

**TO:** Mayor Robinson and City Council

**FROM:** Jeffrey L. McCormick, Chief of Police

**SUBJECT:** Squad Car Replacement

**DATE:** December 14, 2017

**BACKGROUND**

One of the things I was tasked with when hired was the creation of a vehicle replacement schedule that addressed the issues of high mileage vehicles and extensive repairs to keep the fleet operational. Previously the squad cars had been replaced en masse every few years, creating a large bubble in the budgeting process. During the months between when I started and when the new vehicles arrived, the department spent the same amount of money as a new squad would cost, to keep the fleet operational. The plan I created has allowed us to avoid the costly repairs that added up in the past. The plan created a replacement rotation of the fleet that has worked very well with our capital plan. During the tight economic times the rotation time lengthened to five years which has resulted in higher maintenance than I had hoped. I annually modify our capital plan to be as accurate as I can in planning for replacements and am recommending that we move to a four year plan for rotation of the marked squads.

Marked Squad 453, a 2013 Utility, is due for replacement this year and currently has 102,200 miles on it. This is a planned replacement and has been budgeted for within the capital plan. The replacement vehicle will be another Ford Interceptor Utility which is used for the other marked squads in the fleet. This has proven to be a very good patrol vehicle and the advantages identified in 2011 have all proven themselves to be very significant improvements and has made the utility with its All-Wheel Drive (which has been great during the winters) very popular among our officers, and from talking with other Chiefs, the vehicle of choice for many police departments. Advantages identified included:

- Higher seating position meaning lateral entry of officers and a higher observation level while driving and parked.
- Large side windows for checking the blind-spot.
- Greater distance from floor to dash top, keeping the open computer screen below the windshield sightline (in the Crown Vic's it covered about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the windshield height while open).
- Rear cargo interior storage area (keeps AED, Oxygen and all equipment at usable temperature during winter).
- Higher location of light bar provides increased visibility of emergency lights.

The squad to be ordered will be the 2018 Police Interceptor Utility. This year the State has switched vendors because of billing issues uncovered by the news media. We have submitted the requested information to the State Auditor on previous purchases, but it does not appear we had the issues other departments had in being overcharged. The new vendor is Ford of Hibbing and the 2018 Ford Interceptor Utility as specified has an order price of \$30,767.45 using the State Bid Contract. This is the only vehicle we are planning to purchase in 2018.

I am requesting to place this order now to get a lead on the bulk of the orders are made after the New Year. This is the same thing done with our 2017 order and it arrived significantly earlier than our 2016 order, which was not ordered until February.

#### **REQUESTED COUNCIL ACTION**

Motion and approval to purchase of a 2018 squad from the State Contract Vendor and authorize the Chief of Police to sign any contracts that may be required for that order.