

**CITY OF BELLE SLE, FLORIDA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET**

Meeting Date: September 17, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

From: Travis Grimm, Chief of Police

Subject: Approve Belle Isle Police Department K-9 Program

Background: The Belle Isle Police Department wishes to launch a K-9 program aimed at improving our ability to locate missing endangered persons and apprehend suspects. This initiative will enhance public safety and our service to the community. The program will involve the use of two tracking Bloodhounds, each assigned to different shifts to ensure continuous coverage. Tracking K-9s, especially Bloodhounds, are extremely valuable assets in law enforcement for multiple reasons.

Staff Recommendation: Approve the K-9 Program.

Suggested Motion: I move that the Belle Isle City Council approve the implementation of a K-9 program within the Belle Isle Police Department, as outlined in the proposal submitted by Chief of Police Travis Grimm. The council recognizes that a \$25,000 donation from the Animal Welfare Foundation, Inc. will cover a significant portion of the start-up costs, with the remaining funds allocated from the police department's budget.

Additionally, the ongoing maintenance of the K-9 program will be included in the annual police department budget moving forward, with an estimated annual cost of \$10,500 for veterinary care, food, training, and equipment maintenance.

Fiscal Impact: Estimated remaining start-up cost of \$17,000 and estimated annual cost of \$10,500.



Belle Isle Police Department

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Rick Rudometkin

City Manager

Mr. Rudometkin,

I request approval to start a K-9 program at the Belle Isle Police Department. This initiative aims to enhance our department's capabilities in locating missing endangered persons and apprehending suspects, thereby improving public safety and service to our community. The program proposes the implementation of two tracking Bloodhounds, each assigned to different shifts, to ensure continuous coverage. Tracking K-9s, particularly Bloodhounds, are invaluable assets in law enforcement for several reasons:

1. **Enhanced Search and Rescue Operations:** Bloodhounds have an exceptional sense of smell and are particularly effective in locating missing persons, including children, elderly individuals, and those with disabilities or mental health issues who may wander off. Their ability to track scents over long distances and in various environmental conditions can significantly reduce search times and increase the likelihood of a safe recovery.
2. **Criminal Apprehension:** These dogs can follow the scent trail of suspects fleeing a crime scene, even in challenging terrains and conditions. This capability aids officers in quickly locating and apprehending suspects, which can be crucial in preventing further criminal activity and ensuring public safety.
3. **Community Engagement and Trust:** The presence of K-9 units often enhances community relations. Demonstrations and interactions with the public can foster a positive image of the

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police department, showcasing our commitment to utilizing advanced resources for the safety and well-being of our residents.

4. Operational Efficiency: K-9 units can cover areas and detect scents much faster than human officers, leading to more efficient and effective operations. This efficiency can save cost over time, as fewer resources are needed for extended searches and operations.

We are fortunate to have received a generous donation of \$25,000 from the Animal Welfare Foundation, Inc. to help cover the start-up costs of this program. These funds will be used to outfit vehicles, purchase necessary equipment, and cover initial veterinary and food expenses. Additionally, we will work closely with the Jimmy Ryce Center to secure the donation of two bloodhounds, further reducing the start-up expenses.

Below is an estimated comprehensive cost breakdown for the K-9 program:

Estimated Start-Up Costs:

Bloodhound Purchase/Donation: \$0 (donated by Jimmy Ryce Center)

K-9 Handler Training: \$10,000 (2 handlers at \$5,000 each)

Vehicle Outfitting (2 Vehicles): \$25,000 (\$12,500 per vehicle for kennels, temperature control, safety equipment)

K-9 Gear: \$2,000 (leashes, collars, harnesses, etc.)

Tracking and Scent Detection Equipment: \$2,500

Veterinary Initial Health Check-ups: \$1,500 (initial health exams, vaccinations)

Kennel: \$1,000 (for off-duty hours at handlers' homes)

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Total Start-Up Costs: \$42,000

Covered by Donation: \$25,000 (Animal Welfare Foundation, Inc.)

Remaining Start-Up Costs to be Budgeted: \$17,000

Estimated Annual Maintenance Costs:*

Veterinary Care: \$2,000 (\$1,000 per dog annually for routine check-ups, vaccinations, etc.)

Food: \$3,000 (\$1,500 per dog annually for high-quality working dog food)

Insurance: \$1,000 (\$500 per dog for liability insurance)

Ongoing Handler Training/Certification: \$2,000 (\$1,000 per handler annually for continuing education)

Miscellaneous Equipment Replacement: \$1,000 (toys, gear, etc.)

Vehicle Maintenance: \$1,500 (additional wear and tear due to K-9 transport)

Total Annual Maintenance Costs: \$10,500

While the \$25,000 donation will cover a significant portion of the initial costs, I estimate that the total start-up cost for the program will range between \$28,000 and \$50,000, depending on final expenses. The ongoing maintenance of the K-9 units will require an estimated annual investment of approximately \$6,000 to \$10,000 to cover veterinary care, food, continuous training, and equipment maintenance.

I am confident that implementing a K-9 unit will significantly enhance our department's operational capabilities and contribute positively to the safety and security of the Belle Isle community.

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Please indicate your decision below. If approved, we will add this item to the agenda for the council's approval.

- Approved
- Denied

Name: Rick Rudometkov Date 9/9/24
 Initials: [Signature]

Finance Department:

Please review and provide any further information or details regarding this purchase:

Comments: *Will the additional \$17,000 start up costs be able to be funded from the PD Budget for FY 24/25 as currently proposed? Also, will there ~~be~~ be additional pay*
 Name: Tracey Richardson Date 9/09/2024 *For K-9 officers?*
 Initials: TR

Thank you for considering this important matter. I am available to discuss this proposal further at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Travis Grimm
Chief of Police
Belle Isle Police Department