



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 12/3/2024

To: Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Sheriff's Office
Staff Name and Phone Number: Jeff Bean, 565-2003
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:
Boating Safety and Enforcement Financial Aid Program Agreement

Recommended Action:

Adopt a resolution authorizing Eddie Engram, Sheriff-Coroner, to execute grant documents and future amendments with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways to receive grant funding for provision of boating safety and enforcement services in an amount not-to-exceed \$513,899 for FY 25-26. The resolution would also authorize the Sonoma County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector to certify the amount of prior year vessel taxes received by the County.

Executive Summary:

The Sheriff's Office is seeking the Board's approval to execute the grant application, award agreement, and any other related documents with the California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways, Boating Safety and Enforcement Financial Aid Program; and authorization for the Sheriff-Coroner to accept \$513,899 for FY 25-26 to support the Marine Unit's boating safety and enforcement activities on Sonoma County waterways, including Bodega Bay and Lake Sonoma, and portions of the Russian River, Petaluma River/San Pablo Bay, Gualala River, and coastal Pacific Ocean. The grant promotes safety on Sonoma County's waterways and helps augment local funding for the Marine Unit's activities.

Discussion:

The Sonoma County Sheriff's Office Marine Unit maintains primary law enforcement jurisdiction over Sonoma County's waterways including Bodega Bay and Lake Sonoma, and portions of the Russian River, Petaluma River/San Pablo Bay, Gualala River, and coastal Pacific Ocean.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation, Division of Boating and Waterways provides financial aid to subvention grantees for boating safety and enforcement expenses. The purpose of the program is to provide financial aid to local governmental agencies whose waterways have high usage by transient boaters and an insufficient boat tax base to fully support a boating safety and enforcement program. The program is intended to augment existing local resources for boating safety and enforcement activities and is not intended to fully fund these programs.

The Sheriff's Office has received grant funds from the Division of Boating and Waterways since 1985. Most recently, Sheriff's Office staff submitted a subvention grant application for FY 24-25 and received an award of \$513,899, the maximum for which the County was eligible. As a grantee in the financial aid program, the

Marine Unit can claim reimbursement for direct program-related costs including personnel, operations, equipment, maintenance, and administration up to \$513,899. Costs related to peace officer training, weapons, and the purchase of vessels or vehicles, and one-time payments for separation or medical causes are ineligible for reimbursement. If approved, next year's grant will subsidize and offset approximately 35% of the FY 25-26 projected costs associated with providing law enforcement services on Sonoma County waterways.

Historically, Marine Unit revenue has come from the annual Division of Boating and Waterways subvention grant and from a contract with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide law enforcement services during the main recreational boating season at Lake Sonoma. The Unit is authorized for three staff allocations: two deputies and a sergeant. The Unit uses alternate Marine Unit deputies as a pool of trained personnel available to relieve sick, vacation, and training time of full-time deputies.

Budget estimates for the grant application are developed based on currently known information. We are in the early stages of the FY 25-26 budget development cycle and more precise figures are unknown at this time. The estimated \$1.45 million Marine Unit expenditures will be included in the Sheriff's Office FY 25-26 Requested Budget, including approximately \$662,764 in County support (Estimated: \$162,126 Boat Tax and \$500,638 General Funds). For reference, FY 24-25 projected budgeted expenses were \$1.46 million which included an estimated \$723,854 in County support (Estimated: \$206,368 Boat Tax and \$517,486 General Funds).

The Sheriff's Office is the law enforcement agency responsible for monitoring and responding to calls for service on all waterways in Sonoma County, regardless of whether it receives funding from the Division of Boating and Waterways. Funding from this grant assists the Sheriff's Office in meeting its law enforcement obligations. If the County does not accept this grant funding, additional County support of \$513,899 beyond the projected \$662,764 would be needed to maintain current service levels.

Occasionally, there have been opportunities to increase the amount of grant funding mid-cycle. Such opportunities are rare but require quick turnaround due to the limited length of the boating season. Unallocated funds may also be distributed in a one-time augmentation payment under the guidelines of California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Subsection 6593.7 (c) (3). The most recent occurrence for this type of distribution occurred in February 2024 for the FY 22-23 Grant Program. Therefore, the Sheriff is requesting authorization to execute any amendments or additional documents related to this grant, in consultation with the County Administrator and County Counsel, and under the condition that such documents have no increase to the Sheriff's Budget General Fund net cost.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Prior Board Actions:

Subvention grant agreements with the Division of Boating and Waterways have been approved annually since 1985, most recently Resolution 23-0556 on November 28, 2023.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY24-25 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$1,476,455	\$1,452,408	
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$1,476,455	\$1,452,408	
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF	\$523,635	\$500,638	
State/Federal	\$746,452	\$769,644	
Fees/Other	\$206,368	\$162,126	
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$1,476,455	\$1,452,408	

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The subvention grant provides State reimbursement for Sheriff’s Office Marine Unit boating safety and enforcement expenses, not to exceed \$513,899 for FY 25-26. The Sheriff’s Office Marine Unit FY 25-26 Requested Budget will include anticipated funding from two grants (\$513,899 and \$20,000), an estimated federal contract (\$255,745), estimated local boat tax (\$162,126), and an estimated General Fund (\$500,638) request. Currently, the future status of existing grant programs and potential contracts are uncertain and therefore, projections for FY 26-27 are unknown.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

1. Resolution authorizing execution of the Division of Boating and Waterways Financial Assistance Program Agreement and related documents
2. FY 25-26 Division of Boating and Waterways Financial Assistance Program Application - FINAL
3. FY 25-26 Division of Boating and Waterways Financial Assistance Grant Award Letter - DRAFT

Related Items “On File” with the Clerk of the Board:

N/A