Atascadero City Council
Staff Report – Police Department

Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund

RECOMMENDATION:

Council approve the 2010/2011 Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund (SLESF) Grant and attached Allocation Plan in the amount of $100,000.00.

DISCUSSION:

Staff has identified opportunities in which the proceeds may most effectively be used (see list below). Each of the listed opportunities are fully described on the attached Allocation Plan. The Government Code requires the City Council approve appropriation of the funds. The Police Chief has the discretion, if necessary, of redirecting up to 25% of the total grant funds between the spending categories.

- In-Car Video Camera System $90,000
- Reserve/Contract/Cadet Personnel $ 9,000
- Front Line Police Services Equipment $ 1,000

FISCAL IMPACT:

The City will receive the $100,000 grant to the SLESF restricted fund and will utilize it for frontline police services.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Decline the use of SLESF monies and/or decline the reallocation of existing SLESF funds. Not recommended due to significant benefit gained from use of these funds.
2. Request the SLESF Selection Committee revise and reallocate the funds.

ATTACHMENT

SLESF Allocation Plan for the 2010/2011 grant year
2010-2011 SLESF ALLOCATION PLAN

- In-car Video Camera System $90,000
- Reserve/Contract/Cadet Personnel $ 9,000
- Front Line Police Services Equipment $ 1,000

$100,000

In-Car Video Camera System

The current in-car video system, identified as the IPT VisionHawk System was originally purchased with existing SLESF Grant funding in October, 2004. In 2009, the system began failing. Calls to IPT resulted in a lack of customer support and, as a result, currently two of the nine in-car systems have been removed from the patrol cars. IPT VisionHawk Systems is no longer in business.

The in-car video camera systems capture both audio and video data on officer activity in the field as seen through the front windshield area of the patrol car. The officers are trained to position their car in the most advantageous position to capture the event as it is occurring. This data is secured as evidence and is produced during court proceedings. The individual camera systems within the police cars were unreliable to the point that their failure caused concern that audio and video evidence was not being captured and, therefore, would not be available for courtroom presentation.

The Police Department, in partnership with the Technology Department, is involved in researching the aspects of currently available systems. The allocated cost amount is tentative pending final vendor selection. This Staff Report is submitted at this time to meet the time constraints imposed by the County Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Oversight Committee that meets on a quarterly basis.

Reserve/Contract/Cadet Personnel

In conjunction with the Police Department’s five-year Strategic Plan, the Reserve Officer Program, which supplements existing patrol operations and investigations at a more cost effective and efficient level, has become a reality. A level 1 reserve police officer is currently employed and working a minimum of 16 hours per month, supplementing the full-time sworn work force.
As part of the Police Department’s commitment to the Sunken Gardens/Downtown Business District Action Plan and also incorporated in the five-year Strategic Plan, the Police Department has an ongoing partnership with the Atascadero Unified School District in contract hiring an existing school employee to partner with the Police Department Community Response Team. This school/law enforcement team approach is working toward effecting positive student behavioral changes within the Sunken Garden and surrounding areas. This position is staffed during times of the school year when students are most active in the Sunken Gardens/Downtown Business District.

In addition, various contract personnel may be used by the Police Department, upon City approval, on an as-needed basis for specific tasks and projects that may be identified throughout the length of this Grant.

Finally, the current Cadet Program has been utilized to provide an increased level of service to the community and to assist officers with routine operations that allow the officers to engage in more proactive patrol time. This position will be vacant for the immediate future. However, the ability to use grant funding to fill this position based on a future needs assessment is recommended.