



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF MERCER ISLAND**

**AB 5964
November 9, 2021
Study Session**

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 5964: Potential Interlocal Agreements with Medina/Hunts Point for Marine Patrol Services.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution
	RECOMMENDED ACTION:	
	Discuss potential Interlocal Agreements with the City of Medina and Town of Hunts Point for Marine Patrol Services.	

DEPARTMENT:	Police		
STAFF:	Ed Holmes, Police Chief Chad Schumacher, Marine Patrol Sergeant		
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
EXHIBITS:			
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a		

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

SUMMARY

Background

The Mercer Island Police Department has maintained a Marine Patrol Unit since its founding in 1982. At the time, the Cities of Medina and Renton signed Interlocal Agreements (ILAs) for the Mercer Island Police Department to provide marine patrol services for their respective cities; the Towns of Hunts Point and Yarrow Point were added later. The City of Mercer Island (City) maintained these Agreements until 2010, when Medina, Hunts Point and Yarrow Point contracted with a different marine patrol service provider. Also in 2010, the City of Bellevue entered an ILA with Mercer Island to provide marine patrol services to their city in an exchange of services.

Since its inception, the Mercer Island Marine Patrol Unit has dedicated its resources to public safety, education, marine law enforcement, and public assistance both on and off the water. The Marine Patrol Unit has one Sergeant and one Marine Support Officer assigned to it year-round that handle the day-to-day business of the unit. Within the Police division, thirteen officers are certified Marine Patrol Officers with another six slated to be certified early next year. These officers are able to respond 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to emergency and routine calls for service. The unit is also a State Certified Boating Program making it eligible to receive vessel registration fees and boating safety grants from the State.

During the boating season, April to October, Marine Patrol Officers patrol the waters of Lake Washington and the approximate 26.3 miles of shoreline comprising its current jurisdiction. They respond to calls for service ranging from enforcement of state and local laws, assisting disabled vessels, debris and hazard removal to more emergency-related calls involving vessel collisions, search and rescue, and vessel and shore accessible fires. The Marine Unit also conducts a wide range of educational outreach through kindergarten water safety classes, public event booths, marine/boat shows, and news media interviews.

In March of 2021, the City of Medina and Town of Hunts Point were notified that their contracted marine patrol service provider would no longer provide services for their cities. During the 2021 boating season Medina and Hunts Point entered into an agreement with an alternate service provider on an as-needed response basis. In September of 2021 the Medina Chief of Police reached out to Chief Holmes to open the discussion of the Mercer Island Police Department again providing marine patrol services to Medina and Hunts Point.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this Study Session is to discuss with the City Council a pilot program to provide marine patrol services to Medina and Hunts Point. This twelve-month pilot program will give the City an opportunity to capture and compare data related to the services it provides to the City and the cities that contract for marine patrol services. The data gathered over the course of this pilot program will be used to evaluate a cost allocation model for services provided to marine patrol contract cities. Using a multivariable analysis of calls for service, hours spent in jurisdictions, and the specific characteristics of each jurisdiction, among other factors, City staff will be equipped to assess and restructure current and future ILAs for Marine Patrol services.

If the City enters into the Agreement, this will add 6.4 miles of shoreline and more vessel hours due to increased shifts on the water during the boating season. The City forecasts an increase to the 2022 Marine Patrol Budget of \$60,000.

The direct increase in costs will be recovered through the fees established in the ILA with Medina and Hunts Point, and an expected increase in Vessel Registration Fees the City receives for providing these services. These funds will provide a cost reduction to the City without decreasing the level or quality of service it provides.

The Police Department has six Officers slated to attend the Marine Law Enforcement Academy in 2022. This increase in certified Marine Patrol Officers assists in the goal to have at least one Marine Patrol Officer on shift to respond to emergency calls for service. It decreases the need for shifts covered by overtime by increasing the pool of officers available during regularly scheduled shifts. Furthermore, it provides advancement opportunities for officers.

The increase in hours on the vessels and equipment is manageable. The vessels are on a maintenance schedule and funds from these ILAs have been earmarked for increased maintenance in the event of unforeseen costs.

The City's insurance provided has indicated there will not be an increase in insurance premiums for these additional ILAs.

NEXT STEPS:

City staff are seeking feedback from the City Council on the 12-month pilot program. If there is support for the program, staff will return to the City Council meeting on December 7 with an ILA for marine patrol services for Medina and Hunts Point.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive report and provide feedback.