



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Richard Hicks, Interim City Manager
Larry D. James, Sr., Chief of Police

Date: May 6, 2022

Subject: Consideration – Authorize Application for BJA’s “Local Law Enforcement Crime Gun Intelligence Center Integration Initiative” for FY2022

BACKGROUND:

The Elizabeth City Police Department continues to seek grant funding opportunities through outside sources including Federal, State, Local, and private entities for the purpose of enhancing operations and furthering the department’s mission of the pursuit of excellence. Recently, an announcement was released to law enforcement agencies from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), entitled, “Local Law Enforcement Crime Gun Intelligence Center Integration Initiative” for FY2022. This grant, available to local law enforcement agencies across the nation, funds technology associated with gun-related crimes, in a vested partnership with the ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives).

There is no local match or cost share required by law enforcement agencies. The deadline for grant applications is May 19, 2022. Grant awards are up to \$700,000.00 each, with a total of \$4.9 million dollars in funding that will be awarded. Staff would like to take advantage of this cost effective means to enhance our crime solving capabilities to acquire its own NIBIN (National Integrated Ballistic Information Network) machine. The grant will also allow for other crime-solving technology and equipment, as well as related training. The Department is seeking to obtain \$352,266.80 in funding through this grant opportunity, which would be a tremendous benefit in enhancing the agencies crime-solving efforts through advanced technology.

It should be noted that the Department applied for this grant in 2019, 2021 and was unsuccessful. Strengths and weaknesses were reported back to the Department, giving areas that could be improved upon in the grant application. With that said, staff feels confident a solid grant application can be submitted.

ANALYSIS:

The "Local Law Enforcement Crime Gun Intelligence Center Integration Initiative" is a grant that is administered by BJA in partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF); it is a competitive grant program that provides funding to state and local government entities that are experiencing precipitous increases in gun crime to implement comprehensive and holistic models to reduce violent crime and the illegal use of firearms within their jurisdictions. The purpose of this grant initiative is to encourage local jurisdictions to work with their ATF partners to utilize intelligence, technology, and community engagement to swiftly identify firearms used unlawfully and their sources, and effectively prosecute perpetrators engaged in violent crime. The primary objective of this initiative is to develop leads that will identify armed violent offenders for investigation and prosecution.

NIBIN, also used interchangeably with Integrated Ballistics Identification System (IBIS), is a technological weapon in the fight against gun violence. The system is a nationally interconnected, computer-assisted ballistics imaging system operated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and used by firearms examiners to obtain computerized images of bullets and cartridge cases. NIBIN/IBIS extends the capabilities of law enforcement agencies to quickly find links between firearm-related crimes.

Along with the NIBIN machine, the Department is proposing the acquisition of an AFIXTracker System, which is an automated fingerprint and palm print identification system. This technology provides full spectrum of record palm and latent palm search options, including the ability to search either full, undivided palm images, or the ability to divide record palm images into sections for more focused search capabilities. It can aid in unsolved cases being brought to a possible close and adjudication. In addition, the Department will also seek to acquire a CyperNational Ballistic Box. This equipment accommodates extreme high velocity and/or frangible projectiles that may otherwise disintegrate when fired into water.

The total grant budget proposed is \$352,266.80. As previously stated, there is no match required and therefore would have no budget impact.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, authorize the Elizabeth City Police Department to submit a preliminary grant application to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) for the "Local Law Enforcement Crime Gun Intelligence Center Integration Initiative" for FY2022, in the amount of \$352,266.80.