

Council Meeting of
September 14, 2010

Honorable Mayor and Members
of the Torrance City Council
City Hall
Torrance, California

Members of the Council:

SUBJECT: Police – Appropriate and allocate asset forfeiture funds for the purchase of a forensic light source. Expenditure: \$18,864.20

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation of the Police Chief that City Council appropriate and allocate \$18,864.20 of asset forfeiture funds for the purchase of a Spex Forensics Mini Crime Scope 400W forensic light system.

Funding

Funding is available in the U.S. Department of Justice Unappropriated Asset Forfeiture account.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

The Department's hiring of civilian, Forensic Identification Specialists has empowered the new forensics unit with the expertise needed for advanced crime scene investigations. Unfortunately, the Department lacks some key equipment needed to better capitalize on this expertise. Acquisition of advanced forensics equipment will enhance staff capabilities and greatly assist in criminal investigations and case prosecution.

The Spex Forensics Mini Crime Scope 400W forensic light source (ALS) is a vital tool for forensic staff who are in the field examining evidence items and crime scenes for DNA, latent prints, skin damage (such as bite marks and bruises, which would be useful for domestic violence and child abuse cases), shoe prints, drugs, bone fragments, hair, fibers and gun shot residue. Currently, the Department is without a forensic light source that can be easily transported and carried by forensic unit staff for field use. The availability of this equipment allows personnel to view the greatest range of potential forensic evidence while at a crime scene.

The Spex Forensics model is widely used by similar-sized agencies and was recommended by Santa Monica Police Department's Forensic Division. Additionally, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has purchased these lights for their Evidence Response Teams after comparing them to competitor models.

The Mini Crime Scope will be crucial to locating potential DNA evidence at numerous crime scenes. It is therefore a logical addition to the Department's bolstered capacity for forensic investigations which includes use of a contracted Senior Criminalist to process DNA.

The purchase price of \$18,864.20 includes on-site training. Staff has identified asset forfeiture funds as appropriate for this purchase as the equipment directly aids front line law enforcement. After requested appropriation, the Department of Justice Unappropriated Asset Forfeiture account will have a balance of \$1,135,829.52.

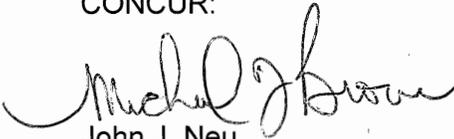
Respectfully submitted,

JOHN J. NEU
CHIEF OF POLICE



By Kent Sentinella
Administrative Analyst

CONCUR:



John J. Neu
Chief of Police



LeRoy J. Jackson
City Manager