STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: February 3, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

From: Erick Lee, Division Commander

Subject: Police Officer Recruitment Update and Proposed Initiatives

Attachments:
1. January 13, 2015 Staff Report
2. December 2, 2014 Staff Report

INTRODUCTION

On January 13, 2015, staff submitted a report updating the City Council on challenges facing the City in regards to Police Officer recruitment and proposing new initiatives aimed at improving timelines in accordance with the City Council's direction to fill all vacant Police Officer positions by May 2015. This report provides additional clarifying information regarding the Police Officer candidate screening process and the five (5) proposals presented during the January 13, 2015 meeting.

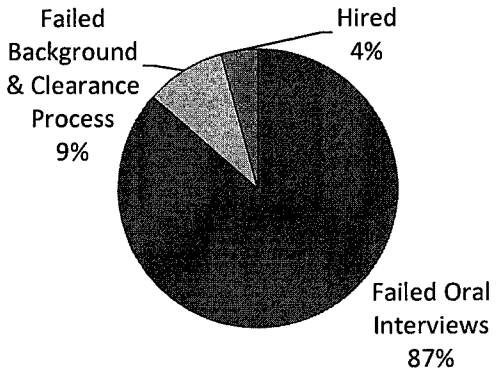
DISCUSSION

In FY13/14, a total of 2,632 applications for the Police Officer position (2,516 entry levels and 116 laterals) were received. Of these, only five (5) candidates (including three laterals) were ultimately hired by the City as Police Officers[1]. The table below details how the candidates proceeded through this screening process:

APPLICANT DISPOSITIONS (APPLIED IN FY13/14)	# Applicants	% Applicants
Incomplete Application	67	2.5%
Does Not Meet Minimum Qualifications	166	6.3%
Withdrew from Process or Have Not Confirmed Appointment for Written Exam	148	5.6%
No-Show to Written Exam	1,518	57.7%
Failed Written Exam	483	18.4%
Failed Physical Agility Test (Includes No-Shows)	132	5.0%
Failed Oral Interviews	102	3.9%
Failed Background & Clearance Process	11	0.4%
Hired	5	0.2%
Total	**2,632**	**100%**

[1] This information differs lightly from earlier reports indicating that eight (8) officers were hired in FY13/14. Of those eight (8) officers, five (5) actually applied and were hired in FY13/14. The remaining three (3) applied at the end of FY12/13.

Of the 2,632 candidates, 95% were screened out by time the written and physical agility portions of the process were completed. Of those 118 that remained, the top 4% were hired.



Staff has contacted nearby jurisdictions and the cities surveyed during the last salary survey to determine if they are experiencing similar trends in their processing of applicants. Due to data limitations and the use of disparate systems, most cities were unable to respond to staff's request. However, the cities of Burbank and Santa Monica provided information on their applicants from FY13/14. A comparison of their data with Beverly Hills is as follows:

CITY	ENTRY LEVEL			LATERAL		
	Applicants	Hired	% Hired	Applicants	Hired	% Hired
Beverly Hills	2,516	2	0.08%	116	3	2.6%
Burbank	2,277	9	0.40%	133	2	1.5%
Santa Monica	N/A	N/A	N/A	291	6	2.1%

During the January 13, 2015 Study Session meeting, staff presented five (5) proposals to address these challenges facing the City in regards to Police Officer recruitment. If implemented, these proposals could assist the City in filling Police Officer vacancies at a more rapid pace. The details of these proposals are included in Attachment #1 (Staff Report from January 13, 2015):

1. Scholarship Program
2. Signing Bonus Program Expansion
3. Police Officer Referral Program
4. Qualified Lateral Incentive Program
5. Police Officer Compensation Review

It's important to note that Proposal #2 (Signing Bonus Program Expansion) does not alter the milestone payment structure of this program. As the Signing Bonus Program is currently applied to Police Officer recruitment, a candidate that is ultimately hired as a Police Officer receives a signing bonus of approximately $8,000. This amount is not paid in one lump sum. Rather, it is paid in three (3) to four (4) milestones as the new hire proceeds through the on-boarding process and eventually completes his or her probationary period:

Entry Level Candidates

- 25% upon initial hiring
- 25% upon graduating from the police academy
- 25% upon completion of six (6) months of service
- 25% upon completion of probation

