



Petersburg Police Department K-9 Unit Proposal

Residents and business owners of Petersburg as well as supporters in other communities located in Southeast Alaska:

For the past year, the Petersburg Police Department has been looking at the possibility of adding a K-9 unit to the department. We feel strongly that the addition of a K-9 unit to the department would benefit the community of Petersburg directly as well as indirectly by making the unit available to surrounding communities.

The Petersburg Police Department is a member agency of Southeast Alaska Cities Against Drugs (SEACAD) and has been for many years. The K-9 program will not only assist Petersburg but will be a benefit to all Southeast Alaska communities. As a member of SEACAD, SEACAD can request the assistance of the Petersburg K-9 unit in other communities. All expenses will be paid by SEACAD when they request the assistance of the Petersburg K-9 unit.

Making the unit available to surrounding communities on an as needed basis would help stem the flow of dangerous narcotics into Petersburg before they could arrive. Having the unit in Petersburg will provide an invaluable tool to locate narcotics in our community as well as be a visible deterrent to those attempting to bring them in. The K-9 unit would be made available to the Petersburg School District, Alaska Marine Lines, the Alaska Marine Highway System, Ocean Beauty Inc., The United States Coast Guard, the United States Postal Service, and other entities interested in curbing the flow of narcotics into our community.

Recently, the proposed program has received interest from other law enforcement agencies within the state. The K-9 would provide an invaluable tool that could be made available to any Federal or State agencies conducting investigations that would benefit the community. These agencies investigate drug trafficking into the State of Alaska as well as around the State at various points of entry to include passengers and luggage arriving at airport terminals, packages and cargo shipped through parcel delivery services and commercial cargo carriers. This will benefit Petersburg, and other neighboring communities, by making it more difficult for drugs to be shipped undetected. The effect of disrupting drug trafficking would also reduce other crimes associated with drugs to include Burglaries and Thefts as well as a reduction in overdoses.

Why does Petersburg need a K-9 unit?

The Police K-9's extraordinary sense of smell, agility, courage, and determination are recognized both Nationally and Internationally. The dog we are proposing is a dual-purpose K-9 that would be certified in patrol work as well as narcotics detection. Over just this past year, the Petersburg Police Department has executed multiple search warrants for illegal narcotics, intercepted numerous shipments containing narcotics and administered a troubling amount of Narcan to

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individuals who have overdosed using narcotics. A K-9 trained in narcotics detection would help prevent narcotics from becoming easily available to users as well as unintended exposures to others. Fentanyl, a narcotic commonly found in Petersburg, does not have to be ingested to be fatal. A person only needs to come in contact with a miniscule amount for a lethal result.

Our proposal to have the K-9 certified as a patrol dog (as well as in narcotics detection) would be to primarily use the dog to track and find lost or endangered missing children and adults. Recently the Petersburg Police Department was involved with Search and Rescue to locate a missing adult on the South end of the island. After the missing person was located, it was determined that searchers had walked past the individual without seeing him. Using similar training, the K-9 could also track and apprehend criminals for arrest and prosecution using a variety of techniques.

Because a dog has a greater sense of smell than a human, it would reduce the time necessary to search buildings, locate illegal drugs, assist with the apprehension of criminals, and locate missing individuals. The introduction of a K-9 unit into the department would also be a highly visible deterrent to criminal activity, provide officers with a non-lethal force multiplier that can be recalled after deployment as well as perform public relations between the police and the community.

How much will it cost?

The initial expenditure for the titled dog and the associated equipment as laid out in the proposed budget is approximately \$54,000 not including the purchase of a used or new K9 vehicle. The projected annual expenditure would be approximately \$14,200. This would include kennel time for the handler to care for the K-9 on days off as well as food and veterinary care. We are also currently exploring the possibility of starting a 501c3 not for profit foundation to assist funding the program.

Reflected in the proposed budget is \$24,354.32 listed as available funds seized from narcotics interdiction. This is money that has been seized from individuals engaging in illegal activities involving narcotics sales, distribution, and use. We are proposing the use of this money to aid in the purchase of the K-9 and its associated training. Essentially, we are having the drug dealers fund the purchase of the K-9 that will assist us in getting more of their drugs off of our streets. Additionally, there is \$5,237.00 that has been seized as evidence not yet released for use by the department.

The K-9 unit has been proposed to the Petersburg Public Safety Advisory Board as well as the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce with overwhelming support. During the Health Fair last year, 30 community members signed a petition in support of the program as well.

Thank you all for your interest in the proposed program and please contact the Petersburg Police Department with any questions you may have.

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