



STAFF REPORT

DATE: 03/04/2026
TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Fire Department

2026-50

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBJECT:

RESOLUTION APPROVING APPOINTMENT OF A RETIRED ANNUITANT TO AN EXTRA HELP POSITION AS BATTALION CHIEF FOR INCIDENT COMMAND AND CERTIFYING THE POSITION AS CRITICALLY NEEDED

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to approve Resolution No. 2026-009 to appoint a retired annuitant Battalion Chief to a part-time, temporary "extra help" position to support large scale incidents and mutual aid deployments.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Adopt Resolution No. 2026-009, approving the appointment of Joey Olsen, a retired annuitant, to a part-time, temporary "extra help" position of Battalion Chief.
- b. Certify that the appointment is necessary to fill a critically needed position sooner than 180 days in accordance with California Government Code Section 7522.56.
- c. Authorize an appropriation in the amount of \$36,673 from the General Fund to the Fire Department's operating budget within the Mutual Aid Assignments Division

and an offsetting estimated revenue increase by the same amount for the remainder of FY 2026.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

The Fire Department operates in a high-risk, all-hazards environment with exposure to wildland-urban interface fires, major transportation corridors, hazardous materials incidents, critical infrastructure, and regional and statewide disaster response obligations. In recent years, California has experienced a sustained increase in the frequency, severity, and duration of catastrophic wildfires and natural disasters, resulting in prolonged emergency operations and increased reliance on typed Incident Management Teams, Area Command and Unified Command structures, and extended operational periods requiring depth and continuity in command staffing.

Increasingly, the Department supports these complex, multi-operational period incidents, extended unified command operations, and regional or statewide mutual aid deployments. These incidents require highly qualified Incident Command and Incident Management Team (IMT) personnel with current California Incident Command Certification System (CICCS) qualifications and extensive operational experience. There is an increased statewide demand for CICCS-qualified command personnel, creating a limited pool of experienced individuals available for immediate deployment, training, and succession development.

ANALYSIS:

The City of Corona Fire Department operates in an increasingly complex all-hazards environment that requires immediate access to experienced, CICCS-qualified command personnel to support extended and multi-agency emergency operations. The appointment of a retired annuitant Battalion Chief provides the Department with critical operational depth to staff key Incident Command and General Staff roles at the local, Operational Area, regional, and statewide levels, while also supporting Incident Management Team continuity, training, and succession planning.

The proposed retired annuitant previously served with CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire as a Deputy Chief and brings extensive experience in incident command, multi-agency coordination, and emergency management. This experience allows for immediate operational effectiveness without the learning curve associated with external hires or newly promoted personnel.

The retired annuitant Battalion Chief shall be compensated at a base hourly rate of \$101.56 per hour. The appointment will not include benefits, paid leave, or holidays, and total hours worked shall not exceed 960 hours per fiscal year, consistent with applicable California Government Code and CalPERS requirements. This compensation structure ensures fiscal control while allowing the City to retain specialized expertise needed to support complex incident operations.

When the retired annuitant Battalion Chief is deployed under mutual aid or assigned to incidents eligible for reimbursement, all allowable personnel costs, including salary, can be fully reimbursable through the California Fire Assistance Agreement (CFAA) administered by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). Eligible reimbursements apply when the employee is assigned to State-approved incidents such as wildfires, disaster responses, or emergency activations. No additional appropriation is required.

The proposed appointment complies with the requirements of California Government Code Sections 7522.56, 21224, and 21227, including limitations on hours worked, compensation structure, and duration of service. Due to the increasing frequency and severity of wildfire and disaster events affecting the City and region, coupled with the limited availability of CICC-qualified command personnel statewide, this position is considered critically necessary and cannot be deferred without increasing operational and organizational risk.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the recommended actions will result in an appropriation in the amount of \$36,673 from the General Fund to the Fire Department's operating budget within the Mutual Aid Assignments Division and an offsetting estimated revenue increase by the same amount for the remainder of FY 2026. This amount reflects 320 hours of service for the period of March through June 2026. Annual recurring costs, capped at 960 hours, are estimated to be \$110,016, which are fully reimbursable.

The retired annuitant Battalion Chief will be paid an hourly rate of \$101.56 no less than the minimum and no more than the maximum hourly rate paid to a person serving in the Battalion Chief classification, as required by CalPERS regulations. He will not be entitled to any additional benefits, paid leave, or paid holidays. All allowable personnel costs, including salary, can be fully reimbursable through the California Fire Assistance Agreement (CFAA) administered by the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is categorically exempt pursuant to Section 1506(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that the activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA, and is therefore exempt from CEQA. This action approves Resolution No. 2026-009 to appoint a retired annuitant Battalion Chief to a part-time, temporary "extra help" position, and there is no possibility that this project will have an effect on the environment. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

PREPARED BY: BRIAN YOUNG, FIRE CHIEF

REVIEWED BY: LORI SASSOON, CHIEF TALENT OFFICER

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Exhibit 1 – Resolution No. 2026-009
2. Exhibit 2 – Employment Agreement Letter
3. Exhibit 3 – CICCIS Guide 2025