TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: POLICE

DATE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2002 CMR:383:02

SUBJECT: CHANGE IN USE OF CITIZENS OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC SAFETY (COPS) FUNDS

This is an informational report and no Council action is required at this time.

BACKGROUND

In October 2000, and again in December 2001, the Council approved the use of Citizens for Public Safety (COPS) funds to cover the salary, benefits, and equipment for an additional sergeant position. The sergeant was assigned to supervise the Special Problems Unit (SPU). However, due to staffing shortages, the Department had to disband the SPU and reassign the sergeant and officers to regular patrol functions. The Police Department now plans to use those funds to cover costs of an additional captain’s position. This position will be responsible for coordinating the development of the City’s homeland security plan and training program. Staff will present this as an action item this fall with a formal request to amend the City’s Table of Organization. This report is intended to inform the Council of this proposal in order that work associated with City’s security plan not be delayed.

DISCUSSION

Based upon all the information and training staff has received since September 11, 2001, it is clear that the fight against terrorism is a local issue and each city and county must be responsible for the planning, training, and intelligence gathering associated with prevention of terrorist acts, incident management and consequence management in the event of an actual incident within their jurisdiction. In order to be as effective as possible, these activities need to be coordinated at a regional level as well. While some planning and preparation has been completed for Palo Alto, staff has determined that there is a considerable amount of work still to be done. To this end, staff is proposing to use the unspent 2001-2002 COPS funds to cover the salary, benefits, and equipment for a third captain’s position. The Police Department is
currently authorized two captains’ positions, one to coordinate the Patrol and Traffic divisions, and one to coordinate the Investigative Services Division. The third captain would be assigned to coordinate the City’s homeland security planning, training, intelligence gathering, grant writing, and regional interactions. Staff believes that, due to the nature of these activities, it is important that a full-time position be devoted to ensure that the City of Palo Alto is as prepared as possible and that this position be a member of the command staff in order to work more closely with members of adjacent agencies who are of similar rank.

Similar to the sergeant’s position that had previously been approved, to minimize any impact to the General Fund in future years, the continuation of this position would be contingent upon continued COPS funding. At the time the funding is no longer available, the Department would eliminate the position through attrition.

Staff will request that the Council approve an amendment to the City’s Table of Organization to reflect this change. This formal request will not be made until the City receives final word of the 2002-2003 COPS allocation. However, in efforts to move forward with the City’s plan and training, until that time, staff intends on using the balance of 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 COPS funds to pay a lieutenant out-of-class as an acting captain.

**RESOURCE IMPACTS**

Because staff had to reassign the previously approved sergeant from the SPU back to normal patrol activities, a balance of 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 COPS funds remains unspent. Currently, including encumbrances, there is a balance of approximately $168,072 in the City’s Local Law Enforcement Services Sub-fund for COPS. Staff intends on using approximately $168,00 for the salary and benefits for a third captain’s position and $4,500 for computer and other equipment. These transactions will not affect the General Fund Budget Stabilization Reserve.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Expenditures of funds associated with COPS funds are consistent with City policy.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

This is not a project subject to CEQA requirements.