



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA STATEMENT



October 20, 2020

File ID: 20-0430

TITLE

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHULA VISTA APPROVING THE AMENDED MEASURE A PUBLIC SAFETY EXPENDITURE PLAN TO ADD ONE PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST AND ONE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TECHNICIAN AND AMENDING THE FISCAL YEAR 2020/21 EXPENDITURE BUDGET FOR THE MEASURE A SALES TAX FUND TO FUND SUCH POSITIONS FROM MEASURE A – POLICE DEPARTMENT AVAILABLE FUND BALANCE (4/5 VOTE REQUIRED)

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Council adopt the resolution.

SUMMARY

On February 13, 2018, the City Council accepted the recommendations of the Public Safety Advisory Committee to adopt the Intended Public Safety Expenditure Plan (PSEP). The PSEP presented the intended expenditures of approximately \$18M per year if a half-cent general sales tax measure passed. The intended plan was a guide on how the funds could be allocated based on the critical needs identified by the Police and Fire Departments. The plan also assumed that both the Police Department and Fire Department would each be allocated, through the budget process, approximately \$9M annually from the sales tax, with the goal of addressing public safety understaffing and improving response times.

On June 5, 2018, the People of the City of Chula Vista approved Measure A authorizing a one-half cent sales tax on retail sales within the City. The collection of the sales tax began on October 1, 2018.

On December 18, 2018, the City Council approved resolutions amending the Measure A Public Safety Expenditure Plan; and amending the Fiscal Year 2019 Operating Budget; adding authorized staffing of various City departments; and approving a side letter between the City of Chula Vista and International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 2180 (IAFF).

On June 4, 2019, the City Council adopted the Fiscal Year 2020 Proposed Budget that established the Measure A appropriations and adding authorized staffing of various City departments.

On June 18, 2019, the City Council approved a resolution amending the Measure A PSEP; updating Measure A sales tax revenue assumptions; staffing changes for both the Police and Fire departments, and updated expenditures.

On June 9, 2020, the City Council adopted the Fiscal Year 2021 Proposed Budget that established the Measure A appropriations and adding authorized staffing of various City departments.

On August 25, 2020, City Council approved a resolution amending the Measure A PSEP to move up the hiring of six Peace Officers to Fiscal Year 2021.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The activity is not a “Project” as defined under Section 15378 of the California Environmental Quality Act State Guidelines; therefore, pursuant to State Guidelines Section 15060(c)(3) no environmental review is required.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

During its regular meeting held on October 8, 2020, the Measure A Citizens’ Oversight Committee (COC) recommended City Council approval of adding one Public Information Specialist and one Information Technology Technician to the Public Safety Expenditure Plan. The COC voted 5-3 in favor of Measure A funding for the two positions in the Police Department.

DISCUSSION

With the successful passage of the Measure A Sales Tax, staff is moving forward with implementation of the Public Safety Expenditure Plan (PSEP). At this time, the Police Department is requesting to approve modifications to the PSEP to meet ongoing or emerging staffing needs.

Public Information Specialist

Between 2004-2011 the Police Department maintained a position for a Public Information Officer (PIO) to plan, direct, organize and coordinate public information and public relations programs for the Police Department. The position has been vacant since staffing was reduced during the Great Recession.

Since that time, the responsibilities of the Public information Officer have been handled by a Police Lieutenant as a secondary, collateral assignment. Secondary assignments are common throughout the organization, but the level of impacts of secondary assignments can vary widely. The Lieutenant handling PIO duties is assigned to a full-time responsibility managing the Criminal Investigations Division, consisting of three separate detective units that comprise a total of 43 individual employees.

Over the years as social media has evolved and public expectation for engagement and transparency has grown, so too have the responsibilities managed by the collateral PIO. Recent information indicates that PIO responsibilities take, on average, 18-hours per week of the Police Lieutenant’s time (nearly 50%). This is a significant drain on the ability to manage the investigative operations of the Police Department, a crucial component to identifying, arresting, and prosecuting criminal offenders.

In addition, the emergence of social media has changed the landscape for traditional media, and the increasing expectations for information transparency and speed have increased pressure on limited police staffing. The need for a traditional PIO has been replaced by the needs for proactive public outreach engagement and social media engagement.

The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing calls on law enforcement agencies to adopt technology-based community engagement to increase community trust and access. The report highlights the value in the use of new and social media as a means of community interaction and relationship building, which can result in stronger law enforcement. Community engagement, the report concludes, must be responsive and current. “False or incorrect statements made via social media, mainstream media, and other means of technology,” the report concludes, “Deeply harm trust and legitimacy and can only be overcome with targeted and continuing community engagement and repeated positive interaction.”¹

The technical requirements of modern police-community engagement and communication call for a collection of backgrounds and experiences for successful integration into the Police Department’s mission. Consider, for example, the unique knowledge described by one nationally recognized expert² in modern police information strategies:

- Digital Risk Manager: Know how to message and respond to the public in times of crisis; Know how to discern between rumor and fact and ensure the community does too.
- Graphic Designer: Know how to brand an agency and tell its story in a visually compelling — and professional — way; Go the extra mile to get that perfect shot.
- Audio/Visual Coordinator: If a picture is worth a thousand words, a video is worth a million. Know how to effectively tell a story in the most consumable way — through video.
- Customer Service: Know that every conversation, every question, and every concern matters; Be available when communities are looking for answers and provide those answers with courtesy and kindness.
- Social Media Expert: Understand how people want to communicate today — and tomorrow — and be willing to test out features to see what will be the next best way to connect with their communities.

