



MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: Michael M. Martinez, Chief of Police

BY: Zak Ayala, Police Commander

SUBJECT: Approve the Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement Between the Arroyo Grande Police Department and the Lucia Mar Unified School District for School Resource Officer Services

DATE: June 27, 2023

SUMMARY OF ACTION:

Approve an agreement to provide continuing School Resource Officer coverage for the Lucia Mar Unified School District as agreed upon in the Memorandum Of Understanding ("MOU" or "Agreement") for the 2023/2024 school year.

IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:

The cost of the School Resource Officer position is approximately \$160,400 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24. This agreement shares the cost of the salary and benefits associated with the officer between the City and Lucia Mar Unified School District (LMUSD). The City will receive fifty percent (50%) of the cost from LMUSD; totaling \$80,200. These funds were included as estimated revenues in the City's proposed FY 2023-24 Budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

1) Approve an agreement between the City of Arroyo Grande and the Lucia Mar Unified School District (LMUSD) to share the cost of salary and benefits for one School Resource Officer (SRO) position in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24; 2) Find that approving the agreement is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") because it has no potential to result in either a direct, or reasonably foreseeable indirect, physical change in the environment. (State CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15060, subd. (b)(2)-(3), 15378.)

BACKGROUND:

The Arroyo Grande Police Department has been providing School Resource Officer (SRO) services to the Lucia Mar Unified School District (LMUSD) since the early 1990's. The SRO Program is a collaborative effort between the City of Arroyo Grande Police Department and the LMUSD with the goal of reducing crime, drug abuse, violence, and providing a safe school environment. The SRO is a full-time police officer whose primary

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function is to address law enforcement concerns at their respective schools. The AGPD and LMUSD work closely in selecting the SRO by identifying specific traits that are essential to working in a school environment. The SRO program utilizes the SRO Triad concept as set forth by the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) that is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference. The SRO Triad concept generally means that the officers assigned to the SRO program are law enforcement officers, counselors and teachers. The SRO works closely with school officials and administrators to develop positive relationships with the community, students, parents and school officials. While the position is housed at, and primarily assigned to, Arroyo Grande High School, the SRO is responsible for responding to requests from Paulding Middle School and Ocean View and Harloe Elementary schools. The SRO interacts with students from a variety of ages and backgrounds, often serving in a mentorship role.

One of the highlights of this program is the ability for the SRO to provide counseling to students on a formal and informal basis. The SRO regularly interacts with students and is often viewed as a role model. The SRO provides opportunities to forge beneficial relationships with staff and students, all the while being a visible deterrent to crime and other untoward behavior. The relationships that SRO's establish with students are enduring beyond students' graduation for personal and professional development. On-site law enforcement provides familiarity with the layout of the campuses and administration, as well as provide quick assistance with student safety emergencies.

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:

The LMUSD has requested SRO services be provided for the 2023-2024 school year. The term of the agreement begins July 1, 2023, and ends June 30, 2024. This agreement is reviewed annually.

The SRO position has been in existence since the 1990's and staff believes this program is extremely important to the City's public safety services and should be maintained. Given the City's demographics, a substantial portion of public safety issues are youth related. If the position were not dedicated to schools, it would require other Police Department patrol personnel to respond to a large volume of school related calls for service. The SRO historically provides advantages and efficiency of personal networking relationships and collaboration from being teamed with school administration to address safety issues in a proactive role, rather than being responsive after the fact.

The MOU has been drafted so that the Police Department and LMUSD share the costs of the SRO, including overtime pay. The cost of the MOU to LMUSD will be \$80,200, except that LMUSD will pay for overtime work at rates which are included in Exhibit A attached to the MOU. The Police Department, specifically the Chief of Police, is responsible for hiring the SRO, but may solicit input from LMUSD to assist in their selection. Further, the Police Department will collaborate with LMUSD in the

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implementation of the SRO program. For example, the SRO will coordinate with the school administration in order to provide lessons regarding police services and general citizenship. The SRO will primarily, however, respond to incidents or conduct investigations regarding calls to service.

In the LMUSD 2022-2023 school year (specifically July 1, 2022 to May 24, 2023), the SRO responded to (288) calls for service and completed (48) police reports. The Police Department has developed guidelines for the SRO with a multifaceted approach to provide services given the many health and safety requirements set forth by the State. The LMUSD has agreed to partner with the Police Department for another year of this program supporting the need to provide this valuable resource to the students, staff and the community.

ALTERNATIVES:

The following alternatives are provided for Council's consideration:

1. Approve the Agreement to share 50% of the cost for SRO services for Fiscal Year 2023-24 with any minor changes necessary to effectuate City Council's intent;
2. Do not adopt the Agreement; or
3. Provide other direction to staff.

ADVANTAGES:

The LMUSD will help the City of Arroyo Grande continue enhanced school safety by sharing fifty percent (50%) of the cost of the salary and benefits associated with the actual officer assigned to the SRO position.

DISADVANTAGES:

Non-approval will result in the Police Department unable to dedicate an officer in the City schools on a full-time basis.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

No environmental review is required for this item. Approving the agreement is not a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") because it has no potential to result in either a direct, or reasonably foreseeable indirect, physical change in the environment. (State CEQA Guidelines, §§ 15060, subd. (b)(2)-(3), 15378.)

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City's website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

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Attachments:

1. Proposed School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement
2. National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) Best Practices