



Interoffice Memorandum

March 13, 2017

TO: Mayor Teresa Jacobs
and the Board of County Commissioners

 Carrie Woodell, Manager, Procurement Division

CONTACT: Mike Wajda, Division Chief, Fire Rescue Department
407-836-9102

SUBJECT: Approval of Contract Y17-1045-MV, Paramedic Training Classes

ACTION REQUESTED:

Approval to award Contract Y17-1045-MV, Paramedic Training Classes, to Valencia College in the estimated contract award amount of \$617,936 for a 1-year term. Further request authorization for the Procurement Division to renew the contract for two additional 1-year terms.

PROCUREMENT:

The Paramedic Program at Valencia College consists of 42 credit hours which includes classroom instruction, labs, clinical rotations, and field experience. The program fees include the cost of tuition, uniforms, immunizations, background check, special course fees, and certifications. This certificate program in the pre-hospital Advanced Life Support is specifically designed for current Florida Certified Emergency Medical Technicians who demonstrate proficiency in their current field work. There is a significant need for paramedics to provide services in Orange County Fire Rescue. Upon completion of the program, we will have increased the staffing level of paramedics within Orange County Fire Rescue to provide Advanced Life Support for the citizens and visitors of Orange County.

FUNDING:

Funding is available in account number 1009 034 0690 4030.

APPROVALS:

The Fire Rescue Department concurs with this recommendation.

REMARKS:

Fire Rescue has implemented a Sponsored Paramedic Program to address the critical need for Paramedics in the Department. All new employees are

Y17-1045-MV Paramedic Training Classes

required to complete paramedic school within three years as a condition of employment. Valencia College has successfully partnered with Fire Rescue to provide for the critical training needs of the Department for many years. These include minimum standards (fire fighter) training, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training, and, since 2012, the Sponsored Paramedic Program. This educational partnership has recently expanded to include the Orange County Fire Rescue Department Corporate University. The university is designed to develop our employees and set them on a path to success within Fire Rescue. Through its tuition reimbursement program, Fire Rescue encourages all of its employees to seek higher education. Through Fire Rescue's promotional process, employees are required to obtain certain classes and/or degrees to become eligible for promotion. After passing minimum standards training and becoming an EMT, the Sponsored Paramedic Program is the next piece of the Orange County Fire Rescue Department Corporate University.

Valencia College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges, and, as such, all of the aforementioned classes including the paramedic Classes fill many of the requirements for an associate's degree in Emergency Medical Services. As the employee moves through the promotional process by taking the required promotional classes, along with Valencia's core curriculum, the employee is quickly able to obtain an associate's degree. Furthermore, due to Valencia's relationship with the University of Central Florida, employees are allowed to transition into a bachelor's or master's degree. This agreement has been built on Fire Rescue's requirements as to the following:

- Paramedic classes offered within Orange County
- Paramedic class credits that can be directly applied towards an associate's degree with a direct connection to a four-year degree
- Orange County Fire Rescue shift friendly class schedule
- Clinical training held on Orange County Fire Rescue Department units and at hospitals located primarily within Orange County
- A paramedic program that correlates with expected paramedic practices within Orange County Fire Rescue

While other sources may provide paramedic classes, none meet all the requirements as listed above. The requirement for paramedic classes to be located within Orange County benefits Fire Rescue, as we regularly

meet with the students and instructors to review the employee's status. Doing so outside of the County would be inefficient, requiring exorbitant drive times. Paramedic class credits that can be directly applied towards an associate's degree with a direct connection to a four-year degree benefits both the employee and Fire Rescue. As the majority of our employees are Orange County residents, it would be an undue hardship to cause an employee to travel outside the County to finish a degree started at paramedic school or start over at Valencia College without the benefit of the paramedic class credits. It should be noted that Valencia College does not recognize, for credit purposes, any other paramedic program located in Orange County.

Fire Rescue projects that this contract will provide schooling for up to 90 students. The price of this training is considered reasonable based on the current contract. The price increase from 2016 to 2017 was less than 1%. Tuition rates are set by the Florida Legislature and the Valencia College Board of Trustees.