



TOWN OF ERIE

645 Holbrook Street
Erie, CO 80516

Town Council

Board Meeting Date: 2/23/2021

File #: 21-080, **Version:** 1

SUBJECT:

Discussion and Board direction on (1) creating a full-time position to support the Town's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts, (2) creating a full-time Oil and Gas Local Government Designee (LGD) position, and (3) contract funding to expand the Town's Co-Responder program.

DEPARTMENT: Administration

PRESENTER: Malcolm Fleming, Town Administrator

TIME ESTIMATE: 30 minutes

FISCAL SUMMARY:

Cost as Recommended:	\$Up to \$350,000 plus initial IT/Vehicle expenses
Balance Available:	\$)
Budget Line Item Number:	TBD
New Appropriation Required:	Yes

SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND OF SUBJECT MATTER:

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Staffing

Staff has been working with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Board to identify DEI goals and objectives, and develop an action plan for achieving those. Our intent was that once the desired outcomes and scope of the Town's DEI program is clearer, staff would work with the Advisory Board to determine what staffing and other resources are needed to support that work. However, the challenges of implementing a new DEI program make it clear the Town needs dedicated and experienced staff now to support the Town's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts and the Town's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Board. For these reasons, staff supports creating a full-time DEI position as soon as possible.

To better understand how to structure this new position, the Human Resources staff requested position descriptions from other similar jurisdictions. So far, they have not found any comparably sized cities or towns that have a dedicated DEI position. However, they did find position descriptions from much larger organizations. The two attached examples are from the City and County of Denver

(more than 11,000 employees) and from Adams County (which has over 1,150 FTEs compared to the Town of Erie's 236 FTEs).

The Denver position combines an emphasis on both internal organizational issues as well as work with external stakeholders, community organizations, and diverse community leaders. The Adams County position is primarily focused on internal organizational issues has a human resources focus. I believe, subject to DEI Advisory Board review, that we want Erie's position to focus on both internal organizational as well as external community-wide issues, including leading and coordinating external community outreach and education activities.

Using the Denver and Adams County position descriptions as a starting point, and incorporating the additional responsibilities noted above, the HR staff developed the attached Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Administrator Position as a discussion draft. If the Board supports creating such a position, staff will work with the DEI Advisory Board to finalize the position description and start recruiting to fill the position. Based on the compensation for the Denver and Adams County positions, we believe the cost of such a position would range from \$100,000 to \$145,000 per year, including benefits. However, if the Board of Trustees approves such a position, we will work with the Town's compensation consultant to ensure the salary is competitive in the Town's labor market.

Mental Health Co-Responders. Mental health clinicians serving as co-responders with police officers have been shown to be effective in dealing with individuals suffering a mental crisis and helping police officers safely deescalate potentially violent confrontations. The Town currently participates in the Boulder County co-responder program through which we have access to co-responders on an as needed basis. In this way co-responders are typically available seven days a week, but currently there is only one day per week where they are stationed at the Erie Police Department. On the days when they are stationed elsewhere, they typically have a 15 to 30 minutes response time, unless they are on a call elsewhere, in which case it could be longer.

To increase the co-responders' understanding of Erie's community, and to improve response time and days of coverage, Chief Stewart explored different options for providing additional resources. The following summarizes those options.

1. Create an entire team which could provide 24/7 team 365 days per year. We would need at least one supervisor and 5-6 co-responders to be able to cover days off/holidays/training. This would likely cost over \$300,000 annually. A member of the Town's Command Staff would need to supervise the co-responder supervisor. Chief Stewart does not recommend this model. We have the lowest calls for service (CFS) for co-responder needs in Boulder County. A team would not be utilized full time here and attrition would be great as we could not keep the employees busy.
2. Hire one co-responder to be supervised by a member of Erie PD Command Staff or a Sergeant. This would cost about \$90,000 per year including benefits. This would not be a 24/7

program nor would it be 365 days per year. This co-responder would basically become a First Responder. We would always put this co-responder with an officer because they should not be in the field by themselves. Chief Stewart does not recommend this model. Placing a co-responder with an officer will take away the clinical face of the responder. It also would likely restrict the police officer from responding to routine calls as the officer would need to be available to respond with the co-responder on "behavioral health issues". The co-responder would need to be in a bullet resistant vest again making the person seem more like a law enforcement officer. This co-responder would not be able to follow-up on the case management aspect as they would be more of a First Responder as previously mentioned.

