



EUREKA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

June 21, 2018

Shaun Brenneman
Interim Chief Probation Officer
Humboldt County Probation Department

Dear Chief Brenneman:

On behalf of the Eureka Police Department and City of Eureka, I would like to add a request for funding to the agenda for next month's Humboldt County Community Corrections Partnership Executive Committee meeting. I am requesting \$434,251.37 to help fund the upgrade of the Eureka Police Department's outdated public safety radio communications system. This would be a one-time funding request for partial support for the replacement and upgrade of our entire radio system including infrastructure (repeaters, receivers, antennas etc.), subscribers (portable and mobile radios), and dispatch console systems (1 ASTRO K2 Redundant Core, 6 complete Motorola ASTRO 25 MCC 7500E dispatch consoles/positions). The cost for our entire radio system upgrade is anticipated to be well over one million dollars. The pricing we've been quoted for the new dispatch console system alone is \$434,251.37 with an additional post-warranty and lifecycle annual pricing of \$44,811 - \$47,934 for years 2-5.

The cost of this crucial public safety project has not yet been budgeted for in the City's General Fund/Police budget, and due to the great expense involved we are currently exploring various grant opportunities, financing proposals, and other funding sources. The opportunity to obtain public safety grant funding (through the utilization of state 2011 Realignment Funds) for the replacement of our communications system is crucial to our ability to complete this project and continue providing high-level public safety services to our community. Covering the cost of our new dispatch consoles would be a tremendous help as we undertake this critical project.

A few relevant justification points for this funding request:

- The complete upgrade of our radio communications system is not optional for us--it is a significant public safety need. Our current dispatch consoles (the Gold Elites), portable and mobile radios have reached the end of their lifecycle and are no longer being supported by Motorola. Additionally, following a comprehensive communications system evaluation by Day Wireless Systems in February 2018, we have learned our radio system infrastructure (repeaters, receivers, transmitters, antennas etc.) is failing and has not been operating to specifications. The system is old, insufficient, and has been inexpertly patch-worked together over the years. As a result, we have significant coverage gaps that pose a serious officer safety issue.
- EPD's Communications Center is the only one in our area that dispatches all three disciplines—police, fire, and emergency medical services. Having reliable, modern communications equipment and services is absolutely vital for our ability to protect and serve our community, and to keep our officers safe.
- EPD currently provides dispatch services for the Humboldt County Probation Department. Probation is charged with supervising AB 109 realignment PRCS offenders and absconders. Our officers regularly partner with and support Probation Officers as they pursue absconders and conduct probation compliance checks in the greater Eureka area. During the period of November 15, 2017 – June 19, 2018, the EPD Communications Center logged 213 Probation Department-generated incidents for which our dispatchers provided radio services to Probation Officers.

- Eureka has no dearth of motivated and willing offenders. Following the Criminal Justice Realignment Act of 2011 (AB 109), which effectively shifted the burden of supervising and incarcerating many of California's most habitual criminals from the Department of Corrections to local jurisdictions, our communities have generally seen an increase in crime and the numbers of recalcitrant crooks loose on the streets. Violent crime rates have risen steeply in Humboldt County according to the latest UCR statistics released. Many of these criminals are Post Release Community Supervision (PRCS) offenders released into our community from prison and mandatory supervision offenders released from county jail. This problem has been compounded by the effects of other legislation such as Proposition 47 (making many former felonies, such as low-level drug crimes, misdemeanors) and our region's heroin epidemic. In January 2016, the former Chief Probation Officer of Humboldt County, Bill Damiano, reported 34% of the realignment population was on abscond status. At the time, there were 104 of these individuals at large in our community—90% of whom were considered at high risk to reoffend. Many of these end up in Eureka.
- According to the Humboldt County Jail booking records by agency for 2017, EPD officers made more than double the number of arrests than the next two closest agencies combined. EPD made 3,424 custodial arrests last year as compared to 1,568 by the Arcata Police Department and 1,555 by the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office. We are the busiest agency in our region. As the county seat and center for government, commerce, and transportation, along with medical, mental health and social services, a perception exists that Eureka has been a de facto "dumping ground" for other outlying communities' problems. We believe this has contributed to Eureka frequently inheriting new and often repeat sources of crime and disorder. Historically, many indigent individuals arrested by other agencies are subsequently being released from the jail (and sometimes from the hospital and mental health facility) directly onto the streets of Eureka without means of returning to the city they were arrested in. (The Sheriff's new jail inmate release transportation program is a step in the right direction to address this issue.) The point here is that EPD is an exceptionally busy agency protecting a vital, capital city with significant public safety challenges.
- In November 2017, the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office set a precedent for the utilization of state 2011 Realignment Funds by requesting and receiving \$750,000 in funding for partial support for the replacement and upgrade of their radio system. EPD's need is just as great and we are asking for much less at only \$434, 251.37. In reviewing the HCCCP's 17/18 Allocated Ongoing Expenses report, I noted it appears that all of the funding is currently going to/for Humboldt County entities and none to municipal police departments like EPD. I believe it is important (and within the intent of PC 1203.1 and the purpose of this committee) that the distribution of this public safety realignment funding be more equitable. The HCCCP Executive Board's granting of our funding request will help accomplish that purpose.
- This issue is time sensitive. We have less than 90 days to accept the console proposal and we were advised by the account manager and manufacturer's representative that time was of the essence due to the projected influx of numerous other public safety agencies across the country all wanting and needing to replace their systems with the same model we are purchasing. They projected supply would be an issue and the cost was also likely to rise.

Sincerely,

Stephen Watson

Stephen Watson
Chief of Police