



staff report

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

ATTENTION: Jeffrey L. Stewart, City Manager

FROM: Joel Hockman, Director of Public Safety

SUBJECT: Consideration and possible action to reduce the City's Community Policing Plan by eliminating one sergeant position and one motor deputy position and adding \$75,000 to traffic enforcement overtime.

DATE: June 27, 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Effective July 1, 2016, the Sheriff's Department's contract rate, plus the liability trust fund rate, will substantially increase. In Bellflower, this equates to an annual increase of \$670,000 just to maintain the current level of Sheriff services. Rather than merely absorbing this significant increase or making service cuts elsewhere in the organization, Staff is recommending offsetting cuts to the Sheriff's deployment. Numerous other contract cities are also following this path to deal directly with the high cost and to potentially send a message to the County that such price increases are not sustainable.

RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL

- 1) Approve Staff's recommendation to modify the Community Policing Plan by eliminating one motor deputy position and one sergeant position and adding \$75,000 to traffic enforcement overtime; or
- 2) Alternatively, discuss and take other action related to this item.

FISCAL IMPACT

While the Sheriff's increase does indeed total \$670,000, approximately \$270,000 of this was anticipated during the normal budget cycle last year. The difference of \$400,000 is the unanticipated amount that exceeds the currently approved budget. The proposed cuts total just over \$500,000. In order to make the cut more appropriate to the need, Staff recommends that Council also approve a \$75,000 traffic enforcement overtime **increase** to offset a portion of the service lost by cutting a full-time motor position. This would bring the net reduction of the budget much closer to the shortfall of \$400,000, while restoring 870 hours (nearly 22 weeks) of motor enforcement services to benefit the Bellflower community.

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DISCUSSION

Increasing and decreasing the City's Community Policing budget over the last fifteen years has been a reoccurring exercise. Examples of previously approved reductions include: temporary City salary reductions, elimination of two special assignment officer (SAO) positions, elimination of two special assignment investigators, a 16-hour per week reduction in Sheriff's patrol, elimination of SkyKnight, not replacing CSO vehicles on schedule, layoff of part time Substation office assistant, elimination of the WeTip Program, reduction of the Probation Officer to 50%, elimination of a Public Safety Supervisor, elimination of an Assistant Director of Public Safety, elimination of nine part-time crossing guard positions, reduction of Substation weekly operating hours from 84 to 61, and etc. The collective cost of these budget cuts was approximately \$1,525,000.

A significant public safety increase occurred when the Bellflower voters approved Measure P three years ago. This increased the City's utility users' tax by an additional 2% (from 5% to 7%) temporarily for five years. With some of the additional funding, the City was able to restore two 40-hour patrol deputies and a range of other public safety support (e.g., park surveillance cameras, deputy overtime). As we approach the end of Measure P funding and consider a \$670,000 Sheriff's deployment increase, Staff is again recommending a cut to the City's Community Policing Plan.

The reduction believed to have the smallest impact on Bellflower residents is the elimination of one motor position - \$286,900 (one motor deputy is currently unable to work due to a medical condition and his return to a motor is very unlikely), and one of our sergeant positions - \$215,600 (Sergeant Oscar Butao). Cutting (and later restoring) a motor is something the City did several years ago, but has never experimented with having just one program sergeant. Lieutenant Milliman is currently making preparations to take over the responsibility of reviewing deputy logs for accuracy going forward, as well as needing to adjust his workday to spend more time in the field addressing customer complaints and a variety of related issues best handled by a Sheriff's manager.

Almost half of the existing deputy overtime budgeted for next year is funded by Measure P, which will be going away after next year. Keep in mind that the contract cost of an hour of overtime is actually less to the City than the cost of straight time, because overtime hours do not contain all of the County overheads that make up the annual contract rate of a deputy that cities pay.

On May 17, 2016, at the Regular Public Safety Review Committee meeting, the committee considered this proposal and ultimately recommended to eliminate one sergeant position, but retain the second motor position. Their direction was for the City to find the required savings elsewhere in the City's budget.

While Staff certainly does not want to make any cuts to the Sheriff's deployment, the time may be right to both offset the rising program costs and see how our Community Policing Program can handle this adjustment.