




**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
SHERIFF'S OFFICE**
Inter-Departmental Correspondence

DATE: January 11, 2006
BOARD MEETING DATE: February 7, 2006
SPECIAL NOTICE/HEARING: None
VOTE REQUIRED: 4/5

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors
FROM: Sheriff Don Horsley 
SUBJECT: Accept Federal Government "COPS 2005 - Technology Grant" in the amount of \$493,322 for FY2005/06.

Recommendation

Approve an Appropriation Transfer Request (ATR), to accept and appropriate a Federal COPS 2005 Technology Grant for the San Mateo County Forensic Laboratory, in the amount of \$493,322, recording this grant as an unanticipated revenue and appropriation for FY2005/06.

Vision Alignment

This aligns with Vision 2010 Commitment No. 7 – protect and enhance the public safety of all residents and visitors; as well as Commitment Nos. 20 and 22, related to effective decision-making and multi-jurisdictional strategic approaches to critical issues affecting the entire County.

Background

Presently the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office Forensic Laboratory (Crime Lab) provides scientific support to all criminal justice agencies in the county. Agencies that provide evidence for examination at the facility include local law enforcement, local offices of state and federal agencies, and the Private Defender. The Lab has historically experienced delays in the processing of evidence due to inadequate equipment, and the present evidence tracking system for work moving through the Lab requires an excessive amount of manual documenting, which also takes valuable staff time away from important analysis.

In the early summer of 2005, the Lab was notified of pending award of a technology grant for equipment; however, due to the federal fiscal year, the award was not

formally issued until November, 2005, and so was not included in the Adopted FY 2005-06 Budget. In the interim, Lab management had received more specific quotes for equipment items, and also recognized the need to make some changes to the original grant budget to better meet emerging laboratory needs. A grant Budget Modification was submitted to the federal COPS Office of the Department of Justice, and was just approved during the holidays. It was determined to hold back on submitting this ATR recognizing the grant, until the budget modification had been approved, and the funds could then be allocated into the appropriate expenditure accounts.

Discussion

The Sheriff's Office plans on using the grant award of \$493,322.00 to increase the capacity of our Forensic Laboratory in meeting the growing needs of the law enforcement community, primarily in the areas of a new Laboratory Information System (LIMS); for expansion of scientific analysis, particularly DNA evaluation; and for enhancing our crime scene response capability.

This grant will help purchase the necessary technology to provide our Laboratory Staff with the tools necessary to meet the needs of the criminal justice community. The equipment will assist in the elimination of backlogs, by allowing us to process evidence in a timely fashion. It will also provide the management tools for monitoring the progress of case work in the lab, as well as allow criminal justice agencies access to the data base for monitoring their own cases via the internet.

Lab management has compiled a list of equipment (including fixed assets), software and other operating needs which aligns with the grant modified budget. This list is attached with the ATR distributing grant funds in the appropriate expense line items to facilitate purchasing.

Fiscal Impact

The requested ATR will recognize both grant appropriations and offsetting revenues, with no impact to net County General Fund cost.