Lateral Candidates

- 25% upon initial hiring
- 25% upon completion of six (6) months of service
- 50% upon completion of probation
- May be advanced three (3) weeks of sick leave

The milestone payment structure of this program helps to ensure that the City receives a return on its investment and that outlays are not unnecessarily issued. Staff's recommendation under Proposal #2 (Signing Bonus Program Expansion) increases the dollar amount of the signing bonus to a flat $20,000 while maintaining these milestone payments. Additionally, staff recommends this program be expanded to provide for the reimbursement of up to $10,000 in qualified relocation expenses to lateral Police Officers. In regards to Proposal #3 (Police Officer Referral Program), any cash payments issued to employees under this proposal would also be paid in accordance with this schedule of milestones.

As a point of clarification, Proposal #4 (Qualified Lateral Incentive Program) relates to the establishment of a deferred compensation program for lateral candidates to address the loss in retirement benefits they would incur by transferring from an employer that currently provides them with the "3% @ 50" retirement benefit. If the City Council would like to explore this proposal, staff would consult with the City's tax attorney to develop the program's framework and identify any provisions of the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA) that may limit the feasibility of implementing such a program.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council continue discussing the merits of these five (5) proposals and provide direction on whether to further explore the possibility of implementing one or more of them.

David L. Snowden, Chief of Police
Approved By

Attachment 1

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: January 13, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

From: Erick Lee, Division Commander

Subject: Police Officer Recruitment Update and Proposed Initiatives

Attachments: 1. December 2, 2014 Staff Report

INTRODUCTION

On December 2, 2014, staff submitted a report updating the City Council on the status of Police Officer recruitment and outlined the challenges facing the City in regards to filling these vacant positions. A copy of that report is attached for reference. This report provides more information on the issues surrounding Police Officer recruitment and includes proposals aimed at improving recruitment timelines in accordance with the City Council's direction to fill all vacant Police Officer positions by May 2015.

DISCUSSION

Over the past three (3) years, the City has hired 22 new Police Officers. Unfortunately, 20 sworn police personnel have retired or otherwise separated from the City during this same period. Four (4) recruits are presently in the police academy. Two (2) of these recruits are anticipated to graduate on January, 15 2015. The City is currently recruiting to fill 13 Police Officer vacancies.

Despite a number of changes that have been implemented to assist with Police Officer recruitment over the last three (3) years, the problem of vacancies persists, and—considering recent trends and impending retirements—the department anticipates ongoing recruitment for these positions for the next several years. The City Council has requested staff to develop a plan to reduce the timeline to fill its current vacancies from a two (2) to four (4) year window to a six (6) month period. This is a very aggressive goal that is unlikely to be achieved without the implementation of new initiatives or approaches.

Since the City continues to receive thousands of applications from Police Officer candidates each year, its problem relates to not having enough *well-qualified* applicants in this pool. For example, a total of 2,568 candidates applied for the Police Officer position in FY13/14 (2,452 entry levels and 116 laterals). Of these, only eight (8) candidates (including four laterals) were ultimately hired by the City as Police Officers.

This means over 99% of the candidates were disqualified or voluntarily withdrew at some point during the screening process.

Under state law, a Police Officer must be:

- Free from any felony convictions
- A citizen of the United States or a permanent resident alien who is eligible for and has applied for citizenship
- At least 18 years of age
- Fingerprinted for purposes of search of local, state, and national fingerprint files to disclose any criminal record
- Of good moral character, as determined by a thorough background investigation
- A high school graduate, pass the General Education Development test or have attained a two-year, four-year, or advanced degree from an accredited or approved institution
- Found to be free from any physical, emotional, or mental condition which might adversely affect the exercise of the powers of a peace officer.

The City has high standards for its Police Officer candidates that go beyond those required by law. The City requires its Police Officers to have an Associates (AA) Degree or complete at least 60 college units by the end of their probationary period. In addition, the Police Department has moral character standards that go beyond simple conviction records. Common disqualifiers for service as a Beverly Hills Police Officer include:

- Substance Abuse
  - Non-experimental drug use
  - Use of felony narcotics

  Note: In Los Angeles County, some agencies give consideration to applicants that have experimented with felony narcotics if over 10 years have passed since their last use.

