



City Council Report

Date: October 15, 2018
To: City Council
Through: John Pombier, Assistant City Manager
From: Ramon Batista, Police Chief
Kim Meza, Forensic Services Administrator
Subject: Grant Award from the Office of Justice Programs – DNA Backlog Reduction Program (Citywide)

Purpose and Recommendation

The City of Mesa Police Department is respectfully requesting that the Mesa City Council authorize the City Manager or his designee to enter into a Grant Award with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, to accept \$150,000 in grant funds from the National Institute of Justice for overtime and equipment for DNA Backlog Reduction for the Police Department's Forensic Services Division.

Background

The Mesa Police Department's Forensic Services Biology Unit consists of seven employees and is responsible for processing biological evidence from homicides, sexual assaults, burglaries, and numerous other crimes. During 2017, members of this unit processed over 3,000 samples and prepared over 1,500 reports regarding their scientific analyses. The laboratory is a National DNA Index System participant.

Discussion

The goal of the unit is to increase the number of samples processed and to reduce the backlog of forensic DNA cases. In an effort to increase the capacity of the laboratory to handle a larger amount of cases with the same level of staffing, the Division will add equipment to increase efficiency to process backlogged cases.

Alternatives

If this Grant Award is declined, the Mesa Police Department's Biology Unit will not accomplish their goal of increasing the number of samples processed and reducing the turnaround time for all requests (persons and property crimes) and equipment will not be purchased.

Fiscal Impact

The award amount is \$150,000 and no match is required. Mesa Police Department personnel will be responsible for submitting invoices to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs. The Office of Justice Programs will remit monies due upon receipt of the invoices.

Coordinated With

The City of Mesa Police Department recommends the approval of the Grant Award from the Office of Justice Programs for the DNA Backlog Reduction Grant Program.