



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: {{item.number}}

Agenda Date: October 31, 2024

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Office of the City Manager

DEPARTMENT HEAD:

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Ordinance confirming the appointment of Fire Chief

SUMMARY:

This ordinance confirms the appointment of Valerie Frausto as the Chief of the Fire Department of the City of San Antonio.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Under the requirements of the Texas Local Government Code, Section 143.013 (a) (1), the City Manager appoints the Fire Chief and the appointment is confirmed by the City Council. The City Manager initiated the recruitment process for a new Fire Chief in February 2024. Over 65 applications were submitted for the Fire Chief Position.

After careful review of the applications, nine candidates were vetted by a panel of executives and a community stakeholder through virtual conversations with candidates. From these conversations, six individuals (three internal and three external) were selected for in-person interviews.

On October 11, in-person interviews were held with three interview panels. The panels consisted of a Fire personnel panel, City Executives, and Community Stakeholders. This process also

included a mock media interview. All six individuals were interviewed by the City Manager.

Following these interviews, three applicants (two internal and one external) were selected for additional conversations with the City Manager and Deputy City Manager. Based on feedback received by the various interview panels, applicant's background and experience and the subsequent conversations, the City Manager appointed Valerie Frausto as the next Fire Chief of the San Antonio Fire Department.

Chief Frausto is a native San Antonian who joined the San Antonio Fire Department in August 2000 and steadily moved through the ranks during her 24-year career, from frontline firefighting to administrative leadership. She spent the first 15 years of her career in the Firefighting and EMS Divisions of the SAFD holding the ranks of firefighter, fire engineer/paramedic, Lieutenant, Captain, and Battalion Chief.

In 2015, as Division Chief of Communications/Dispatch and Technical Services, she and her team streamlined dispatch operations aimed to improve response times. In 2017 she was appointed to the rank of Assistant Chief of Support Services, where Frausto and her team established partnerships with the Austin Fire Department and Bexar-Metro 911 Emergency Communications Center to build redundancy into SAFD's dispatch operations. She subsequently earned the title of Fire Marshal.

During this time, she also helped lead the effort to launch the Hero Like Her recruiting campaign to break barriers that deter young women from pursuing historically male-dominated careers.

In early 2024, Frausto was appointed interim Deputy Fire Chief of Administrative Services. In this position she has played a pivotal role in directing all activities related to Fire Prevention, Recruiting, Applicant Processing, Professional Standards, Personnel and Wellness, Public Outreach, Public Information, Budget, Payroll, and support services including fleet, facilities and supplies.

Ms. Frausto holds a Bachelor of Bachelor's in Fire and Emergency Services Administration from Texas A&M University at San Antonio.

Following City Council confirmation, Valerie will begin heading the City's Fire Department on Friday, November 1, 2024. As Fire Chief, Valerie will serve a critical role in carrying on the San Antonio Fire Department's mission of protecting the lives and property of the community while prioritizing the health, wellness, and safety of firefighters and paramedics.

ISSUE:

Under state law, the City Manager appoints the Fire Chief and the appointment is confirmed by the City Council.

ALTERNATIVES:

None. Under state law, the City Manager appoints the Fire Chief and the appointment is confirmed by the City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this Ordinance.