- Criminal Offenses
  - The commission of criminal offenses—regardless of detection by law enforcement, arrest or conviction—related to assault/battery, domestic violence, fraud, resisting arrest, perjury, theft, filing a false police report, or sexual acts as an adult for which criminal prosecution would have resulted if the incident had been reported

- Traffic Related
  - Inability to obtain a valid California Driver's License or motor vehicle insurance
  - DUI conviction in the past 10 years or more than one DUI conviction during lifetime
  - Conviction of four (4) or more moving violations within the past five (5) years
  - Revocation/suspension of driver's license within the past five (5) years
  - Three (3) or more at-fault collisions in the past five (5) years

  Note: DUI conviction information remains on a California driver's license history for 10 years.

- Truthfulness/Integrity
  - Unwillingness to be truthful throughout the background investigation process
  - Unfavorable work history (discipline, firing, attendance problems, etc.)

In terms of recruitment, there are two (2) categories of challenges affecting the City's ability to fill vacant Police Officer positions. The first relates to nationwide shifts that have resulted in a diminished pool of candidates seeking careers in law enforcement generally. The second relates to challenges that are specific to Beverly Hills. These challenges relate to where the City is situated geographically and the relatively low level of crime that actually occurs in Beverly Hills.

Staff has developed five (5) proposals to address these challenges facing the City in regards to Police Officer recruitment. The proposals are aimed at attracting more well-qualified candidates to Beverly Hills and, if implemented, could assist the City in filling Police Officer vacancies at a more rapid pace.

Proposal #1: Scholarship Program

Historically, the City has been reactive in terms of filling its Police Officer position vacancies. Job openings would be posted on-line and recruiters would attend local job fairs to advertise the benefits of working for the Beverly Hills Police Department. These efforts were sufficient in years past when only a handful of vacancies needed to be filled. However, in light of the facts that current Police Officer vacancies equate to 10% of the department's sworn workforce and retirement waves will continue in the coming years, a reactive/passive posture towards this issue is not sufficient.

Over the past year, the department's recruitment team has actively sought out colleges and universities that offer criminal justice programs and, through networking with professors and faculty members, have secured in-classroom meetings with students. Rather than simply attending campus "job fairs" alongside dozens (or hundreds) of other employers, these meetings are targeted at young adults who have already taken the first steps in preparing themselves for law enforcement careers and are looking for additional information and guidance on their chosen career path. By educating young adults already pursuing careers in law enforcement on what the City has to offer and encouraging them to consider Beverly Hills as a career destination, these meetings have the potential to significantly increase the number of well-qualified candidates in the City's applicant pool for Police Officer positions. The recruitment team is proud to announce that the first student from one of these meetings was recently hired by the City as a Police Officer and is currently attending the police academy.

While the department has had some success in reaching out to colleges and universities, it's a rare professor who is willing to relinquish 10-20 minutes of their class time to allow police recruiters to educate his/her students on what local law enforcement agencies are looking for in prospective Police Officer candidates. In order to provide the department's recruiters with more access to criminal justice students, staff recommends that the City implement a Scholarship Program. This program would be designed to formalize relationships with local colleges and universities that offer bachelor's degrees in criminal justice. By partnering

with these schools to identify and recognize outstanding achievement, staff believes that a Scholarship Program would further help to open doors to the department's recruiters on college and university campuses.

As envisioned by the Police Department, the City would target 3-5 local colleges and universities to partner with on this program. A $5,000 scholarship would be offered at each institution. The City would commit to offering these scholarships for four (4) consecutive years. Applicants would need to be criminal justice majors with an expressed interest in working in local law enforcement. Their academic achievements, extra-curricular activities, and community service interests would all be considered by a panel made up of staff from the Police Department and Human Resources who would convene annually to review applications and make scholarship awards. In return for offering the scholarships, the college or university would need to recognize the Beverly Hills Police Department as a formal criminal justice program partner and provide the department's recruitment team with access to its faculty and students. It's important to note that this program is intended to market the City's Police Department broadly to students preparing to enter into the criminal justice field, not to convert scholarship recipients into Police Officer candidates. Scholarship recipients would be provided with in-depth exposure to the Police Department and encouraged to consider a career with BHPD. However, they would not be obligated to join the Police Department upon graduation. Staff is not aware of any municipalities in the region currently offering scholarship programs as described in this proposal.

