



CITY OF COSTA MESA

77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

Agenda Report

File #: 24-312

Meeting Date: 8/6/2024

TITLE:

UPDATES TO POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFFING AND COMPENSATION RELATED TO POLICE RECRUIT, POLICE CADET, POLICE RESERVE OFFICER AND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER POSITIONS

DEPARTMENT: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE- HUMAN RESOURCES & POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESENTED BY: KASAMA LEE, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER & RONALD LAWRENCE, POLICE CHIEF

CONTACT INFORMATION: KASAMA LEE, HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER (714) 754-5169

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

1. Authorize and approve staffing as follows:
 - a. Authorize an increase of 5.0 FTE for Police Cadet
 - b. Authorize an increase of 2.5 FTE for Police Reserve Officer
2. Approve Resolution Number 2024-XX establishing full-time pay rate and benefits for Police Recruit.
3. Approve Resolution Number 2024-XX revising the pay rate for Police Reserve Officer.
4. Appropriate \$211,000 in the FY 2024/2025 Police Department's General Fund budget to cover the estimated costs of the additional 5.0 FTE Police Cadets.

BACKGROUND:

The Police Department is currently budgeted at 142 full-time sworn employees. Currently, there are 16 Police Officer vacancies. The department has seen a recent trend of officers with less than 10 years of service leave the department for other agencies, to be closer to their homes in other counties, and for jobs in the private sector. Additionally, there will continue to be retirements of

tenured personnel over the next two years. Due to the current and anticipated future staffing losses, the department has had to temporarily decrease staffing in several special assignments including traffic, investigations and community policing. The department is currently reviewing patrol staffing models to ensure that services to the community are maintained.

ANALYSIS:

In order to enhance our recruitment efforts and increase our applicant pool, the City is in the process of implementing hiring and referral incentives for Lateral Police Officers, Entry Level Police Recruits and Lateral and Entry Level Communications Officers. The Police Department, along with the Human Resources Division, are recommending additional changes to enable the Department to be more competitive in recruiting Police Recruits and to provide additional staffing support.

Increase Pay Rate and Convert Police Recruits from Part-Time Status to Full-Time Status

Currently, Police Recruits are hired as un-represented part-time employees. They are employed as part-time employees for approximately six-months while they attend the Police Academy. Upon graduation from the police academy, they are converted to full-time Police Officers and are represented by the Costa Mesa Police Association.

A survey was conducted of 19 police agencies in Orange County and other neighboring counties. Of the 19 agencies, only three other agencies employ their Police Recruits as part-time employees. The remaining 16 agencies employ their Police Recruits as full-time employees. In addition, the current pay rate for the City of Costa Mesa's Police Recruits is \$30 per hour. The range of pay rates for agencies surveyed was: \$31.00 - \$49.75 per hour, with the average pay rate of \$39.94 per hour. Of our contiguous agencies (Fountain Valley, Huntington Beach, Newport Beach, Irvine, Santa Ana, OC Sheriffs) only one agency employs their Police Recruits as part-time employees and the average pay rate for these agencies is \$39.21 per hour.

The Police Department and the Human Resources Division are recommending that the Police Recruit pay rate be increased to \$40 per hour and that Police Recruit positions be converted to unrepresented full-time employees with benefits similar to the Costa Mesa Police Association. Upon graduation from the police academy, they will be promoted to the Police Officer classification and be represented by the Costa Mesa Police Association.

Police Recruit applicants often apply to more than one agency and often make their final agency selection based on the agency with highest pay and most advantageous benefits package. Increasing the pay rate for Police Recruits and converting the position from part-time to full-time will make the City more attractive in comparison with other local agencies. Since these positions essentially underfill vacant Police Officer positions until they are filled, there is no anticipated fiscal impact for this request.

Increase Staffing for Police Cadets

The Police Department currently has nine (9) part-time Police Cadets. Police Cadets offer a variety of public safety services, such as support for special events, and general enforcement, such as parking control. These key positions increase public safety coverage and alleviate patrol officers workloads. Staff is requesting to add ten part-time, the equivalent of five (5) full-time employees (5 FTE) to

continue to alleviate patrol officers and increase their time on patrol. Each Police Cadet costs an estimated \$21,100 per year, as they are part-time and do not have the fully burdened expense as full-time equivalents. The total annual fiscal impact is estimated at \$211,000 for the ten (10) part-time positions. Staff is requesting an increase to the FY 2024/2025 General Fund budget for the Police Department.

Increase Pay Rate and Staffing for Police Reserve Officer

Under the California Reserve Peace Officer Program (RPOP), reserve officers work with full-time regular police officers to provide law enforcement services at the city, county, district and state levels. The Police Department employs Level I Reserve Officers who may work alone and perform the same duties as a full-time regular police officer. The Police Department currently employs six (6) Police Reserve Officers who assist with investigation case follow up and closures, vacation coverage, special event shirts and sergeant at arms duties.

The current pay rate for Police Reserve Officer is \$38.00 per hour and was established in July 2014. There has been no increase to the pay rate in the last ten years. All other City positions have received multiple increases since 2014. The Police Department and the Human Resources Division are recommending that the Police Reserve Officer pay rate be increased to \$42.50 per hour to make the City more attractive to applicants and to address internal alignment with the recommended Police Recruit pay rate.

The addition of five (5) part-time, which is the equivalent of 2.5 full-time employees (2.5 FTE) Police Reserve Officers will assist in supplementing staff while the department is experiencing staffing shortages. There are currently a number of former police safety employees who left employment with the City for private sector opportunities who are interested in remaining employed with the City in a Police Reserve Officer capacity. Each part-time Reserve Officer is estimated at \$47,000 per year. However, as these positions are essentially underfilling vacant police officer positions; thereby utilizing salary savings from these vacant positions to fund this additional request. As such, there is no fiscal impact related to this request.

Changes for Communications Officer Positions

The Police Department is currently budgeted at 21 Full-Time Communication Officer positions (Communications Officers, Senior Communication Officers and Communication Supervisors). There are currently seven Full-Time Communication Officer vacancies. The Police Department and Human Resources Division will be presenting recommendations regarding updates to staffing, compensation and benefits at a future council meeting.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council can provide alternative direction to staff regarding Police Department staffing and compensation for Police Recruit, Police Cadet and Police Reserve Officer.

FISCAL REVIEW:

The FY 2024/2025 Police Department's General Fund budget has sufficient funding to cover the Police Recruits and Police Reserve Officers, as both these classifications essentially underfill fully funded Police Officer positions. The Police Cadets offer a much-needed reprieve for the Police

Officers in their day to day public safety roles; however, the estimated impact for each Cadet is \$21,100; or a total of \$211,000 annually for all ten (10) requested positions. As such, staff is requesting an additional budget appropriation in the Police Department's budget to cover this increase.

Police Cadets cover special events throughout the City, and is fully reimbursed by the promoter of the event. Therefore, the General Fund special events revenues is estimated to increase to cover this additional expense.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City's special counsel, Liebert Cassidy Whitmore (LCW) and City Attorney's Office have reviewed the resolutions and this report and approved them as to form.

CONCLUSION:

The proposed updates support the City's Strategic Plan Goals to recruit and retain high quality staff and strengthen the Public's Safety and Improve the Quality of Life. Staff recommends that the City Council:

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