The complex role of a modern information specialist suggests the need for some qualities not easily found in the traditional policing organization³. They include:

- Experience or education in media relation, communications, and marketing;
- Some knowledge of newsroom operations and/or social media practices and audience engagement strategies;
- Comfort in front of a camera and other oral communication platforms, whether traditional media or live streaming, stemming from practice and experience that helps project believability and confidence;
- Some proficiency in photography and/or videography, coupled with photo editing and video production techniques;

¹ President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. 2015. Final Report of the President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Extracted from https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf

² Extracted from Katie Nelson, “[What Does a Social Media Manager Do?](#)” LinkedIn, April 28, 2019.

³ Chris Hsiung, “Sworn vs. Civilian PIOs: Adapting the Role of the Public Information Officer for 21st Century Law Enforcement,” *Police Chief* 86, no. 8 (August 2019): 46–54.

- Knowledge or experience in communication strategies, branding and/or marketing strategies; and
- Time to dedicate to the role, without the need for Department-mandated position rotation, to understand and leverage the nuances that exist between traditional and social media platforms.

Yet there is still value in maintaining sworn law enforcement experience in the public engagement strategy. Education and experience specific to sworn personnel, such as the police academy or the experience of working a field patrol assignment, are valuable in providing context on any information released to the public. Having uniformed representatives can help increase the appearance of trust and official representation. The knowledge of an experienced manager during times of crises helps enhance the sharing of public information. In short, as quoted by Mountain View Police PIO Deputy Chief Chris Hsiung, “Experienced sworn PIOs are a built-in subject matter expert on all things ‘police.’”⁴

Although the Police Department has operated with a collateral sworn PIO since 2011, the evolution of our community’s needs and expectations suggest that this limited strategy leaves the Department and its personnel at great risk. As evidenced by several high-profile events across the nation, critical incidents require a rapid, professional and transparent information strategy to answer public and media inquiries. Failure to provide timely and factual information that addresses public concerns, and that stays ahead of rumor or misinformation, can have drastic consequences for the safety of community and for its trust in the agency. This can lead to unrest in the community, reduced effectiveness of the agency, and increased risk to the City and its employees. Yet it is these same circumstances that require the full attention of an Investigations Division manager (the Police Lieutenant), who must manage the division to ensure that demands for an objective and comprehensive investigation are met. Without additional support, the requirements of the Investigation Division leave little time for the critical role of providing public information and public engagement.

For these reasons the Police Department intends to supplement the existing sworn PIO with civilian support. We anticipate that the supporting role will greatly reduce PIO-related workload from the Police Lieutenant by coordinating publicity, outreach and public education efforts in order to promote a positive image for the Chula Vista Police Department and ensure citizens are informed about police related services, programs and events. The support role is not anticipated to serve as the “face” of the Police Department – that role will remain with the Department’s designated PIO.

To meet these needs, the Police Department intends to add a Public Information Specialist position to work under the direction of the existing collateral PIO personnel. This allows the department to expand and enhance transparency and engagement strategies within the modern landscape of digital media, maintain the crucial involvement of sworn staff to put police matters into proper context, and free some workload from sworn staff so that they can focus more on their primary crime fighting responsibilities.

⁴ Chris Hsiung, “Sworn vs. Civilian PIOs: Adapting the Role of the Public Information Officer for 21st Century Law Enforcement,” *Police Chief* 86, no. 8 (August 2019): 46–54.

Information Technology Technician

For many years, the Police Department has been successful at leveraging technological innovations to boost efficiency and effectiveness. The Police Technology Unit is the sole unit responsible for the development, implementation, and ongoing management and support of both basic technical resources and innovative technical programs.

The Police Technology Unit maintains a wide breadth of specialized equipment and systems supporting the public safety mission. The unit, for example, is responsible for managing and maintaining critical systems related to our 9-1-1 and Computer Aided Dispatching systems, mobile computing and smartphone systems, our Live 9-1-1 system, and our Drone as a First Responder program. These programs not only boost efficiency, they also enhance de-escalation capabilities and keep the community safe.

Most of these systems are critical, complex and require the attention of specialized skills and experienced police technology specialists to maintain, troubleshoot and deploy. These demands often pull these more senior technologists away from the less complex and more common systems such as PC and peripheral deployment and maintenance as well as traditional office productivity support needs that occur. When these more-common office support needs are not serviced in a timely manner, they quickly become increasingly impactful to department operations and commitments to other agencies, the courts and the public that we serve.

