

**REPORT TO MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

TO THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND COUNCIL:

DATE: June 1, 2009

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE AND APPROPRIATE THE ACCEPTANCE OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE RECOVERY GRANT FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$240,896 TO BE USED TO PARTIALLY FUND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S PART-TIME FORENSIC SPECIALIST, HALF TIME FORENSIC TECHNICIAN POSITIONS AND ONE TIME EQUIPMENT PURCHASES

Report in Brief

The Concord Police Department will be submitting an application in May 2009 for a \$240,896 grant through the Recovery Act Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Formula Program. This grant is part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Staff recommends appropriation of the grant to fund a part-time (.50 FTE) Forensic Specialist, a contract part-time (.50 FTE) Forensic Technician and one time equipment purchases.

Background

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Public Law 111-5 (the "Recovery Act"), which was signed into law by President Obama on February 17, 2009, includes almost \$2 billion in critical resources for state and local law enforcement and other criminal justice activities through the Recovery Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program.

The Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program is the primary provider of federal criminal justice funding to state and local jurisdictions. JAG funds support all components of the criminal justice system, from multijurisdictional drug and gang task forces to crime prevention and domestic violence programs, courts, corrections, treatment, and justice information sharing initiatives.

Under the terms of the JAG grant, local governments must apply for an award with a single, joint application managed by the "Fiscal Agent." The Sheriff's Office of Management Services has been designated as the Fiscal Agent for all cities in Contra Costa County. A fee of 5% of the award amount (\$12,045) is allocated from the grant's funds to pay the County for fiscal management of the grant.

Discussion

Staff recommends the JAG funds be used as follows:

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Re-Hiring of Forensic Specialist & Technician. The Police Department proposes to use these funds to hire one contract part-time (50%) FTE Forensic Specialist and one part-time (50%) FTE Forensic Technician position. During the mid-year budget process the Crime Scene Investigations (CSI) Bureau lost two full-time Forensic Specialist positions. The CSI Bureau at the Police Department had been staffed with five full-time civilian forensic specialists, two part-time forensic technicians and one sworn police supervisor. The elimination of the two full time civilian technicians has reduced staffing by 40% and has impacted service delivery to victims of crime. Response times of technicians to routine crime scenes have been delayed.

The Concord Police Department has eliminated CSI Bureau response to certain felony and most misdemeanor incidents as a result of the staffing reductions. The additional personnel under the grant would improve response times and allow for better collection and processing of evidence. The department has allocated \$33,393 to fund the salary and benefits of the part-time Forensic Technician position and \$41,860 to fund salary and benefits for the part-time contract Forensic Specialist position.

Additionally the department proposes to purchase much needed equipment for use throughout the police department that the City's general fund cannot support at this time:

Dispatch Integrated Controller. The Concord Police Department had planned on remodeling the dispatch work area through funds received by the State of California's Department of General Services Public Safety Answering Point program. This program provides funding to replace 911 telephone systems and furniture; however the project was on hold due to the inability to fund the replacement of the current analog controller system. The department will be using JAG funding to purchase an integrated digital controller and interface to control existing alarms, doors, intercom and CCTV at the police department. The controllers will be managed by the department's dispatchers. The JAG grant will fund \$70,000 for the purchase of the controller.

Handheld Ticket Writers. The department will be purchasing three handheld ticket writers and three Bluetooth printers for use by the Parking Services Unit. The department does not own any automated ticket writers and this purchase will increase efficiency and minimize errors going to the current ticket processing company. This equipment has been allocated \$8,400 from the JAG grant funds.

Document Imaging Scanner. The department will be purchasing a document scanner for use by the Records Unit. In 2004 the Records Unit stopped microfilming documents and began the process of scanning all documents, beginning the project with two off-the-shelf consumer grade scanners. With over 32,000 police reports written every year, the inadequate speed and quality of these scanners became a bottleneck in the Records Unit. The new machine will increase the number of scanners for use by the Records Unit from two to three, and will allow the staff to process documents in a faster manner and make them more readily available to both their internal and external customers, greatly improving their customer service capability. The proposed scanner will cost approximately \$4,000.

Digital Recording Equipment – Investigations Division. The department currently has seven interview rooms in the Investigations Division and two interview rooms in the jail facility that will need to be upgraded from analog to digital recording. This upgrade will improve the quality of evidence captured, which will improve officer efficiency when reviewing interviews and will improve transcription efforts for court

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preparation. The upgrade will include the purchase of a Digital Video Recorder (DVR) and upgrading of the audio system components. Twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) has been set aside from the JAG funds to complete this upgrade.

Digital Camera Equipment – Forensics. Replacing the Forensic Specialists' cameras with high quality, professional grade, digital cameras and associated equipment (multiple focal length lenses, external flash, remote shutter release, tripod, etc.) is also included in the funding proposal. This camera system also records video in 1080p High Definition, allowing the Forensic Specialist to document crime scenes with still images and video using the same equipment. This equipment would allow the Forensic Specialists to document shoe impressions, trace evidence, fingerprints and low-light crime scenes more effectively than is currently possible. The proposed camera system will cost approximately \$4,983.

