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**Police  
Department**

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## Staff Report

ITEM NO. 7

**To:** Lemoore City Council  
**From:** Jeff Laws, Chief of Police  
**Date:** February 15, 2011  
**Subject:** Budget Amendment- Interview Room Recording System

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### Discussion:

The Police Department currently has three interview rooms. These rooms are used to conduct interviews of victims, witnesses, suspects, and other involved parties during an investigation. Most interviews are audio/visually recorded on a dvd and the recordings are preserved as evidence. These recordings are oftentimes vital pieces of evidence, particularly if the parties change their stories in court. There are also occasions when these interviews are the only evidence we have in an investigation.

When the police department was built there were no funds available for an interview room recording system. The equipment currently in use to record interviews had to be pieced together and consists of a camera, a standard household dvd recorder, and a standard household 13 inch television. There is one camera in each of the three interview rooms and the three dvd recorders and monitors are all side by side in the observation room. This configuration and the current equipment have created serious issues. The officer must go into the observation room and go through a tedious twenty step process to start and complete the recording. There have been times when the officer thought he/she was recording, only to find out when the interview was over that it was not recorded. This meant that the officer had to do without the recorded interview as evidence or conduct the entire interview a second time. This can be very time consuming and inconvenient for the officer and the person being interviewed.

The current dvd recorders are becoming old and unreliable. There is no internal hard drive so they only record to a cd or dvd. There have been numerous times where the interviews have exceeded the storage capacity of the disc. This means that the disc stopped recording because it had no more space on it and the officer was not aware of that or the officer had to stop the interview to change discs or a second officer had to change discs for the interviewing officer. This can create a problem in court because the entire interview is not recorded or there is a portion of the interview that has not been recorded.

I have researched an interview room recording system called The Interview Tracker. This system records the interview directly onto a digital video recorder. The officer then copies the interview onto a cd, which can then be booked as evidence. This system has the capability to store up to 2,500 hours of video/audio recordings before any items need to be purged. The Visalia Police Department purchased this system and has been using it for over one year. A visit to their department for a demonstration of the system indicated that they are very happy with the system, that it is very user friendly, the customer service is very good, and they recommended it to our agency.

*"In God We Trust"*

Another company, Sierra Tel Business Systems, was contacted. An estimate was requested but was never provided. Legal Tek was contacted and their least expensive system for three rooms would start at \$19,470.00.

**Budget Impact:**

The cost of The Interview Tracker Digital Video/Audio Recording System is \$14,934.00 and would be purchased with General Fund Asset Replacement funds. The estimated balance of this account is \$1,115,666.00.

**Recommendation:**

That the City Council, by motion, approves the budget amendment and authorizes the purchase of The Interview Tracker Digital Video/Audio Recording System.