Depending on the number of schools that are receptive to the City's Scholarship Program, the fiscal impact of this proposal would range from $15,000 to $25,000 per year and total $60,000 to $100,000 over four (4) years. The goal for this program would be to hire one (1) entry level Police Officer each year from each partnering college and university.

Proposal #2: Signing Bonus Program Expansion

In December 2012, the City implemented a Signing Bonus Program. Under this program, the City Manager can declare a position "difficult-to-fill" after the City has actively recruited for and been unable to fill a position for six (6) months and authorize the payment of up to 10% of the position's base salary to persons filling such vacancies. Currently, the department's Police Officer positions are designated on this list as being authorized for a 10% signing bonus. These amounts range from $7,753 to $9,125, depending on the candidate's previous salary and law enforcement experience, if any. Bonuses are paid in the following milestones:

Entry Level Candidates

- 25% upon initial hiring
- 25% upon graduating from the police academy
- 25% upon completion of six (6) months of service
- 25% upon completion of probation

Lateral Candidates

- 25% upon initial hiring
- 25% upon completion of six (6) months of service
- 50% upon completion of probation
- May be advanced three (3) weeks of sick leave

The Signing Bonus Program has been successfully used to attract well-qualified applicants and can help to persuade Police Officer candidates to choose to work in Beverly Hills instead of another competing agency. However, the incremental aspect this program's payments result in bonus payments of approximately $2,000 each. While this amount is certainly not insignificant, it is modest and has not proven to be as effective as it was designed in terms of attracting well-qualified candidates to the Beverly Hills Police Department.

Considering that the department's average new Police Officer earns between $1,000 and $2,000 per pay period in overtime, the signing bonus payments do not stand out against the other array of benefits offered by the City. In order to improve this program's effectiveness, the signing bonus for Police Officers could temporarily be increased to a flat amount of $20,000. As the City's recruitment picture for Police Officer changes and the number of vacancies subsides, this amount could be lowered to the amounts specified under the current policy or de-authorized by the City Manager, if appropriate.

Additionally, the Signing Bonus program could be expanded to provide relocation assistance to Police Officers. Such assistance could ameliorate the long commute times that deter many candidates from considering Beverly Hills for their law enforcement careers. A recent survey of newly hired lateral Police Officers shows that the City is, at the median, 46 miles away from their residence. If the City provided reimbursement of up to $10,000 for qualified relocation expenses to lateral Police Officers as part of its Signing Bonus Program, it would offer a tangible benefit to counter some of the geographic challenges that deter well-qualified candidates from choosing Beverly Hills. As a basic framework, reimbursement under this program would be subject to the following conditions:

- Relocation must occur within one (1) year of hiring date with the City
- Relocation must result in the employee residing at least 20 miles closer to the City and within 30 miles of the City limits
- Qualifying expenses would be limited to:
    - Packing, moving, insuring, and storing (up to 30 days) household goods
    - One-way airline tickets for employee and immediate family members or automobile transportation reimbursed at the Internal Revenue Service's Standard Mileage Rate (currently $0.575 per mile).

There is no additional budgetary impact to this proposal since signing bonuses are paid out of salary savings from vacant positions. In the past two years, the City has paid signing bonuses to 11 newly hired Police Officers. Payments so far have amounted to $31,849. Another $51,083 is anticipated to be paid to these

individuals once they complete their requisite milestones. If the City Council authorized increasing the Signing Bonus Program to a flat $20,000 and expanded the program to reimburse employees for up to $10,000 of qualifying relocation expenses, the maximum costs associated with this program to fill the City's 13 current Police Officer vacancies would total $390,000. This is approximately $287,000 more than the costs associated with the Signing Bonus Program as it is currently structured and remains within the range of salary savings the department has so far realized.

Proposal #3: Police Officer Referral Program

The Police Department has known for many years that the City's employees are its best resource for recruiting new Police Officers. The reason why this resource is far superior to others is that employees clearly understand the knowledge, skills, abilities, and temperament needed to succeed in various positions in the agency and can identify these traits in prospective candidates who they encounter in their personal lives. Most employees won't refer their friends or acquaintances for jobs within the department unless they believe the prospective candidates have the potential to become valuable members of the department. In a sense, these types of candidates are pre-screened.

