

# STAFF REPORT

## *City Council Consent Item*

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**DATE:** August 23, 2024

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Council Members

**FROM:** Casey Day, Chief of Police

**THROUGH:** Amy Nilsen, Interim City Manager

**SUBJECT:** Recommendation for Hiring Lateral Public Safety Dispatch Candidate at Step Three (3)

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Receive staff report and consider the Chief of Police's recommendation to hire a lateral Public Safety Dispatch candidate at step three of the FY 2024-25 full-time pay rate schedule (\$26.97 per hour).

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the staff report is to recommend the hiring of a seasoned, lateral Public Safety Dispatcher at step three of the pay scale, based on the candidates extensive experience, qualifications, and proven expertise in public safety communications.

### **BACKGROUND:**

Deanna Kay Shaw has applied for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher with the City of Fortuna. Ms. Shaw brings 21 years of extensive experience in public safety dispatch, with the majority of her career spent at the Turlock Police Department in California. During her tenure at Turlock PD, she progressed through the ranks and ultimately served as a Senior Emergency Dispatcher, a role that required high levels of responsibility, leadership, and technical proficiency. Ms. Shaw has also successfully completed the POST Dispatch Academy and possesses a POST Intermediate Certificate, further validating her qualifications and readiness for this role. Her long-standing commitment to public safety and her demonstrated ability to manage complex emergency situations make her an ideal candidate for our department.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Given the candidates significant experience and advanced skills, it is appropriate to consider her for a lateral entry at step three of the Public Safety Dispatcher pay scale. This recommendation is based on the following key factors:

1. **Experience and Expertise:** With 21 years of public safety dispatch experience, the candidate has developed a comprehensive understanding of emergency communications, including proficiency in various dispatch technologies, protocols, and procedures. Her experience as a Senior Emergency Dispatcher reflects her capability to handle high-stress situations and lead dispatch teams effectively.
2. **Professional Certifications:** The candidate has previously completed the POST Dispatch Academy and holds a POST Intermediate Certificate, which is recognized as a significant

professional achievement in the field of public safety communications. These certifications confirm that she has met and exceeded the training and performance standards required for her role.

3. **Leadership and Training:** Throughout her career, the candidate has demonstrated strong leadership skills, mentoring junior dispatchers and contributing to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Turlock PD dispatch unit. Her experience in a training role will be invaluable in mentoring entry-level dispatchers and in maintaining the high standards required of our communications personnel.
4. **Immediate Impact:** By hiring the candidate at step three, we are recognizing her ability to immediately contribute at a high level, reducing the costs associated with training related overtime and expediting the department's onboarding time typically required for new hires. Her familiarity with POST standards and extensive experience will allow her to integrate quickly into the police department's operations.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Based on the foregoing considerations, it is recommended that Deanna Kay Shaw be hired as a Public Safety Dispatcher at step three. Her extensive experience, leadership, and professional certifications make her an exceptional fit for our department, and hiring her at this step is both justified and advantageous to our operations.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The fiscal impact of hiring the candidate at step three will be within the budgeted salary range for Public Safety Dispatchers. Her lateral entry at this step reflects her qualifications and the value she will bring to our department. The difference between step three and step zero is approximately \$2.99 per hour.

**CONCLUSION:**

Hiring the candidate at step three is a strategic decision that will strengthen our dispatch team with a highly qualified and experienced professional. It is requested that Council consider approving this recommendation.

**RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION:**

1. Receive staff presentation and review Council questions with staff
2. Open public comment
3. Close public comment
4. Motion to approve hiring the candidate at step three. Consent agenda vote.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

*FY 2024-25 Full-time Pay Rate Schedule, City of Fortuna*