The Police Department requires a less specialized information technology role to have as their primary focus, these daily traditional office productivity and IT operations assistance to address a variety of less specialized yet essential activities such as user login problems, provisioning new accounts, managing printing services, software requests, new computer deployments, email problems, internet problems, and more.

For these reasons, staff recommends the addition of a first-tier support position to provide non-specialized user technical support needs

- 1.0 Information Technology Technician

Summary of Proposed Changes:

To address the evolving needs to the community and the growing policing organization, staff recommends the addition of positions designed to enhance efficiency through technical innovation, and to enhance engagement and transparency with our community. These include:

- 1.0 Information Technology Technician
- 1.0 Public Information Specialist

The chart below outlines the Police Department’s proposed changes (highlighted in yellow) to the PSEP.

Proposed Police Department Public Safety Expenditure Plan

Position	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	Total
POLICE SERGEANT		3.0	2.0	1.0		6.0
POLICE AGENT	1.0	2.0	3.0	2.0		8.0
PEACE OFFICER	4.0	6.0	11.0			21.0

SWORN FTE TOTAL	5.0	11.0	16.0	3.0	0.0	35.0
CIVILIAN BACKGROUND INVESTIGATOR	1.0					1.0
COMMUNICATIONS CENTER MANAGER		1.0				1.0
COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICER		2.0				2.0
DIGITAL FORENSICS TECHNICIAN II		2.0				2.0
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TECHNICIAN			1.0			1.0
POLICE DISPATCHER	2.0	5.0				7.0
PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST			1.0			1.0
SR. POLICE TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST	1.0					1.0
CIVILIAN FTE TOTAL	4.0	10.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	16.0
POLICE DEPARTMENT TOTAL	9.0	21.0	18.0	3.0	0.0	51.0

The Police Department recognizes that current community demands, safety strategies, and staffing needs will likely change in the future. The Police Department also recognizes that revenues and expenses used to calculate current allocation plans may change in the future. PSEP recommendations for future years will continue to be reevaluated, balanced against changes in revenue or expenditure projections, and considered along with changing public safety trends and community needs. As a result, this Public Safety Expenditure Plan is intended to be a “living document”. Future recommendations may change.

MEASURE A POSITION ADJUSTMENTS

The following table represents the proposed position count amendments for Fiscal Year 2021 related to the proposed actions. The Measure A Fund will see a net increase of 2.00 FTEs for the Police Department.

Department	Fund	Position Title	FTE
Police Department	Measure A	Information Technology Technician	1
		Public Information Specialist	1
Net Position Increase for Police Department			2

DECISION-MAKER CONFLICT

Staff has reviewed the decision contemplated by this action and has determined that it is not site-specific and consequently, the real property holdings of the City Council members do not create a disqualifying real property-related financial conflict of interest under the Political Reform Act (Cal. Gov’t Code § 87100, et seq.).

Staff is not independently aware, and has not been informed by any City Council member, of any other fact that may constitute a basis for a decision- maker conflict of interest in this matter.

CURRENT-YEAR FISCAL IMPACT

Approval of the resolution will add one (1) Information Technology Technician and one (1) Public Information Specialist to the Police Department section of the Measure A fund and amend the fiscal year 2020-2021 expenditure budget in the Measure A fund as indicated in the table below.

Category	Current FY21 Budget	Budget Amendments	Updated FY21 Budget
Revenue from Other Agencies	\$125,000		\$125,000
Transfers In	\$10,010,000		\$10,010,000
REVENUE TOTAL	\$10,135,000	\$0	\$10,135,000
Personnel Expenses	\$7,649,967	\$147,267	\$7,797,234
Supplies & Services	\$525,737		\$525,737
Other Expenses	\$375,375		\$375,375
Capital	\$189,233		\$189,233
Internal Service Charges	\$30,767		\$30,767
EXPENSE TOTAL	\$8,771,079	\$147,267	\$8,918,346
NET FISCAL IMPACT	\$1,363,921	(\$147,267)	\$1,216,654

The Information Technology Technician is anticipated to be hired in November 2020, with a cost of \$84,055 in the current fiscal year. The Public Information Specialist is anticipated to be hired in January 2021, with a cost of \$63,212 in the current fiscal year. Total FY 2021 fiscal impact for these two positions is \$147,267.

ONGOING FISCAL IMPACT

The PSEP anticipates that the one-half cent sales tax increase would generate between \$20.0 million in Fiscal Year 2021 and \$21.0 million in Fiscal Year 2030. As part of the City's annual budget process, annual allocations to the Measure A Sales Tax Fund would be brought forward for City Council consideration and action. In accordance with the Ordinance, for each subsequent year after Fiscal Year 2021, prior to City Council consideration of the City's annual budget, staff will prepare and present to the Citizens' Oversight Committee for its review a spending plan for Measure A revenues. The positions outlined in this report will be included in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment1: Amended Measure A Public Safety Expenditure Plan – Police Department

Staff Contact: Phil Collum, Police Captain