

# Mayor and Council Communication

**DATE:** 09/12/23

**M&C FILE NUMBER:** M&C 23-0735

**LOG NAME:** 35FY23 VIRTUAL REALITY DE-ESCALATION INITIATIVE

## **SUBJECT**

(ALL) Ratify the Application for, and Authorize the Acceptance of, if Awarded, the BJA FY23 Virtual Reality De-Escalation Site-Based Initiative Grant Program from the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance in an Amount of \$758,643.00, Authorize Execution of a Grant Agreement with the United States Department of Justice and Adopt Appropriation Ordinance

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Ratify the application for, and Authorize the acceptance of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Fiscal Year (FY) 23 Virtual Reality De-escalation Site-Based Initiative Grant Program, if Awarded, from the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance in the amount of \$758,643.00;
  2. Authorize execution of a grant agreement with the United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs and Bureau of Justice Assistance; and
  3. Adopt the attached appropriation ordinance increasing estimated receipts and appropriations in the Grants Operating Federal Fund, subject to receipt of the grant, in the amount \$758,643.00, for the purpose of the BJA FY23 Virtual Reality De-escalation Site-Based Initiative Grant Program.
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## **DISCUSSION:**

The primary goal of the United States Department of Justice BJA FY 23 Virtual Reality De-escalation Site-Based Initiative Grant Program is to implement emerging technologies utilized in scenario-based police training that is evidence-based and designed to ensure the safety of police officers, individuals they come in contact with, and the community at large. This is a new grant program under the United States Department of Justice that may be provided additional funding, if awarded, through a continuation award.

The Fort Worth Police Department Reality Based Training Unit applied for program funding in the amount of \$758,643.00 in eligible grant expenses including but not limited to personnel, supplies, equipment, and contractual services to study de-escalation training for officers responding to individuals in crisis, including people with physical, intellectual, and cognitive disabilities and individuals experiencing a mental health and/or substance use crisis. In addition to the other expenses, the grant will fund one (1) new Officer position salary at 100%. If awarded, a separate staffing ordinance M&C will be submitted to approve the officer position and increase authorized strength as required by City policy.

Funding under this grant will be used in two parts: 1) for a planning phase and 2) for an implementation phase. Phase one will include activities to create a project committee/research team to discuss planning, developing, and assessing the virtual reality training curriculum. Phase two will include activities to implement, collect biometric data, and assess/evaluate the results of the virtual reality training. The life of the grant project is for three years.

This M&C ratifies the submission of the grant application that was due on June 29, 2023. Ratification is necessary due to delays that affected the preparation of this M&C. More specifically, this is a new grant program from DOJ and had not been previously identified for advanced planning by the Police Department. Due to the extended review time needed to determine if Police could respond to this new program, the City Manager's Office was consulted prior to application to determine the appropriateness of proceeding with a ratified grant application.

Matching funds are not required under the grant. The funding type is reimbursable.

Indirect costs are an allowable budget category in the grant. The budget will include indirect costs if applicable.

The grant will serve ALL COUNCIL DISTRICTS.

A Form 1295 is not required because: This contract will be with a governmental entity, state agency or public institution of higher education: U. S. Department of Justice

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## **FISCAL INFORMATION / CERTIFICATION:**

The Director of Finance certifies that upon approval of the above recommendations, and adoption of the attached appropriation ordinance, funds will be available in the current operating budget, as appropriated, in the Grants Operating Federal Fund. The Police Department (and Financial Management Services) will be responsible for the collection and deposit of funds due to the City. Prior to an expenditure being incurred, the Police Department has the responsibility to validate the availability of funds. This is a reimbursement grant.

**Submitted for City Manager's Office by:** Fernando Costa 6122

**Originating Business Unit Head:** Neil Noakes 4212

**Additional Information Contact:** Angela Love 4441