



Sheriff's Department
COUNTY OF TULARE
AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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AGENDA DATE: August 26, 2014

Public Hearing Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scheduled Public Hearing w/Clerk	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Published Notice Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advertised Published Notice	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meet & Confer Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Electronic file(s) has been sent	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Transfer (AUD 308) attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personnel Resolution attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agreements are attached and signature line for Chairman is marked with tab(s)/flag(s)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CONTACT PERSON: Michael Bowen PHONE: 636-4645

SUBJECT: Presentation on new Mobile Crime Lab of Sheriff's Department

REQUEST(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

Presentation by Sheriff's Department on new mobile crime lab

SUMMARY:

Today, the Sheriff's Department would like to introduce its new mobile crime laboratory to Board members and the general public. This meticulously designed and constructed vehicle will greatly enhance the Department's processing of crime scenes and expedite subsequent investigations of major crimes within the County.

The Sheriff's Department worked closely with Sirchie Vehicle Division of Medford, New Jersey for a year on the design and construction of lab. Sirchie is a national leader in the manufacture of mobile crime laboratories and specialty vehicles for law enforcement. The vehicle, which arrived just weeks ago, replaces a 15-year-old mobile crime lab (also built by Sirchie). The previous vehicle had rolled up 227,000 miles; its engine had idled at crime scenes (operating mobile generators for field equipment) for hundreds of thousands of hours. The new vehicle has two gas-operated generators, saving wear-and-tear on the truck's engine.

The new Sirchie vehicle is twice the size of the old mobile crime lab. The new vehicle measures almost 28 feet long, by 12 feet wide, by nearly 12 feet tall. It sits on a durable Ford F550, 5-ton chassis and weighs almost nine tons. Inside, the spacious work area is 18 feet long, with a 7-foot ceiling, enough to easily

accommodate the 6-foot-7-inch sergeant who runs the Department's crime lab unit.

Here are some improvements the new mobile crime lab versus the previous vehicle:

- A powerful, roof-mounted light to illuminate processing crime scenes at night. The light is mounted on 7.5-foot telescoping boom, which means the light shines from a height of almost 19 feet. Crime lab personnel relied on less powerful portable lights with the old vehicle for such scenes.
- Access to computer databases of the Department and other law enforcement agencies. With the old mobile lab, detectives had to travel to Sheriff's substations for access to suspect mug shots, fingerprint records, local, state and national databases and other vital data, wasting valuable investigation time.
- Ability to generate photo lineups of suspects at the scene to show witnesses and speed investigations.
- An enclosed area where Sheriff's command staff can view evidence and direct detectives on the next steps to take on investigations.

Like the previous vehicle, an essential function of the new mobile crime lab will be to identify, preserve, document, and collect evidence for analysis at the Department's brick-and-mortar crime laboratory north of Visalia at Sequoia Field. However, crime laboratory personnel will be able to perform a number of essential tests at crime scenes. These include processing video footage (such as from convenience store cameras where a robbery has occurred). Crime lab personnel can use reagents and other chemical formulas to detect blood and other bodily fluids at scenes, and use specialized "fuming" equipment to reveal fingerprints not visible to the naked eye.

The vehicle is air conditioned and heated for staff comfort while processing crime scenes. The lab also has a 16-foot awning to shade staff working outside during warm summer days. The lab also has heavy-duty electrical hookups on the exterior, such as for running extension cords to portable lights to illuminate darkened houses that contain crime scenes.

The vehicle joins three specially equipped, smaller trucks the Department uses to process routine crime scenes. The new mobile crime lab is the first of two major technological tools to enhance processing of crime scenes. The Department plans to add a laser scanner during the next year that will measure crime scenes and produce accurate crime scene mapping and 3-D diagrams in a fraction of the time now required for these tasks.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

The Board of Supervisors originally authorized that the County's General Fund be utilized to pay for the Sheriff's Department's mobile crime lab as part of the department's FY 2013-14 operating budget. However, as the vehicle's delivery was delayed until July 2014, after the close of FY 2013-14, the Board authorized on July

29, 2014, that lab's purchase price of \$212,698 be applied to the Department's FY 2014-15 budget as a General Fund expense.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:

The new mobile crime laboratory speaks to two strategic initiatives of the County's Strategic Business Plan: Organizational Performance and Safety and Security. The vehicle will greatly enhance the Department ability to process crime scenes and expedite subsequent investigations to find and punish criminals involved, thus increasing Department efficiency and public safety.

ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:

Mike Boudreaux
Sheriff-Coroner

Cc: Auditor-Controller
County Counsel
County Administrative Office (2)