



Legislation Text

File #: 18-186, **Version:** 1

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jim Steele, Chairman, Board of Supervisors

FROM: Brian L. Martin, Sheriff/Coroner

DATE: March 20, 2018

SUBJECT: Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing Hiring Incentives for Deputy Sheriff I/II Job Classifications

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The history of employment recruitment and retention difficulties within the County of Lake is long and consistent. Within the Sheriff's Department, this has been a common problem for years. There are a number of factors that contribute to these difficulties including less competitive wage and benefits packages, competition for qualified candidates by neighboring agencies, and a decline in the interest for law enforcement amongst people entering the workforce.

A California Constitution Amendment from 1993 (CA Constitution Article XIII, Section 35(a)(2) which primarily addresses taxation, also outlines California's citizens expectations of local government and local officials. The section reads: "The protection of the public safety is the first responsibility of local government and local officials have an obligation to give priority to the provision of adequate public safety services." Article XIII, Section 36 (a)(1)(A) indicates that "Public Safety Services" includes "Employing and training public safety officials, including law enforcement personnel, attorneys assigned to criminal proceedings, and court security staff." Clearly, we have an obligation to the communities we serve to make such services our top priority. Such services can't be provided without employees.

The Sheriff's Office responsibility for law enforcement services in the unincorporated area includes a population of approximately 44,700 people. The estimated population of the County in 2015 was 64,591, less the estimated population of the City of Lakeport of 4,772, and the City of Clearlake of 15,052, giving us an estimated population in the unincorporated areas of 44,767.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police pulled data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics Data for a 2003 report titled "Police Officer to Population Ratios." I have included a copy of the 1 page report with this memo. The report indicates that for an agency serving a population of 25,000- to 49,999 people, the average ratio of full time officers is 1.8 per 1,000 residents. For all populations

of all sizes, the ratio is 2.5 per 1,000.

The Sheriff's Office budget has 66 full time deputy sheriff classification positions allocated. Of those, only 47 positions are currently filled. As I write this, I am aware of a deputy sheriff who has received a conditional job offer from a local police department, and is in the final hiring stages. I expect to receive his notice of resignation very soon.

According to the statistics cited above, the average number of full time officers for agencies serving a population the size of unincorporated Lake County's is 80. Even if all of our allocated positions were full, we would fall short.

Your Board has worked collaboratively with the Sheriff's Office to address these issues. Reclassifying 5 Deputy Sheriff positions to Deputy Sheriff/Trainee positions has allowed us to add 4 deputies to the street, and obtain multi-year commitments from them in exchange for the opportunity to attend the academy. I am very grateful for this, and intend to continue that program. Despite these efforts, attracting qualified applicants continues to be a challenge.

In an effort to attract more candidates, I am proposing this resolution to offer hiring incentives to applicants who have already completed an academy, or are already currently certified and eligible to be hired as deputy sheriffs. Many other agencies offer hiring bonuses to attract candidates. The Santa Cruz Police Department offers a \$10,000 hiring bonus. The City of Eureka offers a \$5,000 hiring bonus for entry level officers, and a \$15,000 bonus for laterals. The City of Modesto offers a \$15,000 bonus for laterals. The Napa County Sheriff's Office offers a \$5,000 hiring bonus and a \$20,000 college loan reimbursement. Such incentives are becoming more commonplace as agencies compete for a limited pool of qualified candidates.

It is my recommendation that funds from Rural Sheriff's Budget Unit 2206 be used to fund these hiring bonuses. Funds in this Budget Unit are a result of AB 443 passed in 2001 and enacted in Government Code Section 30070. Pursuant to state law, Lake County is allocated \$500,000 each year for our Rural Sheriff's Budget. The funds are specifically earmarked to enhance law enforcement efforts and recruiting and retaining qualified Deputy Sheriff staffing will most certainly meet this goal.

I respectfully request your Board's approval of this resolution. I understand that hiring difficulties trouble multiple County Departments, and there is a desire to ease the burden for all, but the Constitutional mandate for the provision of public safety services combined with specifically designated funding for exactly this type of purpose, makes the Sheriff's Department a unique department for this proposal.

FISCAL IMPACT: ☐ None ☒ Budgeted ☐ Non-Budgeted
Estimated Cost: 50,000
Amount Budgeted: 20,000
Additional Requested: N/A

Annual Cost (if planned for future years):

FISCAL IMPACT (Narrative): Incentives will be paid from the Rural Sheriff's budget 2206 and there is no cost to the County General Fund.

STAFFING IMPACT (if applicable): The resolution authorizes eligibility for 10 full time Deputy Sheriff applicants to receive incentive payments.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The Sheriff's Department recommends adoption of the Resolution authorizing hiring incentives for Deputy Sheriff I/II job classifications