



AGENDA REPORT

Department: Administrative Services - Human Resources
Prepared by: Molly Brennan, Administrative Services Director
Meeting Date: Tuesday, January 17, 2023
Approved by: Brad Raulston, City Manager

SUBJECT:

Resolution of the City of National City, California authorizing the Police Lateral Officer Bonus Program from January 2023 through December 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Resolution entitled, "Resolution of the City Council of the City of National City, California, Authorizing the Police Officer Lateral Bonus Program from January 2023 through December 2024."

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE PRIOR ACTION:

Not Applicable.

EXPLANATION:

A number of San Diego County Police Department have implemented hiring bonuses to attract lateral police applicants. Hiring bonuses are not only being used as a competitive hiring strategy to keep up with attrition, but bonuses are also used as budget neutral process given the costs associated with hiring Police Recruits.

Background

The National City Police Department, along with police departments across the nation are raising concerns about current and future staffing levels. The outflow of officers retiring and resigning has surged while the influx of number of viable police recruits is drastically low. The factors that have combined to create this moment include:

- Rapid increases of police officer retirements and resignations
- Fewer applicants, for both police laterals and recruits
- The COVID-19 pandemic
- Negative public portrayals of and attitudes toward police
- Lengthy and difficult entrance requirements
- A competitive and strong job market
- Attitudinal changes and expectations of Millennials and Gen-Xers

Additionally, the current work force of officers is working short staffed which then in turn leads to increased and forced overtime and burn out.

Definitions

Police Officer Recruit: An applicant that has no police experience and does NOT possess a POST certificate. Traditionally, these individuals are hired by a police department and attend a six-month academy. While attending the academy, the recruit is an employee of the city and receives Recruit Police Officer salary.

Police Officer Lateral: An applicant who has successfully completed a police academy and possesses a California Basic POST Certificate or equivalent. Traditionally, these individuals fall into two categories; 1. Police academy graduates that have not yet been hired by police departments 2. Laterals that are currently employed with another police department.

Program Evaluation

California Police Officers Standards and Training require police recruits to complete 944 hours of training in the academy, over a six month period. A recruit receiving "Step E" pay earns \$31.80 per hour or \$30,019.20 in salary while in the academy. This figure does not include any associated benefits as a full time City employee.

When taking into consideration recruit salary plus benefits, the cost of attending the academy, and the costs associated with staff time (Police Department and Human Resources) to complete recruitment, testing, and the background process, the costs are well above \$ 75,000 per recruit.

Hiring lateral officers who are already certified and trained is more cost-effective for departments.

Below are some examples of hiring bonuses local police departments are currently offering:

- Chula Vista Police Department \$25,000.00 with up to an additional \$5,000.00 applied toward moving expenses.
- San Diego Sheriff's Department \$20,000.00 with up to an additional \$15,000.00 applied toward moving expenses.
- San Diego Police Department. \$15, 000.00
- La Mesa Police Department \$15,000.00
- Oceanside Police Department \$22,000.00
- Harbor Police Department \$10,000.00

The National City Police Department will continue to recruit and hire the best candidates available and provide the community the highest level of police services in San Diego County. To that end, staff recommends the implementation of hiring bonuses in the amount of \$30,000 for police officer laterals. It is a budget neutral proposal that will allow the Police Department to continue to be relevant in a very competitive police officer job market. The bonus will be paid in the following manner:

- \$10,000.00 Upon date of hire
- \$10,000.00 Successful completion of probation period
- \$10,000.00 two-year anniversary date, and Standard or Above Standard Performance Evaluations

Bonuses are a mandatory subject for collective bargaining. The National City Police Officers Association (POA) is in full support of the bonus program as recommended and a side letter to the 2022-2024 POA MOU will be signed to document the bonus program upon Council approval.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

The program is budget neutral. The cost of up to \$30,000 per lateral officer is more than offset in the budgeted costs for hiring police recruits and sponsoring their academy attendance.

RELATED CITY COUNCIL 2020-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

Public Safety

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

This is not a project under CEQA and is therefore not subject to environmental review.CCR15378;
PRC 21065.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION:

Agenda Report posted within 72 hours of meeting date and time in accordance with Brown Act.

ORDINANCE:

Not Applicable

EXHIBIT:

Exhibit A - Resolution