Acquisition of Eight Taser Units. The Concord Police Department purchased 50 Tasers two years ago for patrol officer usage. At the time of the order the minimum amount was purchased. Due to the current budget situation the purchase of additional Tasers was put on hold. However, the need for additional Tasers still exists. Often on weekends between staffing patrol, Reserves, Special Enforcement Team (SET), and special details, the department is unable to provide a Taser for each officer. The purchase of eight additional Tasers will help alleviate this problem. The JAG grant will fund \$8,000 towards this purchase.

Tactical Negotiations Communications Equipment. The Concord Police Department is also proposing to upgrade the existing "throw phone" equipment used by the Tactical Negotiation Team (TNT). A "throw phone" is typically thrown into a residence or business so negotiators can speak with the suspect, barricaded person, etc. in order to bring any volatile situation to a peaceful resolution. Currently the Department is using the "Direct Link 007" throw phone, produced by the Enforcement Technology Group. The Department has used this throw phone for many years and replacing this phone with an entirely new system is not financially practical at this time. However, there are upgrades available which will allow the existing equipment to be used more efficiently, preventing the need for an entirely new system at this time. Funding in the amount of \$5,615 has been set aside in the grant for the "throw phone" upgrade.

CSI Equipment. Field duty kits would be purchased to outfit sworn personnel with equipment that would allow them to perform CSI duties at times when the Forensic Specialists are off-duty or otherwise unavailable. This field kit would allow the user to process most crime scenes that could be handled without a CSI call-out. Each kit would include items such as fingerprint lift tape, trace evidence collection and packaging materials. These kits could be shared by multiple sworn field duty CSIs but would be required by each officer that is on-duty at the same time. For the majority of times throughout the week this would necessitate two or three kits. The duty kits will cost approximately \$16,000 to purchase.

Patrol Semi-Automatic Rifles. The appropriate management of a lethal force encounter is among the most important responsibilities placed upon an officer. The Concord Police Department believes that the need for the implementation of .223 semi-automatic rifles will afford officers the best opportunity for success in a lethal force encounter. These rifles, equipped with the appropriate accessories, will provide Concord Police Officers the requisite weapon to win a lethal force encounter in all lighting conditions. The implementation of these rifles will better equip Concord Police Department Officers to meet the challenge to adequately protect

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the lives of the community as well as the officers. Eight thousand dollars (\$8,000) of the JAG funds have been set aside to fund this purchase.

Tracking Devices. Advanced technology greatly enhances a police department's ability to fight crime. Especially now in this budgetary crisis, the need to leverage the effectiveness of existing police personnel is critical. Sophisticated criminals are well versed in the methods of counter surveillance and police tactics. Purchase of tracking devices will allow law enforcement to work with greater efficiency whereby the number of officers required to track criminals is greatly reduced. These devices also enable safe surveillance operations for the criminal, community, and the officers. The tracking device has an estimated cost of \$2,500.

Digital Cameras. Four advanced point and shoot cameras would also be purchased and supplied to the patrol squads. These cameras, while not professional quality, are significantly better than cameras currently used by patrol and will improve the quality of injury and minor crime scene photos. The cameras will cost approximately \$2,000.

Digital Voice Recording Devices. Individual digital recording units will be purchased for the detective unit. The current digital recorders that are now being used are approximately eight years old. Also, there does not exist a pool of recorders to issue to all detectives. Current technology will allow for greater memory storage and noise cancelling features for improved quality. Three thousand and six hundred dollars (\$3,600) has been set aside from the grant funds to purchase the digital recorders.

Laser Measuring Device. A laser distance measuring device will be purchased for the use of the Crime Scene Investigations (CSI) unit. At major outdoor incidents, CSI calls upon the Motorcycle Unit to assist with the use of the "Total Station Laser Surveying" device to diagram and document the scene. For smaller, indoor and lower profile incidents, CSI has had to rely on a steel tape or Rolatape to take measurements. These methods often require two people to complete all measurements. High quality, engineering-grade laser distance measuring devices are available that allow for one Forensic Specialist to completely measure and diagram a scene in a fraction of the time currently required. These devices can also be used to calculate angles and determine vertical and horizontal distances. The grant will be funding the \$500 cost of the laser measuring device.

Fiscal Impact

There are no costs to the City for implementation of this grant, though the grant entails certain federal reporting requirements.

Public Contact

Posting of the Council Agenda.

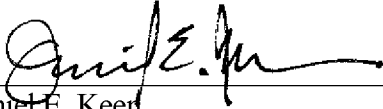
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Recommendation for Action

Authorize and appropriate the acceptance of the Federal Recovery Justice Assistance Grant funds in the amount of \$240,896. (Note: Once Council authorization is obtained, the County Fiscal Agent will release JAG funding to the City of Concord.)



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