



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DATE: 19 January, 2012
TO: Jim Scholl, City Manager
FROM: Michael Davila, Division Chief of Operations
SUBJECT: Executive Summary – South Florida Workforce Grant

PROJECT

The Key West Fire Department, in coordination with the Key West High School, has developed a Fire Academy to provide instruction to students of the Key West High School with the goal of facilitating the students to become Fire Fighter 1 level in the Florida State Fire College system. The students would continue after graduation from high school to acquire Firefighter 2 level and Florida State Certification at the Monroe County Fire Academy, and Emergency Medical Technician Basic to be eligible for employment (entry level) with several Fire Departments in Monroe County, including the Key West Fire Department.

The KWFD/KWHS Fire Academy was reinstated this school-year (2011-2012) after several years of dormancy due to budget cuts. A Grant was requested and awarded by the South Florida Workforce in the amount of **\$35,000**. The contract stipulates that the money be used to pay instructor wages as well as participants expenses such as; Bunker Gear, Uniforms, Boots, Gloves, Hoods etc.

The Fire Academy program is coordinating with the Monroe County Fire Academy to provide First Response medical instruction and basic fire fighting curriculum. The Monroe County Fire Academy has agreed to use their facility to provide live burn instruction as needed once all senior students are 18 years old. Junior students will not be allowed to participate in live burn instruction until their second year due to age restrictions.

The Fire Academy has produced three active employees of the Key West Fire Department, Andrew Perez, Chris Mendizabal and Dylan Snider. The Key West Fire Department has hired four new employees within the last year with at least three more new hires are expected due to retirement in the next six months. State certified former Fire Academy graduates will be considered first due to their relationship with the Key West Fire Department. Keith Durden, another former graduate, is currently attending the Florida State Fire College in Ocala to complete the Firefighter 2 and State Certification and expects to return to Key West to apply for employment.

The KWFD Academy will prepare all students to work in the public safety industry. Prior to the Fire Academy, the Key West Fire Department hired several employees who lasted less than two years leading to the term "one year wonders". We expect to

develop employees who will spend their entire career with the Key West Fire Department as valuable hard working men and women.

The Department proposes approval for the following reasons:

- The Fire Academy is a great way to provide KWHS students interested in public service an avenue to forming career development
- South Florida Workforce is an established, respected agency which promotes the positive placement of prospective workers
- The grant money will ensure the program is a success by relieving the City of Key West and Monroe County School Board of some of the fiscal responsibility for the program
- A successful program will ensure the continuity of the program, providing a better candidate for employment once completed

The Key West Fire Department recommends approval of the contract, execution of the contract by City Manager Scholl, and Budget Adjustments as needed.