

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL

DATE: AUGUST 9, 2006

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: GREG RAMIREZ, CITY MANAGER

BY: NATHAN HAMBURGER, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: FINGERPRINTING SERVICES – DEDICATED SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES TO THE MEMBER CITIES OF THE LAS VIRGENES/MALIBU COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

The General Services Agreement with Los Angeles County includes the provision of public safety services provided through the Sheriff's Department. The services provided include Sheriff's personnel, equipment, vehicles, and access to a variety of Sheriff specialized services available to all of the Los Angeles County contract cities such as the Juvenile Intervention Team.

Agoura Hills is recognized as a safe community in which there are very few Type I or violent crimes committed within the city. A majority of the crimes that are committed are related to burglary or theft of personal belongings, whether taken from parked vehicles or an individual's home. When this type of criminal activity occurs, it is necessary to collect fingerprints from the scene of the crime in order to obtain leads or tie criminals to past incidents when apprehended. Unfortunately, these non-violent crimes are not a top priority for the limited fingerprinting technicians that must provide service throughout Los Angeles County. Many times this forces individuals to leave the affected crime area untouched until the trained personnel can fit it in their schedule or prevents the incident from being fingerprinted because the victim wants to clean up the affected area in a timely manner. Many times, even when fingerprints are collected, they are slow to get processed and properly filed due to the large amount of incidents that occur throughout Los Angeles County.

Recognizing this issue as a regional problem, the Las Virgenes/Malibu Council of Governments (COG) has worked with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to secure dedicated fingerprinting staff for the five affected cities. The COG was recently informed that Los Angeles County would be willing to provide a dedicated fingerprinting technician and use of the necessary equipment for a cost that would be divided between the COG cities on a per capita basis. An existing technician has been identified as the individual that would provide fingerprinting services to the COG cities five days a week and be available for weekend service on an as-needed basis. The benefit of utilizing a current county employee is that they would be able to begin immediately, avoiding any time delay involved in recruiting and hiring a new employee.

The dedicated fingerprinting technician would allow for crime scenes to be cleaned up in a more rapid manner, which allows residents to move on after being a victim of a burglary or theft. Although the collection of fingerprints does not guarantee that a crime will be solved, it does help law enforcement personnel link crimes to apprehended individuals or provide leads that may prevent strings of crime from occurring. In addition, the fingerprints collected within the five COG cities would be processed in a more expedited fashion, allowing for prints to be available sooner to law enforcement personnel to utilize for investigative purposes.

The cost to Agoura Hills to receive these services is \$20,000 annually. It is recommended that this program be utilized for one year on a trial basis and to be reviewed and brought back to the City Council to gauge its merit for the next fiscal year. As such, this item was not included in the current fiscal year budget due to the fact that the program details were not finalized and agreed upon by the COG member cities at the time of the budget adoption. The approved Fiscal Year 2006-07 budget has a surplus of approximately \$61,000 of which staff would recommend using the appropriate funds to provide for the aforementioned fingerprinting services.

This proposal has been reviewed by the Law Enforcement Committee and was recommended to be brought forth to the entire City Council for approval. In addition, this item has been discussed at the July 2006 COG meeting in which all five member cities agreed to take the item back to their respective City Councils for approval.

Although there is a fiscal impact due to the need to utilize a portion of the surplus funds from the Fiscal Year 2006-07 budget, the City would still maintain a balanced budget if this program were to be approved.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff is recommending the City Council:

- (1) Approve the dedicated fingerprinting services program; and
- (2) Appropriate \$20,000 from the General Fund Balance; and
- (3) Once approved by the Las Virgenes/Malibu COG, authorize the City Manager to sign the multi-agency agreement for these services in conjunction with the four other COG member cities.