According to a recent survey, 52% of the department's employees indicated that they were referred to the Beverly Hills Police Department by another person employed by the City.

The implementation of a Police Officer Referral Program would validate this resource and provide employees with incentives to act as informal recruiters to assist with the City's efforts to hire Police Officers. This program would provide all City Employees with the incentive to "be on the lookout" for well-qualified Police Officer candidates and recommend that they consider employment with the City. As envisioned by the Police Department, the Police Officer Referral Program would include two (2) components:

1. $2,000 to the employee responsible for referring the new employee
2. One (1) week of paid vacation to the referring employee

This program would share a milestone payment structure similar to the existing Signing Bonus Program:

Entry Level Candidates

- 25% upon initial hiring
- 25% upon graduating from the police academy
- 25% upon completion of six (6) months of service
- 25% upon completion of probation

Lateral Candidates

- 25% upon initial hiring
- 25% upon completion of six (6) months of service
- 50% upon completion of probation

While the cash component of the Police Officer Referral Program would be paid in the milestones identified above, the one (1) week of paid vacation time would be awarded to the referring employee upon the new employee's successful completion of probation.

The costs to implement this proposal relate to the issuing of cash payments to employees and the accrual of additional vacation leave, as indicated below:

Cash payment	$2,000
40 Hours of Vacation Accrual	$2,000*
Total	**$4,000**

* Estimate only. Actual costs would vary, depending on the referring employee's salary.

These costs equate to approximately 3% of the annual salary and benefits budgeted for a vacant Police Officer position. There would be no budgetary impact from this proposal if these amounts were paid out of the salary savings from these vacancies.

There are a number of variables in any recruitment process. Additionally, there may be inherent conflicts of interest for some employees to be eligible to participate in this proposed program, especially those who play active roles in the recruitment process. If the City Council directs staff to pursue this proposal, clear policies and procedures would need to be implemented to ensure the benefits of the program are realized and that impropriety is avoided.

The goal for this program would be to hire three (3) Police Officers each year.

Proposal #4: Qualified Lateral Incentive Program

Over the past few years, the CalPERS retirement plan for Police Officers has changed considerably and now includes three pension tiers for the City. Under the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Beverly Hills Police Officers Association, employees hired prior to July 1, 2012 receive the "3% @ 50" retirement benefit. Employees hired on or after that date and before January 1, 2013 receive the "3% @ 55" retirement benefit. Under the Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013 (PEPRA), employees hired on or after January 1, 2013 who are not "Classic" (active) members of CalPERS receive the "2.7% @ 57" retirement benefit. With this three-tiered system, "Classic" members of CalPERS hired as lateral Police Officers receive the "3% @ 55" retirement benefit.

Essentially, the difference between the "3% @ 50" benefit and the "3% at 55" benefit relates to the age at which a Police Officer can retire with a fully-matured pension. There isn't much difference for Police Officers who start their careers after reaching 25 years of age and plan to work for 30 years and retire with 90% of their salary. However, Police Officers who started their careers in their early 20's must work extra years under the "3% @ 55" formula before they receive that same benefit. If they don't choose to work the extra years, their retirement benefits are substantially less than working under the "3% at 50" formula. Depending on the age when someone began their law enforcement career, this difference could amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars. The difference

between the two (2) formulas for five (5) hypothetical Police Officers who started their careers at various ages, retired with an annual base salary of $91,248 (the current top base salary for the City's Police Officers) after 30 years of service, and lived to age 85 is illustrated below:

NAME	START AGE	RETIREMENT AGE	BENEFIT UNDER 3% @ 50	BENEFIT UNDER 3% @ 55	ANNUAL BENEFIT DIFFERENCE IN RETIREMENT	YEARS IN RETIREMENT	TOTAL UNADJUSTED VALUE OF BENEFIT DIFFERENCE
Officer 1	21	51	90%	75.6%	$13,140	34	$446,750
Officer 2	22	52	90%	79.2%	$9,855	33	$325,208
Officer 3	23	53	90%	82.8%	$6,570	32	$210,235
Officer 4	24	54	90%	86.4%	$3,285	31	$101,833
Officer 5	25	55	90%	90.0%	-	30	-

