



CITY OF BELLE ISLE, FLORIDA CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: November 13, 2018

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

From: B. Francis, City Manager

Subject: False Alarm Ordinance

Background: The City Staff would like the City Council to consider a false alarm ordinance. The ordinance requires all active alarm systems to be registered with the Police Department.

A false alarm occurs when the alarm system is activated and the Belle Isle Police Department responds, but there is no evidence of unauthorized entry, criminal activity (or reasonable threat of criminal activity) or any other emergency that would require the services of the Police Department. This includes signals activated by accident, negligence, mechanical failure, electrical failure, signals activated intentionally in non-emergency situations and signals for which the actual cause of activation is unknown. An alarm is considered **false** if responding personnel follow normal operating procedures and find no evidence of an unauthorized entry, criminal activity (or reasonable threat of), or other emergency.

In recent years, false alarms account for approximately 85% of all alarms to which the BIPD has had to respond. These false alarms divert law enforcement resources from crimes in progress, other emergency situations and time spent patrolling their areas.

Other communities have had great success reducing the number of false alarms when they require alarms to be registered and assess cost recovery for false alarms. Cities using this program have reduced the number of false alarms by as much as 70% in one year after implementing an alarm registration system.

BIPD officers must take each and every alarm call seriously. In nearly every case, however, our officers arrive to discover a false alarm was caused by accident or error. This new program will help to ensure that officers are available to patrol our neighborhoods and respond to emergencies.

If the Council decides to move forward with this ordinance, the City will develop the process and brochures necessary to inform the residents.

Staff Recommendation: Move forward with the false alarm ordinance.

Suggested Motion: No motion is necessary, but provide direction to the staff (move forward or not to move forward).

Alternatives: Do not develop a false alarm program

Fiscal Impact: TBD

Attachments: False Alarm Log from BIPD
Draft Ordinance