



STAFF REPORT

Public Hearing 5-21-24

AGENDA ITEM #: 24-40
COUNCIL MTG OF: May 7, 2024
FROM: David Caron, Town Administrator
OFFERED BY: Chief George R. Feole
PREPARED BY: Captain David M. Michaud
SUBJECT: Bureau of Justice Assistance FY 2024 Byrne Discretionary Community Project Grants/Byrne Discretionary Grants Program (Opportunity ID: O-BJA-2024-172101)

PURPOSE: Consider applying for and accepting funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance for body worn and cruiser cameras.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS: The use of body worn cameras has been a Council operational goal, yet the implementation has been stymied due to funding constraints. The receipt of this grant will allow the Department to proceed with the implementation of this goal. Council support is appreciated after the May 21, 2024 public hearing.

BACKGROUND: In March of 2023 the Derry Police Department submitted a request for congressional spending funds through Senator Shaheen and Congressman Pappas' offices. In early 2024 the Police Department was notified that the funding had been awarded for the project and an application would need to be submitted through the Bureau of Justice Assistance to receive the grant.

Funding for this project would provide the Derry Police Department with sixty-three (63) Body Worn Camera units and fully equip fifteen (15) marked cruisers with integrated In-Car Video Systems, as well as associated Wireless Access Points, and necessary training and start-up equipment. Funding will also support the upgrading and outfitting of four (4) interview rooms, six (6) prisoner containment cells, and two (2) prisoner processing and receiving areas with video recording. This package includes unlimited cloud storage, the software necessary to run the program and conduct redaction as necessary for Right to Know requests based on NH Statute 91-A. The total cost of the project and anticipated grant amount is \$585,790.

Body Worn Cameras (BWC's) have the potential to be a positive influence on both citizens and Officers, providing transparency to the community and accountability for our staff. At the same time helping protect police against false accusations. Though studies are limited, there is some evidence that BWCs may calm all parties involved in an incident and reduce the likelihood that violence will occur. This is good for our citizens, Officers, and community in general.

DISCUSSION: The Town Charter states that the Town Council may apply for and accept grants or gifts. Specifically, "SECTION 9.15 Grants, Gifts; provides in part, that the Town Council may apply for, accept and expend monies received from the State, Federal, or other governmental units, or from private sources which become available during the fiscal year." Since the grant amount exceeds the \$10,000 threshold, as listed in our Town Charter, a public hearing is required before Council action.

FISCAL IMPACT: The acceptance of these funds will have no impact on the budget as this is a one-time expense, with no match, being covered entirely by the Bureau of Justice Assistance for a period of 5 years. Funding for continuation of the program beyond that would likely need to come from local tax dollars.

RECOMMENDED ACTION BY COUNCIL: Schedule this matter for the Consent Agenda for the May 7, 2024, Council meeting with a subsequent public hearing to be held on May 21, 2024.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: See Resolution Number 2024-025

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RESOLUTION

Number 2024-025

To Accept a US Bureau of Justice Assistance Grant for Body Worn Cameras

WHEREAS, Section 9.15 of the Town Charter authorizes the Town Council to accept grant funding; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council has long recognized the advantages of body worn cameras for its Police Officers; and

WHEREAS, Senator Shaheen submitted a Bureau of Justice Assistance Grant in the Federal FY24 Budget for cameras for both officers and cruisers; and

WHEREAS, funding for the grant was approved in the Federal FY24 budget;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED IN COUNCIL, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b, that the Town Administrator is hereby authorized to apply for, accept and expend up to \$585,790 from the United States Bureau of Justice Assistance for Body Worn Cameras and In-Car Video Systems and supporting equipment for the Police Department.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its passage.

Adopted: May 21, 2024

Attest:

X _____

Erin Spencer, Council Chair

Date: _____

X _____

Cristina Guilford, Town Clerk

Date: _____

Archival Ref: Agenda #24-40
