



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 3, 2006

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION BUDGET AND INCENTIVE PROPOSALS

DATE: SEPTEMBER 19, 2006

FROM: POLICE DEPARTMENT/ ADMINISTRATION

PRESENTATION BY: STEVE STAVELY, CHIEF OF POLICE

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: HUGH TATE, TRAINING & RECRUITMENT ADMIN.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 1) Approve Budget Adjustment 07-24 in the amount of \$71,094 appropriating additional funding for Police Officer recruitment efforts.
- 2) Authorize the City Manager to modify current personnel policies regarding terms of probation and allocated sick leave for lateral police applicants.

BACKGROUND

Currently, there is a severe shortage in law enforcement with regard to recruitment of entry level and lateral police officers. In the State of California alone it was estimated that over 60,000 police officers would need to be hired between 2002 and 2012. This enormous recruitment drive has seen fierce competition between over 600 agencies, statewide, in a bid to attract qualified applicants from a limited recruitment pool.

While a number of internal changes to recruitment methodologies have been made over the past two years that include monthly testing, accelerated processing, and job fair outreach, it is clear that these are not enough to meet the challenges now being experienced.

On August 25, 2006, the City Manager formed the Police Officer Recruitment and Retention Task Force. The task force is to meet over a thirty day period commencing September 1 and concluding September 30. This group was tasked to review short and long term strategies and actions to improve police recruitment and retention practices.

As a result of the early meetings of the task force, a number of actions were put forward that addressed both recruitment of entry level officers and strategies to attract qualified lateral police officers to the department. While the Task Force is still meeting and considering a range of actions, several immediate, short term solutions have been put forward that require somewhat minor adjustments to the budget and/or administrative procedures, but potentially could have immediate impact on recruitment.

ANALYSIS

Three short term solutions were identified as vital to improving recruitment. These are:

1. **Budget:** Approve additional funding to provide for the needs of current competitive recruiting practices that include marketing, recruitment outreach, and logistical support of the recruitment function.
2. **Personnel Assignment:** Provide for an increase in personnel assigned to the Training and Recruitment Bureau to ensure the recruitment function is staffed at a level appropriate with the additional activities to be performed.
3. **Incentives for Laterals:** Approve incentive provisions to attract lateral police officers to the department that are competitive with other agencies.

1. **Budget:** Additional funding proposed for the recruitment activities has been summarized in Attachment 1. This attachment was developed to provide a line item breakdown of the additional appropriations requested. The additional appropriations address the funding needs to ensure the recruitment process stays competitive and functional for the next ten months. The total for all line item requests is \$71,094. This amount includes the purchase of a recruitment vehicle.

The salary and benefit costs reflected in the budget adjustment are created by the transference of a sergeant position from the Field Operations Division to the Technical Services Division, Recruitment Program. The transfer of half of the Training Officers' salary and benefits is also reflected in the budget adjustment. The Training Officer currently spends, at minimum, fifty percent of her time working on recruitment. These two administrative adjustments do not change the departmental budget allocation.

2. **Personnel Assignment:** Currently, the Training and Recruitment Bureau conducts recruitment testing and processing on a monthly basis. The amount of testing being conducted, and the subsequent processing work that this entails, has stretched personnel resources. Because of the current level of staffing, no follow up or pro-active recruitment efforts can be made. As a result the department is very hard pressed to increase the numbers being processed or to conduct marketing, personal outreach or follow up with applicants.

In order to become more competitive and meet basic recruitment needs, the services of an experienced sworn officer who has recruitment training is needed. Typically, in like-sized agencies these duties fall on a sergeant given their level of experience and ability to make viable decisions and give immediate supervision to recruitment staff.

The police department currently enjoys full staffing at the sergeant rank. By altering some schedules and re-assigning some line personnel (3) to other sergeants, a sergeant could be transferred from the Field Services Division to the Technical Services Division without undue personnel issues and the creation of overtime coverage.

It is envisioned that by making this transfer, in conjunction with the requested budget appropriation, immediate results could be experienced in recruitment levels and lateral officer interest. Review of this personnel transfer would be made in June 2007 as to the effectiveness of the additional staffing.

3. Incentives for Laterals: Lateral incentives now being offered throughout the State are wide ranging. The following incentives do not require any MOU adjustment with the Police Officers Association and only require some administrative adjustment. They are also incentives that our research has show are meaningful to lateral applicants.

- A. Reduce the current probationary period for qualified lateral applicants from 18 months to 10 months. The applicant will need to have passed probation at their current agency and have no background issues that suggest there were probationary issues in the past. Applicants meeting this criterion must be officers serving with a police department or sheriff's office.

This incentive has merit in that it is appealing to applicants and reduces some of the professional fear officers have with long probationary periods. All probations can be extended because of performance, and even though the initial probation period is reduced the department can still extend probation on a case by case basis.

- B. Provide 80 hours of sick leave on initial hire date for qualified lateral applicants. Such sick leave is in the standard sick leave bank and remains there unless used. The applicant still accrues normal sick leave at the standard rate.

Many lateral applicants give up large sick and vacation banks when they transfer their services to another agency. Numerous agencies have introduced various types of incentives to overcome this. Research has again shown that some kind of leave, or sick leave incentive, is very attractive to applicants and their families. The sick leave bank also gives some security to an applicant as they go through the probationary stage of service.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Numerous alternatives were discussed by the task force such as monetary incentives for lateral applicants, general leave accrual for experienced officers based on years of service, and POST incentive pay options, but it was felt that these alternative actions were not viable at this time.

FISCAL REVIEW

The attached Budget Adjustment 07-024 in the amount of \$71,094 appropriates additional funding for Police Officer recruitment efforts and is recommended for approval. Funding for this budget adjustment comes from un-appropriated General Fund fund balance.

The need for additional budget appropriations for recruitment efforts was presented to the task force and is being recommended by the Task Force and City Manager in concept. The attached Budget Adjustment would address the needs identified.

LEGAL REVIEW

No legal review is required for this report.

CONCLUSION

The approval of the actions outlined in this report will enhance recruitment to the Costa Mesa Police Department. Implementation of the budget, personnel assignment, and incentive items will make the Costa Mesa Police Department more competitive and attractive for entry level and qualified lateral police officers.

Hugh J. Tate
Training and Recruitment Administrator

Marc R. Puckett
Director of Finance

Attachment 1: [Budget Adjustment 07-024](#)