



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 3/16/2021

File #: 21-149

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Sheriff

Agenda Section: Departmental

SUBJECT:

Introduction of an Ordinance of the Board of Supervisors, County of Humboldt, State of California Amending Chapter 6 of Division 1, Title IX of The Humboldt County Code Relating to Regulation and Permitting of Alarm Systems in Humboldt County

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Introduce the attached ordinance by title and waive the first reading;
2. Set the ordinance for adoption on March 23, 2021;
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors to publish the pre-adoption summary of the ordinance and to post a certified copy of the full text of the ordinance in the office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors at least five (5) days prior to the Board of Supervisors meeting at which the ordinance will be adopted [Government Code Section 25124(b)(1)]; and
4. Direct the Clerk of the Board, within fifteen (15) days after adoption of the ordinance, to publish a post-adoption summary of the ordinance with the names of the Supervisors voting for and against the ordinance and to post in the office of the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors a certified copy of the full text of the adopted ordinance along with the names of those Supervisors voting for and against the Ordinance [Government Code Section 25124(b)(1)].

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General Fund

DISCUSSION:

Chapter 6 of Division 1, Title IX of the Humboldt County Code regulates personal and business alarm installation for the county ("the ordinance"). The Sheriff's Office responds to over twelve hundred (1,200) false alarms each year, many in outlying areas and often to the same locations. This is an ineffective use of taxpayer funds and diverts law enforcement resources from where they are needed. Therefore, the fees in the ordinance are designed to incentivize home and business owners to take responsibility for their alarms and prevent false alarm calls for service whenever possible.

Some of the ordinance fees have been historically listed on the Humboldt County Schedule of Fees (“Schedule of Fees”) and are also listed in the ordinance creating opportunities for one or the other to not be updated at the same time in the event changes are proposed. Other ordinance fees are only listed in the ordinance and not on the Schedule of Fees. The Sheriff’s Office is proposing listing all the ordinance fees on the Schedule of Fees and changing the language in the ordinance to refer to the Schedule of Fees for current fee rates. This will create more transparency and annual review of the fees for the ordinance.

In addition to listing all the ordinance fees on the Schedule of Fees, the Sheriff’s Office also proposed restructuring and increasing the false alarm fees and reducing the late fees. On February 23, 2021 your Board approved the addition of the ordinance fees to the Schedule of Fees and approved the proposed changes to the false alarm fees and late fees which will go into effect on March 29, 2021.

Due to the timing of the Schedule of Fees effective date and the introduction and adoption of the amended ordinance, the Sheriff’s Office will continue to charge the rates listed in the current ordinance and will not implement the new fees until April 22, 2021 (pending adoption of the amended ordinance on March 23, 2021). Below is a summary of the anticipated fee changes and timeline:

Current Ordinance Fees to be charged until April 22, 2021	Schedule of Fees effective March 29, 2021	Amended Ordinance Fees effective April 22, 2021
False Alarms: 3 free in a 6-month period \$50.00 each additional	False Alarms: 2 free in a 12-month period 3rd false alarm \$50.00 4th false alarm \$100.00 5th false alarm \$150.00 6th + false alarm \$200.00	As set forth in the Humboldt County Schedule of Fees and Charges
Late Payment Penalty \$50.00	Late Payment Penalty 30-day late \$5.00 60-day late \$10.00 90-day late \$15.00 <i>(total late fees assessed in a 90-day period is \$30.00)</i>	As set forth in the Humboldt County Schedule of Fees and Charges
All other fees as stated in the ordinance.	All other ordinance fees added to the Schedule of Fees are the same rates listed in the ordinance. There are no other proposed changes.	As set forth or listed as a reference in the Humboldt County Schedule of Fees and Charges

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

False alarm and permitting fees save taxpayers money by establishing penalties for unnecessary law

enforcement response to alarm activations and by resulting in data collection of local alarm holders to make their response to all alarm calls more efficient. There is negligible financial impact for legally required publication. This can be covered by existing budget appropriations.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by enforcing laws and regulations to protect residents.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Your Board could choose to revise or reject the recommended ordinance amendment, but that is not recommended as these updates clarify the existing text.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Ordinance

Attachment 2: Summary for Publication prior to Adoption of the Ordinance

Attachment 3: Summary for Publication after Adoption of the Ordinance

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A