



City of Homer

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Police Department

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MEMORANDUM 21-031

DATE: 1-27-2021

FROM: Chief Robl

TO: City Manager Dumouchel

SUBJ: HPD Fleet Purchase

We have been operating our fleet with a take home policy for our police officers for over 25 years. Having a take home policy ensures officers can be called in from an off duty status and rapidly respond directly to the location of the call fully equipped and ready to render aide. We have found other advantages to the take home policy as well. We are currently budgeted for 13 police officers. We gained an additional position in 2020. We neglected to budget for an additional patrol vehicle last year. I would like to add one soon and keep up with a reasonable replacement schedule to keep our fleet safe and capable.

Most police departments do not operate patrol vehicles with over 100,000 miles on them. Many replace them at far fewer miles. We have always tried to run ours as long as we safely can. There is great risk with operating aged vehicles in emergency responses, you just never know when something is going to break that could cause an accident. We currently have two front line patrol vehicles that should be replaced as soon as possible with a third also very close to the end of its service time. An additional need is to replace our jail transport van. It has numerous problems and over 110,000 miles on it. These vehicles are identified as follows:

Unit 526	2009 Chevy Impala	148,000 miles
Unit 518	2007 Ford Expedition	124,000 miles, extremely rusty, literally falling apart
Unit 527	2014 Ford Explorer	93,500 miles, still operable but deteriorating
Unit 523	2008 Chevy Van	110,000 miles, this is our jail van

We have been purchasing four wheel drive vehicles with the police package on them. The police package has heavy duty electrical components in it to handle our equipment. It also comes with heavy duty brakes and suspensions. The police package is currently offered on Chevy Tahoe's, Ford Explorers and Expeditions and some pick-ups. Pick-ups don't work for our uses. The Tahoe's and Expeditions are our preferred vehicles. They have enough room for prisoner cages and the rest of our equipment. We have several Explorers. The spacing in the rear seat with the cage in it is very tight making it difficult to fit a large, resistive person in them. I intend to purchase Tahoe's and Expeditions in the future unless something better comes along.

The Alaska Department of Public Safety bids a contract with Chevrolet and Ford for police vehicles every year. The contract pricing is offered to all police agencies in the state. We have tried to obtain better pricing through the bid process but have not been able to do so. Sticking with the negotiated prices from DPS has

proven to be the way to go. The manufacturers typically have a window open for ordering police service vehicles. You can't order vehicles when the window is closed. COVID is complicating the process and slowing it down. Our last new vehicle orders took about a year to get to us. The cost of the vehicle is just a part of it. The vehicles have to be outfitted before they are ready to go. Outfitting is done at Alaska Safety in Anchorage, also on state contract prices. I have not seen the state contract prices for this year yet. We purchased two new Expeditions in 2020 at a cost of \$40,000 each. Outfitting them came in at \$12,600 each.

For CY 2020 we had originally planned and budgeted for replacing our jail van. We neglected to budget for an additional patrol vehicle. We currently have approximately \$80,000 available in our fleet reserve account. I would like permission to replace the Chevy Impala now using our existing fleet reserve funds. I request permission to spend up to \$55,000 on this purchase. For FY 2022 I will plan on budgeting to replace the 2007 Expedition and add an additional patrol vehicle to our fleet.

City Manager's Note: While the Chief is requesting \$55,000 to purchase and outfit a vehicle, I am directing staff to increase the value requested in the ordinance to \$65,000. This is not to allow for additional equipment purchases, but to account for the fact that there is an international disruption to automotive supply chains which could impact the prices of vehicles. Any funds not spent on the originally intended use (patrol vehicle and police-use outfitting) will be returned to the fleet reserve account.