



Cover Memorandum/Staff Report

File #: 24-1516

Agenda Date: 11/19/2024

Item #: 6.K.

TO: Mayor and Commissioners
FROM: Chief Russ Mager, Police Department
THROUGH: Terrence R. Moore, ICMA-CM
DATE: November 19, 2024

APPROVAL OF APPLICATION FOR FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT FY 24/25 ONLINE STING OPERATIONS GRANT PROGRAM

Recommended Action:

Motion to approve application and acceptance of award for Florida Department of Law Enforcement FY 24/25 Online Sting Operations Grant Program.

Background:

The Police Department is requesting approval to submit an application and accept an award for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) FY 24/25 Online Sting Operations Grant program. The program provides funding to local law enforcement agencies to support the creation of sting operations to target individuals who are soliciting children online. Applicants must be a signed affiliate with its regional Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. Award funds must be used to support the creation or execution of online sting operations to target individuals soliciting children online and may be used to reimburse expenses related to computers, electronics, software, and other related necessary supplies.

In order to expand our agency's ability to identify, disrupt, and dismantle activities by online offenders soliciting children, our agency requires expanded technology as it relates to digital evidence processing. Offenders are reliant on digital devices to connect with minors online and conduct illegal activities. As such, the addition of Cellebrite technology will greatly enhance our agency's ability to investigate these crimes. Offenders participating in activities to solicit children online often secrete their activities through the use of increased encryption, advanced device locking technology, sophisticated file hiding/vault systems, chat systems, and advanced anti-forensics measures. With the addition of Cellebrite/GrayKey, we will bolster our capabilities and capacity to access, extract, and analyze data from the widest range of iOS and Android devices. Cellebrite/GrayKey technology will allow us greater ability to gain access to encrypted digital devices. The technology will also increase efficiency and save valuable time during online operations, which are often 'time is of the essence' situations, all while strengthening cases for prosecution and helping uncover additional victims. The Police Department is requesting total of \$62,500 under this program, for needed equipment and software costs.

City Attorney Review:

Approved as to form and legal sufficiency.

Funding Source/Financial Impact:

If awarded, costs would be budgeted via budget amendment in 001-21-150-521.34-90 (Operations-Other Contractual Services) account.

Timing of Request:

This grant application is time sensitive as it is awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.