Besides assisting municipalities in controlling their pension costs, in the long run PEPRA will "level the playing field" when it comes to local agencies competing with one another to recruit new Police Officers. However because a number of agencies in Southern California still offer the "3% @ 50" retirement benefit to lateral Police Officer candidates, they have a competitive advantage over the City when it comes to Police Officer recruitment. Of the 44 cities in Los Angeles County that maintain their own police departments, 14 still offer the CalPERS "3% @ 50" benefit to lateral Police Officers:

- Alhambra
- Burbank
- El Monte
- Gardena
- Hawthorne
- Irwindale
- La Verne
- Manhattan Beach
- Monrovia
- Montebello
- Palos Verdes Estates
- Santa Monica
- Vernon
- Whittier

Additionally, a number of Orange County cities continue to offer the "3% at 50" benefit to their lateral candidates including Anaheim, Costa Mesa, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Los Alamitos, and Placentia.

While the City has taken many steps to reform its pension plans and control its unfunded liabilities, one of the consequences—at least in the short run—has been the addition of a hurdle in the contest to attract well-qualified lateral Police Officer candidates from other law enforcement agencies. In order to improve its ability to attract these candidates from other cities, the implementation of a Qualified Lateral Incentive Program that provides some type of financial incentive, possibly in the form of deferred compensation payments, to "Classic" members of CalPERS who transfer from an agency that offers the "3% @ 50" retirement benefit would help to remove an obstacle in the Police Officer recruitment process and restore a competitive advantage to the City.

Proposal #5: Police Officer Compensation Review

A key component of an effective recruitment strategy is the establishment of a competitive base salary. For many years, the City's Police Officers were

considered among the highest paid in Southern California. In fact, the City's previous MOU with the Beverly Hills Police Officers Association (which expired in 2011) called for Police Officer "total compensation" to be at least 1% higher than other law enforcement agencies surveyed in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. This level of compensation was significant benefit and assisted in efforts to recruit for Police Officers.

However, Human Resources' recent survey of agencies that were used in the past to benchmark Police Officer compensation reveals that the current top-step base salary for the City's Police Officers is, on average, 11% below the surveyed cities:

CITY	CURRENT TOP STEP BASE MONTHLY SALARY	TOTAL COMPENSATION PER MONTH*	OFFERS 3% @ 50 RETIREMENT	CURRENT # OF POLICE OFFICER VACANCIES	# OF SWORN AUTHORIZED	% OF SWORN POSITIONS CURRENTLY VACANT
Beverly Hills	$7,604	$15,714	No	13	127	10.2%
Costa Mesa	$8,579	$14,507	Yes	31	136	22.8%
Glendale	$8,212	$13,661	No	2	254	0.8%
Newport Beach	$9,429	$15,164	No	5	149	3.4%
Santa Monica	$8,089	$14,902	Yes	20	216	9.3%

* Total Compensation information is based on the last survey conducted by the City in May 2011.

It's important to note that base salary comparisons are not the same as "total compensation" comparisons. The former relies exclusively on the wages paid to employees without concern for bonuses or other special pays that municipalities may use to compensate its Police Officers outside of base pay. In contrast, "total compensation" takes the value of employer-paid retirement contributions and employer-paid member contributions to CalPERS, medical, dental, and vision insurance, retiree medical insurance, uniform allowance, long term disability benefits, life insurance, deferred compensation, vacation leave, and holiday and other pays.

While the City used "total compensation" when it last conducted its survey in 2011 to compare its Police Officer salaries with those offered by other jurisdictions, this information is not readily available to the public and certainly not widely known among the region's Police Officer candidate pool. Instead, this pool of candidates usually relies on advertised base salary information to determine the highest paying employers in the region. In order to remain as competitive as possible in the tight market for Police Officer candidates, the City Council may want to consider initiating a formal review of the City's compensation of Police Officers.

Staff believes that the five (5) proposals outlined above address many of the City's challenges regarding Police Officer recruitment. If implemented, they have the potential to significantly increase the effectiveness of its recruitment program, attract more well-qualified candidates, and provide better incentives to help persuade candidates with multiple job offers to choose to work in Beverly Hills.

In order to meet the City Council's goal of filling all vacant Police Officer positions by May 2015, the Police Department—in partnership with Human Resources—will be taking the following actions:

Meeting Date: January 13, 2015

1. Develop a marketing campaign to highlight the benefits of choosing a rewarding career as a Police Officer with Beverly Hills.

