is approximately \$34,685. Budget unit 1100269 will recognize salary savings from the currently allocated and vacant Code Compliance Officers. The positions were allocated with approval of the fiscal year 2021-22 budget and will remain vacant until at least October due to the time required to recruit and hire. These salary savings will offset the additional cost. No additional General Fund allocation is being requested and no supplemental budget is required for this action.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by enforcing laws and regulations to protect residents, providing community-appropriate levels of service and managing our resources to ensure sustainability of services.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

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The Board could choose to maintain staffing at the presently allocated levels. This is not recommended because the more complex work of code enforcement requires a Code Enforcement Investigator. Maintaining current staffing levels will result warrant and abatement processing delays due to staff limitations.

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A