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### STAFF REPORT

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL  
**MEETING DATE:** JAN 20, 2025  
**FROM:** TOM DUBOIS, CITY MANAGER  
**SUBJECT:** PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGET SUSTAINABILITY AND AUTHORITY TO NEGOTIATE WITH AMADOR CITY

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#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Authorize the City Manager to negotiate with Amador City to provide police services.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

As the Council is aware, the finance ad-hoc committee has been looking at the police budget in detail for the last several months. Expenses are well managed and Sutter Creek is one of the most efficient agencies in the state in terms of costs per resident. The ad-hoc committee has suggested looking at additional sources of revenue and our contracted costs with the county. Council directed the City Manager to get written estimates from the county on what they would charge to provide police services to Sutter Creek, and to explore other options for revenue generation or cost containment.

I met with Sheriff Redman in Dec 2025. The County Sheriff committed to providing a written proposal to quantify what Sutter Creek would be charged for police services. Verbally, he indicated that policing at our current level of service would be significantly more expensive. I will share that information with the Council when it is received. I also asked the Sheriff to consider providing a three year budget for dispatch services so that the cities can plan cost increases better over time. Dispatch costs have risen much faster than inflation and represent a larger and larger share of our public safety budget.

Additionally, I began discussions with Amador City to gauge their interest in Sutter Creek PD providing police services. The attached letter was presented to their council and they discussed the possibility at their December Council meeting. After the meeting, I was requested to provide a formal proposal to Amador City.

Currently Amador City receives a COPS grant from the state which it uses to pay the County for policing services. They are paying \$100,000 annually.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Before moving ahead with a formal proposal, Council should reaffirm their interest in exploring this option and authorize the staff to engage in negotiations. We are seeking your direction tonight to propose detailed terms to Amador City for their review at their February council meeting.

As outlined in the letter to the Amador City Council, it could be a real win-win for Sutter Creek PD to add Amador City to its beat. For Amador City, benefits are an increased police presence, true community policing, and faster response times. For Sutter Creek, the additional revenue would greatly ease burdens on our budget. We could provide coverage without hiring additional staff or adding additional equipment.

I notified Sheriff Redman we intended to propose this change and he indicated that the County will try to retain Amador City as a customer. The \$100,000 Amador City pays represents about 0.5% of the Sheriff's budget and represents 10% of our police budget. That is it will have a relatively minor impact on the County and a major impact for Sutter Creek. That said, our proposal needs to be attractive to Amador City.

The Sheriff indicated that the County may start charging for additional services. We will have to deal with that in the future if it came to pass, but all cities in the county should be treated equally and fairly.

With Council's authorization, the City Manager and Police Chief will develop a detailed proposal for Amador City. Our goal is to offer them the same price, at least for the next several years and agree to a fair framework that accounts for inflation and capital costs for police equipment.

With a population of under 200 people compared to Sutter Creek's population of 2700, they are about 6% of our size. Our intention would be to price fairly based on the relative size.

We are researching how to address other issues, particularly liability under our RMA which provides insurance and legal defence for police activities. We are anticipating proposing a 3 - 5 year initial term. We are asking that Council give us authority to engage in negotiations.

**BUDGET IMPACT:**

Would generate up to an additional \$100,000 in the general fund dedicated to public safety per year. The work can be absorbed into our existing capacity without incurring additional expense.

**ATTACHMENT:**