

CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA

AGENDA# 1

A G E N D A R E P O R T

DATE June 21, 2005

ITEM Take public comment and accept the recommendation of staff.

INITIATED BY Police Department.

ACTION REQUESTED Seek public comment on the recommended use of the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) for 2005. The JAG replaces the previous Local Law Enforcement Block Grant funding. Accept the recommendation of made by staff.

PRESENTED BY Chief of Police, Robert Jones.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended the City Commission accept staffs recommendation to expend the funds to purchase Mobile Data Terminals and equipment for the Great Falls Police Department and the Cascade County Sheriff's Office.

MOTION:

I move the City Commission accept the recommendation of staff.

SYNOPSIS:

A new grant process has been developed for the administration of the previous Local Law Enforcement Block Grant. The program is now identified as the Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) and it has a new application process and new rules governing the distribution. The new allocation is \$131,675 and it must be a joint application between the Great Falls Police Department and the Cascade County Sheriff's Office. The staff at both agencies feels that it is important to continue both agencies growth in data communication. Both agencies currently use the same mobile data equipment and the same communications center. They are currently attempting to adopt a communication system, both voice and data, that will provide easy interoperable communication between street officers.

The proposed use of JAG grant funding will be used to purchase associated equipment, software, and installation of that equipment. The funds may also be used to make technological improvements to the existing system and to expand the systems capabilities. These may include but will not be limited to; mobile data terminals, and bar coding equipment and software. Once the system is fully operational it will improve crime response capabilities.

The application process allows 30 days for the review by the governing bodies (City and County) and provides an opportunity for public comment on the grant application.

BACKGROUND:

Congress allocated funds to be dispersed under the Justice Assistance Grant Program, established within the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), US Department of Justice. The allocation is based on the following formula.

FORMULA

The JAG formula includes a *state allocation* consisting of a minimum base allocation with the remaining amount determined on population and Part 1 violent crime statistics, and a *direct allocation* to units of local government. Once the state allocation is calculated, 60% of the funding is awarded to the state and 40% to eligible units of local government. State allocations also have a *variable pass through* requirement to locals, calculated by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) from each state's crime expenditures.

JAG funds can be used for state and local initiatives, technical assistance, training, personnel, equipment, supplies, contractual support, and information systems for criminal justice for any one or more of the following purpose areas:

- Law enforcement programs
 - Prosecution and court programs
 - Prevention and education programs
 - Corrections and community corrections programs
 - Drug treatment programs
 - Planning, evaluation, and technology improvement programs
- *Any law enforcement or justice initiative previously eligible for funding under Byrne or LLEBG is eligible for JAG funding.

MATCH

While match is not required with the JAG Program, match is an effective strategy for states and units of local government to expand funds and build buy-in for law enforcement and criminal justice initiatives.

TRUST FUND

The unit of local government must establish a trust fund in which to deposit JAG funds. The trust fund may or may not be an interest bearing account.

PROHIBITED

JAG funds cannot be used directly or indirectly for security enhancements or equipment to nongovernmental entities not engaged in criminal justice or public safety. Based on extraordinary and exigent circumstances making the use of funds essential, BJA may certify a unit of local government's request to use funds for:

- Vehicles, vessels, or aircraft
- Luxury items
- Real estate
- Construction projects, other than penal or correctional institutions