

## **REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL**

**DATE: MARCH 28, 2007**

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**FROM: GREG RAMIREZ, CITY MANAGER**

**BY: NATHAN HAMBURGER, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER**

**SUBJECT: VOLUNTEERS ON PATROL POLICING PROGRAM**

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The Volunteers on Patrol (VOP) Policing Program is one in which community volunteers agree to assist the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department as additional "eyes and ears" in the community. The Volunteers on Patrol program is utilized by several contract cities throughout Los Angeles County and Southern California to allow residents an opportunity to become involved in their community. The program would ask that members of the VOP volunteer a specified number of hours each month or quarter. The program would be operated through the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and supported by the City of Agoura Hills.

The Sheriff's Department will conduct all background checks of all interested volunteers and house the VOP members at the Lost Hills Station. Deputy Shawn Brownell would likely be the Deputy assigned to work with the VOP members. Liability insurance coverage for the volunteers would be through Los Angeles County. Training would be arranged for by the Sheriff's Department.

The VOP Program is designed to do the following:

- Vacation Checks – Patrol the areas where residents have notified Sheriff's Department that they will be on vacation. Look for signs that indicate someone is not home (trash cans or piled newspapers left out). If they see signs of a break in they call Sheriff's personnel to respond.
- Home/Business Security Surveys – Trained to assist home or business owners to look at possible safety improvements to the areas inside and surrounding their home or business. This is a free service to the public.
- Assist with Patrol at Special Events – Assist at events such as Reyes Adobe Days, Great Race of Agoura Hills, Concerts in the Park, 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events, etc.
- Traffic Control/Directing – If sent to the proper training, the VOP could assist in traffic control at intersections where signals are out or for special events.

- Code Enforcement Assistance – If provided the proper training, the VOP could assist the City in specific code enforcement field reviews and report incidents back to City’s Code Enforcement Officer to follow up on.
- Assist With Neighborhood Watch Programs

The VOP program is not designed to replace Sheriff Services, and VOP members are not assigned to do investigations of crimes, write citations/tickets, make arrests, or carry weapons.

The VOP program would be operated from the Lost Hills Sheriff Station, with oversight coming directly from the Sheriff’s Department personnel. The City would be responsible to provide the following:

- Cell Phones
- Uniforms
- Vehicle with decals
- Small Equipment
- Fuel/Maintenance for Vehicle
- Advertisement of the program
- Training – as needed

The City will work with the Sheriff’s Department to complete the recruiting process and purchase uniforms and the necessary communications devices with funds existing in the current fiscal year budget. Staff would then budget for the purchase of a V.O.P. vehicle in the fiscal year 2007-08 budget to be approved by the City Council. A typical V.O.P. Program budget would have a financial commitment of approximately \$6,000 annually (excluding initial vehicle purchase).

This program has been reviewed and recommended by the Law Enforcement Committee.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff respectfully recommends the City Council instruct staff to initiate the Volunteers on Patrol Policing Program with the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.

Attachment: (A) V.O.P. Program