



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF SNOQUALMIE

AB24-015
April 22, 2024
Ordinance

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| TITLE: | AB24-015: Misuse of the 911 Response System | <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution |
| PROPOSED ACTION: | Adopt Ordinance No. xxxx in order to hold suspects criminally accountable for their actions by creating a misdemeanor level offense. | |

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|----------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| REVIEW: | Department Director | Brian Lynch | 4/1/2024 |
| | Finance | n/a | Click or tap to enter a date. |
| | Legal | Outside Counsel | 4/3/2024 |
| | City Administrator | Mike Chambless | 4/8/2024 |

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|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| DEPARTMENT: | Police | | |
| STAFF: | Brian Lynch, Police Chief | | |
| COMMITTEE: | Public Safety | COMMITTEE DATE: April 15, 2024 | |
| EXHIBITS: | 1. Draft Ordinance No. xxxx | | |

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|--------------------------------|--------|
| AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE | \$ n/a |
| AMOUNT BUDGETED | \$ n/a |
| APPROPRIATION REQUESTED | \$ n/a |

SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This proposed ordinance is intended to reduce the number of false requests for emergency services or misuse of the 911 emergency response system which occurs within the City of Snoqualmie, threatening public and officer safety, and resulting in the waste of city resources. This ordinance would hold violators criminally responsible for their actions.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) allows prosecution for false reporting where the false information is made that the caller knowingly causes the evacuation of a building, place of assembly, or transportation facility; causes public inconvenience or alarm; or an emergency response to take place.

It also allows for prosecution for telephone harassment but is limited to situations in which the caller is contacting or attempting to contact a specific person to harass, torment or embarrass that person.

BACKGROUND

The Snoqualmie Police Department contracts 911 services with the Issaquah Police 911 Center. That 911 Center is experiencing a high number of repeated harassing phone calls on the non-emergency line, as well as the actual 911 line, from citizens that are not reporting an emergency, nor are they reporting new information for a previously reported incident. One citizen has called the Issaquah 911 Center 264 times since January of 2023 (2023 = 115 calls and 2024 = 149 in just the first three months of the year). This caller usually calls the non-emergency line, but recently has resorted to calling the 911 line directly. Their calls come in clusters, such as the twelve calls in fifteen minutes that occurred on March 21, 2024.

Currently, this caller can never be charged criminally, or held accountable for their actions under the Revised Code of Washington. The need for an ordinance that contains language specifically addressing the misuse of the 911 system is needed as a matter of public safety.

ANALYSIS

Approval of this ordinance would allow the Snoqualmie Police Department to deter any further abuse and misuse of our 911 system. This ordinance does allow for any citizen to continue to use the 911 system as it was intended to be used.

BUDGET IMPACTS

There are no budget impacts.

NEXT STEPS

PROPOSED ACTION

April 22, 2024: First Reading of Ordinance No. xxxx Misuse of the 911 Response System.

May 13, 2024: Second Reading of Ordinance No. xxxx. Move to adopt Ordinance No. xxxx Misuse of the 911 Response System.