3. Approve about \$90,000 in additional funding to contract for dedicated resources with the Boulder County co-responder program. This would allow Boulder County to hire and designate one clinician specifically for the Town of Erie. This employee could work Mon - Fri, 1200 - 2000 hours. Again, this would not be a 24/7 operation 365 days per year. This employee would be a Boulder County employee supervised by the current supervisors of the BC Co-responder program. They would train with this team and would also be trained to specifically deal with Town of Erie issues. This person would be trained to follow-up with case management for Erie cases. In addition, this person could provide more outreach to our community to include the schools (if the schools will allow) and start handling Safe2Tell notifications. Chief Stewart recommends this model as it maintains appropriate clinical (not law enforcement) supervision of the co-responder. It also would provide effective coverage; when the Erie clinician has days off, on holidays or during training, a current member of the Boulder County co-responder team would be assigned to Erie.

Based on the evaluation of these options, staff recommends #3, contracting with Boulder County for a co-responder dedicated to Erie with additional back-up as needed from the Boulder County Co-responder program. The Town's current and projected call volume is not sufficient to sustainably maintain a 24/7/365 co-responder program currently. Contracting with Boulder County will provide good coverage, provide an effective compliment the Town's police response, and ensure the co-responding program staff have the appropriate supervision in a clinical approach to calls.

Oil and Gas Local Government Designee (LGD)

The Board of Trustees recently adopted new regulations that will significantly change the terms under which new oil and gas operations might be located in Town. However, there are already hundreds of oil and gas scattered throughout the Town and nearby surrounding unincorporated County areas that were approved under the State's previously less restrictive regulations. The State's new regulations as well as the Town's new regulations enable the Town to conduct significant new permit review, monitoring and compliance inspections. The Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission has also adopted new rules that include significantly more frequent notice requirements of oil and gas operations. Oil and gas activity has always been a source of significant inquiry from residents, and that has only increased under the State's new regulations.

To effectively monitor existing oil and gas operations, to conduct thorough reviews of any permit applications, and address in a timely and thoughtful manner inquiries from residents and developers, and to proactively develop the Town's oil and gas oversight program, we need a full time position dedicated to this area and to hire an experienced professional to fill that position.

After reviewing the way other local governments-including the City and County of Broomfield and Adams County-staff have developed the attached discussion draft Oil and Gas Liaison position description. Based on comparison of the compensation paid by Broomfield and Adams County for their comparable positions (attached) staff estimates the cost of this new position will range from \$80,000 to \$115,000 per year, including benefits.

Fiscal Impact:

If the Board approves proceeding to create both the DEI and Oil and Gas positions, and to contract for the Co-responder, the total cost would be \$270,000 to \$350,000 annually, consisting of:

- DEI Administrator: \$100,000 to \$145,000 per year, including benefits.
- Oil and Gas Liaison: \$80,000 to \$115,000 per year, including benefits.
- Co-Responders Contract: \$90,000
- Total: \$270,000 to \$350,000 annually plus initial costs for IT equipment and potentially a vehicle.

Board Priority(s) Addressed:

- ✓ Attractive Community Amenities
- ✓ Engaged and Diverse Community
- ✓ Prosperous Economy
- ✓ Well-Maintained Transportation Infrastructure
- ✓ Small Town Feel
- ✓ Safe and Healthy Community
- ✓ Effective Governance
- ✓ Environmentally Sustainable
- ✓ Fiscally Responsible

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Denver Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Administrator Position Description
2. Adams County Diversity and Inclusion Administrator Position Description
3. Erie Discussion Draft Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Administrator Position
4. Adams County Oil and Gas Liaison Position Description
5. Broomfield Senior Energy & Environmental Analyst Position Description
6. Broomfield Oil and Gas Monitoring Specialist Position Description
7. Erie Discussion Draft Oil and Gas Liaison Position Description