



701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Council Memo

Department Source: Fire

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: July 20, 2026

Re: Memorandum of Understanding with Learning for Life, an affiliate of the Great Rivers Council, Incorporated, Boy Scouts of America for the Fire Explorer Post

Impacted Ward: Citywide

Executive Summary

Staff has prepared a resolution for Council consideration authorizing the City Manager to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Learning for Life, an affiliate of the Boy Scouts of America, for the Columbia Fire Department Explorer Post renewal.

Discussion

The Columbia Fire Department is committed to continuing its Fire Explorer Post, open to youth from Columbia and the surrounding areas. This hands-on program, available to individuals aged 14 to 21, is designed to introduce young people to first-responder practices and serve as a strategic recruiting tool for fostering diversity within our fire department. By actively engaging youth from all backgrounds, the Fire Explorer Program strengthens our commitment to creating a fire service that reflects the diverse community we serve.

Participants in the program don't just gain theoretical knowledge, they acquire practical life skills that are applicable in various personal and professional situations. These include teamwork, respect for themselves and others, accountability, and time management. The program also equips youth with essential trade-related skills such as ropes and knot tying, safe ground ladder use, hand tool operation, water emergency safety (ice rescue and warm water emergencies), CPR, fire prevention, and leadership.

Through this program, we aim to inspire the next generation of fire service professionals. But it's not just about the individuals, it's about the community. We want to emphasize the crucial role of community involvement in shaping a fire department that protects and serves everyone equitably.

This Memorandum of Understanding outlines the responsibilities of the Columbia Fire Department and participating members and the support services provided by Learning for Life.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: \$5,000 is budgeted for uniforms and safety equipment.

Long-Term Impact: \$5,000 annually to replace equipment as needed.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan ImpactStrategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Safe Community, Secondary Impact: Inclusive and Equitable Community,
Tertiary Impact: Organizational Excellence

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Inter-Governmental Cooperation, Secondary Impact: Not applicable,
Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
10/21/2024	R183-24 Memorandum of understanding and addendum with Great River Council, Inc, Boy Scouts of America, a/k/a Learning for Life, associated with the Fire Explorer Post program within the Fire Department.

Suggested Council Action

Should the council agree, we recommend passing the resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with Learning for Life, an affiliate of the Great Rivers Council, Incorporated, Boy Scouts of America, to continue the Fire Explorer Post.