



Distributed on:
JAN 19 2012
City Manager's Office

Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Christopher M. Moore
Chief of Police

SUBJECT: SJPD Verified Response
Program /Fines for False Alarms

DATE: January 19, 2012

Approved

Date

1/19/12

INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

With regard to Verified Response, Councilmember Oliverio has inquired as to how much the false alarm fines would need to be raised in order to recover the cost of the police response. This information memorandum is being distributed to the Mayor and City Council in response to this request.

ANALYSIS

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Mayor and City Council with additional information regarding the fines currently charged by the Police Department for false alarms and an estimate of how high fines would have to be raised to cover Police response costs.

Fine Per Call/Cost Recovery

Currently, the fine schedule is as follows regarding false alarms:

- Free – for the first call per calendar year
- \$125 – for the 2nd call per calendar year
- \$200 – for the 3rd call per calendar year
- \$300 – for the 4th call and all subsequent calls within a calendar year

As a very rough estimate, a false alarm fee of \$450 would need to be established to break even for two officers to respond to one false alarm on top of the current fine structure. This does not factor into account the additional staff necessary in order to bill and collect the fines, which would likely increase this to \$550 - \$600 per false alarm.

January 19, 2012

Subject: SJPD Verified Response Program/Fines for False Alarms

Page 2

False Alarm Reduction Goal

It is important to note, other cities have attempted to solve the false alarm problem in part by raising false alarm fees. What they have found, however, is higher fees alone do not achieve the primary goal of reducing false alarms that Verified Response is expected to provide. The Police Department's newly implemented Verified Response Program intends to yield a 90% reduction in false alarms. This reduction is based on results from other cities who have implemented Verified Response.

Staffing/Service Delivery Model

The Department's reduced staffing levels were the primary reason for adopting the Verified Response Program, because responding to all general alarms was deemed a lower priority than other patrol functions. The Department responds to over 12,000 alarm calls per year, of which 98.5% are false. Verified Response was implemented in an effort to maximize Police patrol response to actual in-progress crimes and other emergencies, as well as providing time to commit to the Department's ongoing Community Policing efforts.

Similar to the Los Angeles Police Department, SJPD will continue to broadcast all alarm calls to patrol officers assigned to the district in which the alarm has been activated. In the event officers have beat specific knowledge of recent burglaries or other crime related events in the area, they may choose to respond to the location of the alarm to investigate.

The Police Department will evaluate the Verified Response Program on an ongoing basis to ensure its effectiveness.



CHRISTOPHER M. MOORE
Chief of Police