



October 30, 2009  
Mr. Roy Otto  
City Manager

Dear Mr. Otto,

The membership of Greeley Firefighters Local 888 is currently conducting research into the possibility of a trial of a 48/96 schedule that would begin on April 15, 2010 and conclude on March 17, 2011. This means that line firefighters would work 48 hours on-duty and then be off for 96 hours. We feel this switch would be of mutual benefit to the City of Greeley as well as our fire department. We also are considering the recent wage MOU agreed upon by the City and Union. The MOU was developed due to budget shortfalls. The members of the union voted to forego wage increases in 2010 to assist the City with balancing the budget. The "48/96 Schedule" has been demonstrated to provide savings to city government and the personnel working for the fire department. While this option will not solve the budget issues single-handedly, it is still a significant amount of money that merits consideration. Based on actual figures from 2008 and a scientific study completed by West Metro Fire and Saint Anthony's Hospital in 2006, the 48/96 schedule has the potential to save the City of Greeley \$33,881.64 – \$45,377.04 (see the actual calculations on the last page of this document).

The 48/96 schedule works the same amount of hours as the current Modified Kelly Schedule, only in a different format:

Current Modified Kelly Schedule: 24 on; 24 off; 24 on; 24 off; 24 on; 96 off

48/96 Schedule: 48 on; 96 off (Hence the name)

Numerous departments across the nation have gone to the 48/96 schedule and to date, none have gone back. This schedule has proven to decrease long term fatigue in personnel compared with our current modified Kelly schedule. For example, San Jose and Sacramento, CA Fire Departments both have firehouses running 20-40 calls in a 48 hour shift and they both are currently using the 48/96. Our neighbors, Evans Fire and Windsor Fire are on it. Additionally, several departments in the Denver/Front Range area are on it or considering a trial:

1. West Metro
2. Boulder
3. Longmont

4. North Metro
5. Mountain View
6. South Metro (rumored to be considering a trial)
7. Littleton (rumored to be considering a trial)
8. Thornton (rumored to be considering a trial)
9. Pueblo (negotiating with City to change to 48/96)

In 2006, the West Metro Fire Department was the first and only department thus far to have a scientific study done by medical doctors (from St. Anthony's) on the Modified Kelly Schedule vs. 48/96 schedule. In short, the results were very positive. Here is a link to the study . . .

[http://www.westmetrofire.org/docs/2006/ops/st.as\\_final\\_4896.pdf](http://www.westmetrofire.org/docs/2006/ops/st.as_final_4896.pdf)

It is important for you to know that a 48/96 schedule as a trial was presented to the Union Membership in the fall of 2007. The trial was voted down. Without going into detail of why it failed, we feel the trial now has substantially more support considering the current economic climate and negotiations between the City and the Union on money saving measures. Note that a trial would have to occur before a change to the contract. Therefore, on this issue you would have to consider the terminology "Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)" vs. "Contract Change" similar to the MOU that was agreed to for the wage & step increases for 2010. An MOU would allow a trial run of the schedule prior to changing the contract. It would likely also allow an "escape" clause where either Administration or the Local could opt out of the new schedule.

We have compiled some benefits that should be recognized if this trial is brought forward by the Local for your consideration. These include:

- Morale boost to personnel.
  - A happy employee is a productive employee.
  - This could also be included in the cons based on individuals who do not support the change to 48/96.
- Decrease in long term fatigue.
  - Most of the feedback from individuals working this shift state that they are less fatigued at work and at home. Even though they are working 48 in a row, they still felt that there was a reduction in the time they felt fatigued at work compared to working our current schedule.
  - Most studies that have been done on the 48/96 indicate that the long term fatigue is reduced when compared to our current schedule.
- Going Green...
  - Potential reduction in emissions from employee vehicles by reducing the round trips required per year.
- Reduction in information lost at shift change.
  - Pass on information between shifts will happen less frequently, which in turn should reduce the number of items lost in translation.

