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CITY RECORDER USE ONLY:

AGENDA ITEM #: F. 3.

MEETING DATE: 05/23/2022

FINAL ACTION: RESO 2022-26

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

TO: *City Council*

FROM: *Jesse VanderZanden, City Manager*

PROJECT TEAM: *Henry Reimann, Police Chief*

MEETING DATE: *May 23, 2022*

SUBJECT TITLE: *Staff Report and Resolution Authorizing City Manager to Execute the Digital Forensic Lab Intra-Government Agreement between Washington County and Forest Grove Police Department*

ACTION REQUESTED:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ordinance	Order	X	Resolution	X	Motion	Informational

X all that apply

BACKGROUND:

The Washington County Digital Forensics Laboratory (WCDFL) program was established in 2018.

The WCDFL focuses on assisting police officers and prosecutors in gathering computer and digital evidence in criminal investigations and ultimately helping the community obtain more timely justice, obtain evidence more quickly and develop stronger cases.

The WCDLF provides significant assistance in investigations of crimes against vulnerable victims and crimes that threaten community safety. These crimes include child abuse, elder abuse, financial fraud and identity theft, domestic violence, home burglaries, and sexual assault cases. In the current digital age, digital “footprints” can be present in any crime. A digital device often provides key evidence to corroborate the statement of a crime victim, show a suspect’s state of mind or location, and even prevent future crimes

The WCDFL combines resources to avoid the unnecessary duplication of forensics tools and share operational costs amongst several agencies. Additionally, Washington County communities that previously could not afford digital forensics tools now have access to state-of-the-art equipment purchased by larger police agencies.

This jointly operated digital lab is designed to serve all Washington County residents and law enforcement agencies. The immediate benefits to our community include increased access to digital forensic services and fiscal responsibility.

The Forest Grove Police Department has benefit from the WCFDL since its inception in 2018. There were no costs associated with examining digital evidence until 2021.

CURRENT STATUS:

The high cost of digital forensics equipment and training is prohibited to individual police agencies, such as Forest Grove.

As the demand for digital evidence has increased, the cost of running the lab, training examiners, equipment purchases and replacement has risen. As mentioned, prior to the 2021/2022 Fiscal year, the burden of running the Lab was carried by the larger law enforcement agencies.

During the 2020 calendar year, it was decided by the Law Enforcement Council, that all the law enforcement agencies to assist in the cost of running the lab. The cost for each law enforcement agency would be based on population and or by each digital examination.

Based on our population, the Forest Grove Police budgeted fifteen thousand dollars for the 2021/2022 fiscal year.

The attached IGA was created to spell out the responsibilities for the participating agencies and the WCFDL.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The adoption of the resolution continues to carry a fiscal burden.

The Forest Grove Police Department has requested fifteen thousand dollars for the 2022/23 City budget in order to continue its participation with the WCDFL.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends City Council consider and approve the attached resolution.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: Resolution

Attachment B: Washington County Digital Forensic Lab Intra-Government Agreement