

CITY OF BUCKEYE
Regular Council Meeting
COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

MEETING DATE: 05/06/25	AGENDA ITEM: 4.B. CMO - FY2026 - FY2027 Fire Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
DATE PREPARED: 05/01/25	DISTRICT NO.:
STAFF LIAISON: Doug Sandstrom, Deputy City Manager, dsandstrom@buckeyeaz.gov, (623) 349-6993	
DEPARTMENT: City Manager	AGENDA ITEM TYPE: Consent Agenda Items / New Business

ACTION/MOTION: (This language identifies the formal motion to be made by the Council)
 Council to take action on the Memorandum of Understanding between the City Manager of the City of Buckeye and the United Buckeye Firefighters Association (UBFA) with a term from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2027.

SUMMARY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Representatives of the UBFA and the city met several times over the months of January and February to review requests, understand the needs, background and driving force behind their requests in order to develop a recommendation for council that enables our success as an innovative, fiscally responsible, high-performing organization. The agreed upon items in this MOU meet these criteria and reinforce our commitment to our residents and our employees. The proposed MOU was approved by the UBFA membership in March and if approved by council will become effective with the new fiscal year in July.

Council approved a two (2) year MOU on June 20, 2023 covering FY2024 and FY2025, the below is a summary of the major modifications which are proposed for council consideration in the MOU to cover FY2026-FY2027.

Overtime: All hours worked will count towards overtime. Currently leave such as vacation, sick or holiday does not count as hours worked when calculating overtime. With this modification, employees working hours outside of their normal work schedule will generally be paid at an overtime rate. This is standard practice in nearly all of our benchmark cities.

Specialty Pay: Fire employees on special assignments will receive assignment pay equal to 3.2% of the top firefighter pay (\$1.03 per hour). Regardless of number of assignments this will be limited to a maximum of two specialty pays (increased from one). Moving the basis for this specialty pay to a percentage will allow the amount to increase based upon any CPI or market adjustments.

Step Structure: Fire is currently on a step structure based upon the 2022 classification and compensation study adopted by council. This will capture the structure of the step system with all steps based on the starting pay of a Firefighter. Fire Recruits are 5% lower than a step 1 Firefighter and all steps for Firefighter, Engineer and Captain are set at 5%. Future adjustments through a COLA or Market will be applied to step 1 of the Firefighter range with the 5% increases flowing through the rest of the structure. As presented a step 1 Engineer will be paid 4.1% more than a topped-out Firefighter and a step 1 Fire Captain will be paid 6.29% more than a topped-out Engineer, however the range of all is based upon the 65th percentile of the market and this will continue to determine the number of steps and

separation between grades in the future.

40 Hour Shift Assignment: When an employee is assigned to a 40-hour shift all specialty pays will be converted to converted to a 40-hour rate. The current \$3.00 per hour 40-hour assignment pay will be modified to be 4.2% of actual rate of pay (ranges from \$1.35 to \$2.55), this change normalizes this assignment pay to accurately reflect the pay differential that occurs when moving from a 56-hour assignment to a 40-hour assignment.

Paramedic Pay: Fire employees assigned as paramedics will receive paramedic pay equal to 10.3% of the top firefighter pay (\$3.32 per hour). Moving the basis for this specialty pay to a percentage will allow the amount to increase based upon any CPI or market adjustments.

City Contribution to Deferred Compensation: The MOU does not specifically require a city contribution to represented employees deferred compensation, however this will be proposed as part of the FY2026 City Managers Budget.

Policy language clean-up

In addition to the above changes there have been many changes which clean up existing policy references, reconciliations to the above modifications and clarifying language concerning the chiefs use of discretion in operations.

BENEFITS:

The Meet and Confer process continues to facilitate open and ongoing dialogue between City of Buckeye Management and the United Buckeye Firefighters Association. The successful conclusion of the Meet and Confer process, with an agreed upon MOU, continues the foundational agreement previously adopted by Council.

FUTURE ACTION:

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The modifications included in the proposed MOU are estimated at approximately \$208,000 annually, these costs will be included in the FY2026 Budget. Although inclusion of the salary step structure will have an impact on costs, the overall plan continues to be based on the council adopted 65th percentile and contains small modifications to the current structure. Costs associated with the potential of a city contribution to deferred compensation are not included in this amount as that will be a budgetary decision outside of the MOU.

BUDGETED:

Yes

FISCAL YEAR:

FY2026

Items related to a project or facility location must include an attached vicinity map for Council Review.

ATTACHMENTS:

[FY2026-FY2027 MOU, United Buckeye Firefighters Association - Redline.pdf](#)

[FY26-27 MOU with Buckeye Fire Association_Signed by Association.pdf](#)