



STAFF REPORT

Public Hearing 8-15-23

AGENDA ITEM #: 23-80
COUNCIL MTG OF: July 11, 2023
FROM: David Caron, Town Administrator
OFFERED BY: Chief George R. Feole
PREPARED BY: Captain David M. Michaud
SUBJECT: Acquisition and Implementation of a K9 program for the Police Department

PURPOSE: Consider the implementation of a K9 program for the Police Department, to include all associated costs, and the hiring of a new police officer beginning January 1st, 2024.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS: The Town Council has discussed for some time the benefits of adding K9 capabilities to complement existing Police Department resources. This proposal allows the organization to phase in the impact by initiating a program beginning January 1, 2024. Additionally, with higher than anticipated new construction occurring in Derry over the past year, there are excess tax revenues available to fund this program and maintain the target municipal tax rate of \$5.94.

BACKGROUND: The Derry Police Department has researched costs associated with establishing a patrol K9 program for the agency. The purchase, training, and implementation of this program would benefit the agency and the citizens of the town in a variety of ways. This program would assist the agency with searches for missing persons or items, suspects involved in criminal activity, narcotics detection, community relations, etc. Derry PD currently utilizes mutual aid for all K9 requests (several agencies around us include Londonderry PD, 2 Dogs; Salem PD, 3 patrol dogs, 1 comfort dog; Rockingham County Sheriff's Department, 2 Dogs; and New Hampshire State Police, numerous dogs).

The cost of this program includes the purchase of a patrol K9 for the agency, the cost of food and an estimate of medical bill needs, training for the K9 and the handler, all necessary equipment, overtime, and the backfilling of the K9 handler's position with an additional police officer. The K9 would be assigned to the K9 handler permanently so there is a need to hire an additional officer to cover the existing patrol position that the individual we assigned as the K9 handler was previously in. Below is a cost breakdown for this program.

Personnel Costs:

Table with 2 columns: Cost Category and Amount. Rows include Patrol Officer (\$103,426.75 annually), Overtime (\$10,244 annually), and Uniform (\$7,830).

Start Up Costs:

Purchase of K9	\$8,000 - \$10,000 (Belgian Malinois)
Home Kennel and Doghouse	\$1,500 - \$3,000
Uniforms	\$500 (K9 handler requires a modified uniform)

K9 and Handler Training Equipment: \$2,500 (E-Collar, Pinch Collars, Harness, etc.)

Training Requirements (Boston Police K9 Academy):

Patrol K9 Handler – 14 weeks	\$1,400, Year 1
Narcotics Detection – 6 weeks	\$500, year 2
Explosive Detection- 10 weeks	\$1,000, year 2

Veterinary Care (Locally Sourced):

Routine Vet Care (if applicable) \$950, estimate

O&M Costs:

Monthly food/treats	\$100
Medication	\$100
Annual USPCA Membership	\$50
Boarding Costs (vacations)	\$700

Estimated Program Total Costs:

Additional Officer	\$103,427 X ½ year = \$51,714
O.T. for Care of K-9	\$5,122
Year One – Startup Costs	\$17,850
Ongoing Yearly Costs	\$15,000, FY 25 and beyond.

Potential for grant programs available:

Stanton Foundation Grant

Approx. \$27,000 over a 3-year period (Londonderry PD Award)

Approx. \$32,000 over a 3-year period (Rockingham County Sheriff's Award)

DISCUSSION: The Police Department has researched all aspects of establishing a K9 program for the agency. The purchase, training, and implementation of this program would benefit the agency and the citizens of the town in a variety of ways. This program would assist the agency with searches for missing persons or items, suspects involved in criminal activity, narcotics detection, community relations, etc. It is believed adding this additional tool to the police department will alleviate the need for mutual aid in instances where it is currently requested for K9 services.

FISCAL IMPACT: Approve a supplemental appropriation of **\$74,686** for 6 months funding in FY 24. The possibility exists that some revenue could be received from various grant sources to offset that expenditure, however it is not predicted here since there is no guarantee of receiving those funds. Additionally, the Town can remain committed to its 2023 target tax rate for town expenditures of \$5.94 and apply \$67,500 in excess tax revenues to this project. The Town estimated an additional \$20M in new property value when the FY24 budget was constructed. Assessing has just finalized the Town's assessment for the 2023 Part A bill and has determined that \$31.34M in new value was generated, resulting in additional fiscal capacity of approximately \$67,500.

Further, it is anticipated that the Town will receive grant assistance which would reduce the local fiscal impact of the program.

RECOMMENDED ACTION BY COUNCIL: It is recommended that the Town Council approve a supplemental appropriation to provide **\$74,686** funding for 6 months of FY 24 that enables the Police Department to establish a patrol K9 program for the agency.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: See Resolution Number 23-051



RESOLUTION

Number 2023-051

To Approve a Supplemental Appropriation for a Police Department K-9

WHEREAS, the Town Charter establishes the Town Council as the appropriating authority of the Town and as such it is empowered by Section 9.6 of the Charter to make supplemental appropriations after the annual budget is adopted; and

WHEREAS, K9 programs in police departments contribute to the community's safety and augment the abilities of departments to respond to a variety of requests for assistance; and

WHEREAS, the K9 program would enhance the Department's effectiveness went searching for missing persons, apprehending suspects, narcotics detection and community relations; and

WHEREAS, unanticipated growth in the tax base would fund the implementation of this program within the Council's target tax rate.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED IN COUNCIL that the sum of Seventy-Four Thousand Six Hundred Eighty-Six Dollars (\$74,686) shall be appropriated to fund a K9 program beginning on January 1, 2024.

This Resolution has been adopted by two-thirds majority of the entire Council as required by Charter and shall take effect immediately upon its passage.

Adopted: August 15, 2023.

Attest:

X _____
Charles Foote, Council Chair
Date: _____

X _____
Cristina Guilford, Town Clerk
Date: _____