



City Council Report

Date: December 1, 2020
To: City Council
Through: John Pombier, Assistant City Manager
From: Ken Cost, Police Chief
Kim Meza, Forensic Services Administrator
Subject: Grant Award from the Office of Justice Programs – DNA Capacity Enhancement and 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 designee to enter into a Grant Award with the Office of Justice Programs, to accept \$250,025 in grant funds for personnel services and software for the Police Department's Forensic Services Division for DNA capacity enhancement and backlog reduction.

Background

The Mesa Police Department's Forensic Services Biology Unit is responsible for processing biological evidence from homicides, sexual assaults, burglaries, and numerous other crimes. During 2019, the unit's seven members processed over 3,100 samples and prepared over 1,400 reports regarding their scientific analyses. The laboratory is a National DNA Index System participant.

Discussion

The objectives of the Biology Unit are to increase the number of samples processed and to reduce the backlog of forensic DNA cases. A grant funded position assists with the backlog reduction. The laboratory will increase its interpretation software licenses to meet the on-going needs of the laboratory.

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.

Fiscal Impact

The award amount is \$250,025 and no match is required. Mesa Police Department personnel will be responsible for submitting invoices to the 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.