

..Fiscal Note

The City will be responsible for funding the maintenance, repairs and fuel for any vehicles purchased by Madison Mounted Police Partners and donated to the City. While these potential costs were not anticipated in the Police Department's 2008 Operating Budget, any such costs would be minimal and could be accommodated within the amount budgeted for payments to Fleet Service. No additional appropriation is required. Future years' budgets will need to include funding for these costs. The Madison Mounted Police Partners program will be accounted for in a segregated fund.

..Title

Approving City acceptance and expenditure of funds raised by "City of Madison Mounted Police Partners" to equip and train a Mounted Police Unit for the Police Department.

..Body

PREAMBLE

The Madison Police Department has never had an organized, formal mounted patrol program/unit. In 2007, two officers were trained to work as mounted patrol officers on a part-time basis as other duties allowed. These officers worked in the State Street area and at special events involving large crowds.

For many years, MPD has utilized mounted patrol officers from outside jurisdictions to help with the Halloween event on State St. These officers have been invaluable in addressing the large crowd and resolving potential problems. Our experience has been that through the use of horses, the mounted officers are able to move and break up crowds in a much more efficient and less confrontational manner than officers on foot. It would require at least ten officers on foot to move the same crowd that two mounted officers could move. This experience has been repeated as our own MPD mounted officers have worked with bar crowds in the downtown area and at other special events. Mounted officers are able to more easily see over crowds to detect conflicts that are developing and are able to address those conflicts before they turn into larger physical confrontations.

In 2008, MPD will have two officers working approximately half time as mounted officers. These officers are currently assigned to the East District CPT and the Central District CPT. In addition, the Department is training a third part-time mounted officer to fill in when one of the other officers is off or unable to work. The goal for this unit will be to have a consistent presence in the downtown area on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. In addition, this unit will work events involving large crowds.

WHEREAS, currently, the two full time mounted officers own the horses used for mounted patrol; and,

WHEREAS, the officers are responsible for a portion of the costs associated with the board and care of these horses, and also provide their tack (saddle, bridle, etc.) and the part time officer must have access to a truck and horse trailer, and pay for fuel to get the horses to the location where they will be working; and,

WHEREAS, it is difficult to recruit officers to fill a position that requires such a high personal financial investment; and,

WHEREAS, the 2008 Downtown Safety Initiative (DSI) included modest funding for the Mounted Patrol, which only covers a small portion of the costs associated with this program; and,

WHEREAS, the DSI funding pays for the horses' board and farrier during the 7 months they are primarily in use as mounted horses; and,

WHEREAS, the cost to maintain and expand this unit will increase significantly if the individual officers are relieved of their current financial commitment to the program; and,

WHEREAS, the Department supports this program but recognizes the difficult fiscal environment and feels compelled to seek alternative avenues of funding to supplement budgeted funds; and,

WHEREAS, there is a movement by supporters of the Mounted Patrol Unit to form a non-profit organization, to be called Madison Mounted, to raise funds to help defray the costs associated with expanding this unit; and,

WHEREAS, the nonprofit organization, Capital K9's, has agreed to allow Madison Mounted to operate as a component of their non-profit organization; and,

WHEREAS, Madison Mounted would have the goal of securing funding to help pay for equipment and training associated with a Mounted Patrol Unit; and,

WHEREAS, this equipment may include horse trailers and vehicles to pull the trailers; and,

WHEREAS, any vehicles secured through this process would be added to the City's fleet and the City of Madison would be responsible for maintenance, repairs and fuel.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor, City Clerk and Chief of Police are authorized to accept funds, vehicles and equipment on an ongoing basis from private sources in support of the Mounted Patrol Unit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Comptroller and the Madison Police Department are authorized to establish and/or maintain a segregated account for the administration of these funds.