- ❑ 48 hour shift allows increased time for projects and/or personnel issues.
  - Personnel will have to log-in to computers once per two shifts
  - Conference calls would only have to be conducted once per two shifts
  - Station routine and apparatus checks would only have to be done once in two shifts.
  - Scheduling appointments for car seats or business owners for pre-plans should become easier. There are times that training sessions or other activities interfere with getting to these in a timely manner.
  - Globally thinking... there is always time involved with preparing to the day's work and there is time spent preparing for the end of the shift. An increase in productivity may be recognized by having to do this once in 48 hours.
  
- ❑ Should realize some savings on cleaning products with the reduction of station routines done per year.
  - Most departments that have switched to this schedule have policies in place to do a good detailed station routine the first morning of a rotation (2 shifts) and then just keep the station operational for the remainder of the rotation. Theoretically, if we decide to give the 48/96 a try and we follow the same type of policy; we should have a reduction in use of cleaning supplies.
  
- ❑ Always have two battalions on a 4 day. More personnel available for emergency call back, or constant staffing.
  - With the 48/96 schedule, there are always two battalions that are on a 4 day. Considerations will need to be made on how many hours personnel will be allowed to work in a row. Our current policy states 48 hours.
  - Departments who have switched to this schedule have a wide range of policies dealing with this issue. Some use a max of 96 hours worked, some use 72 hours and there are some that use 60 hours.

There would be some impact on the fire department as a result of this trial. These include:

- ❑ There may be times when contact between Chief Officers and shift personnel will be delayed because of holidays and weekends. The shift we are currently working has similar issues now.
  
- ❑ Pay periods would change from 27 days currently to 24 days with 48/96 schedule. Payroll would be adjusted to reflect FLSA adjustments. The POT hours reset on April 14, 2010. The pot hours would continue with the exception of being calculated at a different rate.
  
- ❑ There is the potential that busy stations may have an increase in short term fatigue. Information acquired in the feedback from personnel working this shift currently and the studies that have been completed on this subject state that the reduction in long term fatigue far out way the impact of the short term fatigue.

This information was provided to you in good faith. The membership of the Greeley Firefighters Local 888 will be reviewing the material from the study that is being completed and will make a decision on moving forward with a vote of the membership for a trial.

We would be more than happy to talk with you further on this issue if you would like.

Sincerely,

Lt. Jeff Stranahan

CC Kevin Maloney; President, Local 888  
Duane McDonald: Fire Chief  
Sharon McCabe; Human Resource Director

## FLSA SAVINGS

1. The Modified Kelly Schedule Yearly FLSA = 162 hrs/person *OR* 15,066 hrs for 93 line personnel
2. The 48/96 Schedule Yearly FLSA = 152 hrs/person *OR* 14,136 hrs for 93 line personnel
3. The 48/96 Schedule reduces FLSA by 6%
4. \$181,513.94 was coded/paid out for FLSA in 2008
5. **Based on 2008 actual figures, a 48/96 schedule would have saved \$10,890.84 in FLSA pay for the City of Greeley.**

## SICK TIME SAVINGS

1. 3,408 OT hours were coded for in 2008 due to sick call outs
2. Numerous departments report reductions in sick leave, but few have done scientific research to achieve a hard number. However, Saint Anthony's Hospital documented a 30% reduction in sick hours used (11,637 in 2005 to 8,246 in 2006) by West Metro Fire Department on a 48/96 schedule when compared to a Modified Kelly Schedule.
3. Using a 20%-30% reduction of sick time estimate for the City of Greeley if UCFRA were on the 48/96 schedule, this equates to 680-1020 hours less over time pay out for sick coverage.
4. **Using a 1.5 hour pay rate for BLS Top Engineer Pay in 2008 (old contract: \$22.54 X 1.5 = \$33.81), this is an estimate savings for the City of Greeley of \$22,990.80 - \$34,486.20.**

## TOTAL SAVINGS

1. **Based on actual figures for 2008 and the Saint Anthony's Study of West Metro Fire Department's switch to the 48/96 schedule, the City of Greeley has the potential to save \$33,881.64 - \$45,377.04 if we did a 48/96 schedule trial.**