



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: September 4, 2007

ITEM NUMBER:

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

DATE: AUGUST 8, 2007

FROM: POLICE DEPARTMENT / FIELD OPERATION SERVICES DIVISION

PRESENTATION BY: DALE BIRNEY, POLICE LIEUTENANT

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: DALE BIRNEY, POLICE LIEUTENANT

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the attached Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Costa Mesa and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District, concerning the extension of the School Resource Officer Program.

BACKGROUND:

In 1999, the Newport Beach Police Department entered into an agreement with the Newport-Mesa Unified School District (NMUSD) to provide two (2) officers to staff a new School Resource Officer (SRO) Program for the two (2) high schools and the one (1) intermediate school, located within their city. Their program was implemented on February 17, 2000, and is still in effect. To date, both the police department and district representatives have viewed the result of their program favorably.

Based in part on the success of Newport Beach's program and the other articulated facts, in 2001, our department pursued a SRO Program to provide two (2) officers to staff a program for our city's two (2) high schools and one (1) intermediate school. The City, along with district officials subsequently approved the implementation of our program on May 9, 2001 through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the City and District. Thus far in the three years the program has been in place, both representatives from our department and the district have viewed it as being a successful program and a benefit to all parties involved.

ANALYSIS:

Since the inception of the program, the Costa Mesa SRO's have been responsible for handling many law enforcement related matters on campus and in the immediate vicinity. Their presence and immediate response to incidents have helped combat criminal activity such as thefts, use of drugs, and potentially violent acts (i.e., assaults). Each SRO has also been responsible for handling a majority of the follow-up investigations generated from the incidents they handle on their respective campuses. The SRO's also play a primary role in the identification of both existing and potential gang members.

Another role of the SRO's has been to serve as a resource for students and faculty to enhance the educational experience of the students. Our officers have been responsible for assisting in classroom instruction as guest speakers on topics such as government, criminal law, child abuse, and gang deterrence. They have also provided education as it relates to drug and alcohol resistance and positive decision-making skills. In addition, each SRO has assisted in the career development of students through education and mentoring.

Another role that the SRO's have actively participated in is that of a liaison with parents and the community. They have made themselves available and have participated in counseling both parents and students alike. The familiarity developed through their contacts with parents has helped to better the communication between law enforcement and the community and have brought a better understanding to the parents on what their children have been involved with on school grounds.

The SRO's have participated in after school and extra-curricular functions with students, parents and faculty. Their presence has helped to foster a more community service oriented philosophy, and has developed a closer, more effective relationship with all stakeholders.

The City Council recently approved two new positions for the Police Department's 2007-08 Operational Budget, and the Chief of Police has made the determination to use these positions to add two more SRO's in order to enhance our efforts to reduce gang and youth related criminal activity in the city. If approved, the Police Department will staff four (4) SRO positions. One officer will be assigned to work with Costa Mesa High School (grades 7 through 12). One officer will be assigned to work at Estancia High School (grades 9 through 12) One officer will be assigned to work at TeWinkle Middle School (grades 7 and 8), and one officer will most likely be assigned to work between TeWinkle Middle School and with any Elementary Schools that request an officer on campus.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

A possible alternative would be to discontinue the program and handle any on campus calls for service or other police needs through the area/beat officer responding. Such an alternative could negatively affect staffing levels utilized to handle calls in other areas throughout the community. Based on the positive impact the officers have had on students and district personnel, along with issues that have presented themselves to officers and officials, the need for two (2) additional officers appears to be a necessity.

FISCAL REVIEW:

The annual salary and benefits for four (4) officers is \$545,128. The Newport-Mesa Unified School District will be responsible for half of the total salary cost, which is \$272,564. The City is responsible for the other half through the general budget funding.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney's Office has approved the Memorandum of Understanding as to form.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends approval of the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Costa Mesa and the Newport-Mesa Unified School District.

DALE BIRNEY

Lieutenant

CHRISTOPHER SHAWKEY

Chief of Police

MARC R. PUCKETT

Finance Director

KIMBERLY HALL BARLOW

City Attorney

ATTACHMENTS: 1

[MOU BETWEEN THE CITY OF COSTA MESA AND THE NEWPORT-MESA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT](#)