



CITY OF HARRISONBURG
POLICE
DEPARTMENT

INTERIM CHIEF OF POLICE GABRIEL CAMACHO

101 NORTH MAIN STREET, HARRISONBURG, VA 22802

EMERGENCY NUMBER: 911

NONEMERGENCY NUMBER: (540) 434-4436

FAX NUMBER: (540) 437-2691

WWW.HARRISONBURGVA.GOV/POLICE

TO: Eric Campbell, City Manager
FROM: Gabriel Camacho, Interim Chief of Police
DATE: November 17, 2020
RE: Purchase of Police K-9

Summary:

Consider a supplemental appropriation for the Harrisonburg Police Department in the amount of \$12,645 from state asset forfeiture funds (to be used for Law Enforcement purposes only). Funds will be used for the purchase of a needed police K-9 and the associated training to acclimate the dog with its handler.

Background:

The Harrisonburg Police Department utilizes dual-purpose police K-9s to work in both patrol utility and narcotics detection functions. After completing its initial certification as a police K-9, the performance of one of the dogs in the K-9 Unit deteriorated and the dog was unable to perform satisfactorily as dual-purpose police K-9. The K-9 in question, K-9 Bravo, has been retired from its police functions and the dog is beyond the workability warranty that the department's previous K-9 kennel provided. The HPD K-9 Unit now needs to replace K-9 Bravo so that the unit can maintain its provision of services to the community and department. This was an unexpected outcome and the department did not expect the need to replace any dogs during the current budget year, which has created a budget shortfall to purchase this dog.

After realizing that K-9 Bravo would not pass his certification testing, the leadership of the K-9 Unit contacted the supplying K-9 kennel to explain the situation. The kennel in question cited that it only provided a three-month workability warranty on its dogs and refused to make significant concessions to maintain its relationship with HPD. The HPD then immediately began a search for a new provider kennel for police K-9s. After an extensive search, HPD selected Tarheel Canine Training, Inc. in Sanford, NC for future K-9 purchases.

Tarheel Canine Training, Inc. has a strong reputation in the police K-9 community. Reference checks with numerous police agencies utilizing this kennel all indicate that it provides high quality dogs and superior service to its customers. Tarheel Canine's warranty is clearly superior to all its competitors, as it offers a lifetime performance guarantee and a



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two-year health guarantee on the police K-9s it sells. Officers from the HPD K-9 unit vetted the Tarheel Canine facility through a site visit at the kennel yielding conversations with staff and evaluations of several of the dogs on hand at the kennel. In terms of value, the costs of pre-trained dual-purpose dogs at Tarheel Canine are comparable to the costs at competitor kennels. However, competitor kennel's warranties are significantly less robust than the warranty from Tarheel Canine.

Key Issues:

- The HPD K-9 Unit is short one police K-9 and needs to replace on police K-9 dog to meet the community's and department's expectations for the HPD K-9 Unit.
- HPD did not expect to have to replace any K-9s during its budget planning cycle and did not plan for this expense. Therefore, this purchase is not included in the department's current budget.
- Tarheel Canine Training, Inc. is a reputable supplier kennel for police K-9s and provides a written lifetime workability guarantee and two-year health guarantee on the dogs it sells.

Environmental Impact:

None

Fiscal Impact:

The HPD K-9 Unit budgets for five police K-9s – one for each officer and supervisor in the unit. Expenses equipment, food, veterinarian visits, etc. are included in the current budget for each of the K-9s in the unit and the related expenses for this dog will be covered in the current HPD budget.

Prior Actions:



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None

Alternatives:

The HPD could request funding for the purchase of this K-9 during the next budget cycle. However, this would create at least an eight-month period in which the K-9 Unit would be staffed with a K-9 handler with no dog. This would create potential problems with service provision and continued diminished K-9 support for the officers at HPD.

Community Engagement:

N/A

Recommendation:

I recommend purchase of one dual-purpose police K-9 with four weeks of handler-K-9 acclimation training from Tarheel Canine Training, Inc.

Attachments:

See Attached

Review:

The initiating Department Director will place in Legistar, in sequence of transmittal, the names of each department that must initial their review in order for this item to be placed on the City Council agenda. The completion of review only addresses the readiness of the issue for Council consideration. This does not address the recommendation for approval or denial of the issue.