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Police Department

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Staff Report

ITEM NO. 4-3

To: Lemoore City Council
From: Darrell Smith, Chief of Police
Date: August 26, 2014
Subject: New Vehicle Design Proposal

Meeting Date: September 2, 2014

Discussion:

Law enforcement is a profession of trends and traditions. Few traditions are more identifiable than the black and white patrol car. In the 1990's, agencies that once sported black and white patrol cars began converting to solid colored vehicles comparable to the Lemoore Police Department units. In recent years, black and white vehicles have made a comeback and citizens and officers are rejoicing. In the 1990's the Lemoore Police Department like many others converted to solid white cars and white cars became a standard practice. Emblems that had often been simplified for the readily recognizable black and white scheme often were now embellished and enlarged so citizens could recognize the white cars as police cars.

In the past few years, the trend has been reversed. Black and whites are making a comeback. According to a Policeone.com report, public recognition tops the list. For instance, the concept of community policing relies heavily on the active participation of citizens to solve community-wide problems. The street officer must maintain a high degree of visibility in order to collaborate and build relationships with our citizens. To this end, having a recognizable police vehicle makes a lot of sense.

Captain Tim Johnson of the Sunnyvale (CA) PD has done extensive research on this topic. He finds that, not only does the public have a positive response to black and white cars, but that officers who drive them are seen as more approachable. Indeed, recent surveys suggest that nearly every department using black and white cars cite increased visibility and accessibility as the main selling points.

Other factors are cited, as well. When the Costa Mesa (CA) PD began reverting to black and white cars in 2004, the public began asking if more cops were on the streets. Lieutenant Karl Schuler of Costa Mesa believes that the traditional look is a great way to make the community feel more secure. In fact, the Winnemucca, Nevada PD credits their black-and-whites with not only giving the appearance of more officers, but also reducing certain crimes in their small town.

With the traditional look, it appears that an increase in officer morale follows. Officers from across the country have overwhelmingly supported a change to black and white

cars. A recent vote in a large Midwest municipal police department revealed that 83% of the officers were strongly in favor of transitioning to a black and white vehicle. The Lemoore Police Department formed a committee to look at the current patrol vehicle and make a recommendation of any changes they would like to see in regards to the color of the car and the graphics package. They selected a couple of different color schemes involving black and white combinations and graphic changes to reflect our recent patch theme. I have included the final selections from the committee and the overall consensus was to go to a black and white vehicle with a new graphic design as portrayed in the photographs attached to the report. The chosen color scheme is not your traditional black and white scheme, but a theme that will continue to allow Lemoore to be unique in nature. The graphics theme included a US Flag in the background and the already recognizable Lemoore Police badge and the words Lemoore Police on the car. Our new design will also include a portion of our motto "Dedicated to Excellence" on the rear quarter panel of each side the vehicle. A vehicle design photo is attached.

Budget Impact:

This design change proposal will only affect any new cars added to our current fleet. For the FY 14/15 budget, Council has approved the addition of two new patrol cars and the costs to change the color scheme and graphics were added to the quotes for the units. With the proposed changes to the cars, there was a slight increase in costs to the overall scheme based on a need to paint a portion of the vehicle black, however the graphics package proposed resulted in a cost savings of approximately of \$450.00. The additional costs to paint the portion of the vehicle black from Jones Collision center was estimated anywhere from \$800 - \$1200. David Jones advised us he would not be able to give a more accurate quote until the vehicles arrive and he determines how much labor would be involved. There is an option to have the dealership do the paint scheme, however the estimate was higher than Jones Collision Center, and I would recommend we continue to support our local businesses with these types of projects. These estimated increases have already been built into the asset replacement budget account for these cars.

Recommendation:

That the City Council, by motion, approve the proposed changes to the Lemoore Police Department Patrol Vehicle Design.