    - This campaign will overhaul the messaging used in both print and online advertising to truly market BHPD as the career destination of choice for aspiring Police Officers.

2. Conduct recruitment presentations at colleges, universities, and job fairs two (2) times per month.

3. Continuously process applications for both entry level and lateral Police Officer candidates.

    - Conduct written testing two times per month
    - Conduct physical agility testing and oral interviews two times per month
    - Complete background investigations within 60-90 days on all candidates

4. Ensure medical and psychological screenings are completed with three (3) weeks of issuing conditional job offers to candidates.

5. Immediately implement new recruitment initiatives approved by the City Council.

6. Provide periodic updates to the City Council specifically on the status of Police Officer recruitment.

Although the City currently has a considerable number of Police Officer vacancies, providing excellent policing services to the Beverly Hills community continues to be of utmost importance to the department. Effective January 3, 2015, the department initiated a temporary change in its organizational structure to both ensure public safety and better meet the service demands of the community. This change has resulted in re-assigning seven (7) additional Police Officers and one (1) additional Police Sergeant to the Patrol Bureau, equates to a 17% increase in field staffing, and will allow the department to designate one (1) patrol officer as a liaison with the schools. These moves will significantly improve the department's ability to address the City's quality of life issues, allow for the deployment of Bike Unit and Foot Beat officers in and around the business district on a daily basis, and provide the department with the ability to maintain a more visible presence around the community's public school campuses. Additionally, they have ameliorated some of the overtime burdens associated with filling patrol shifts on a regular basis. These temporary changes will remain in-place until a substantial number of the department's vacant Police Officer positions become filled.

In order to keep the City Council aware of the department's progress in recruiting for these vacant positions, staff will provide a status update on this issue in April 2015.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time.

Meeting Date: January 13, 2015

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council discuss the merits of these five (5) proposals and provide direction on whether to further explore the possibility of implementing one or more of them.

David L. Snowden, Chief of Police
Approved By

Attachment 2

STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: December 2, 2014

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

From: Erick Lee, Division Commander

Subject: Police Department Recruitment Update

Attachments: None

INTRODUCTION

During the City Council's Study Session meeting on November 18, 2014, staff was requested to prepare a report updating the City Council on the status of filling Police Officer position vacancies. This report provides background on staff's work and outlines the challenges facing the City. Staff will provide a more detailed presentation on this important issue at the January 13, 2015 Study Session meeting.

DISCUSSION

During the two (2) month period from September 2011 to October 2011, 15 sworn Police Department employees retired from City service. These retirements included one (1) Police Captain, three (3) Police Sergeants, and 11 Police Officers. Since that time, promotions have occurred, filling the Police Captain and Police Sergeant vacancies. Additionally, the City has hired 22 new Police Officers. Unfortunately, 19 sworn personnel have retired or otherwise separated from the City during this same three (3) year period.

The Police Department has two (2) new recruits scheduled to start the police academy on December 1, 2014. Another two (2) recruits are anticipated to graduate the police academy in January 2015. Currently, the City has 12 Police Officer vacancies. To fill these vacancies within the next year, and keep up with the annual rate of attrition, the Police Department has set its sights on hiring 18-19 new Police Officers. However, this is a very aggressive goal that is unlikely to be achieved without the implementation of new initiatives or approaches.

The Police Department prides itself on the high standards it has for its employees. As such, its goal for hiring Police Officers is—and has always been—***to hire not merely enough people but the right people.*** But Beverly Hills, like most other municipalities, is experiencing a diminished pool of qualified candidates for Police Officer positions. Nationwide, the top reasons for this reduced pool of candidates include unfavorable demographic trends that have produced a smaller population of 21 to 35 year olds (the

target age for new police officers) and social trends that have led to increased illicit drug use, maturity issues in young adults, and ethics concerns relating to many candidates' unwillingness to be truthful during the screening process.

Additionally, many local governments have implemented budget cuts, including changes to pension and other benefits, in recent years that have impacted police agencies' ability to attract Police Officers who are already employed by other cities. These prospective lateral candidates are reluctant to transfer to other agencies because transferring and losing their seniority may expose them to potential layoffs.

The City of Beverly Hills is not the only municipality in the region that has found it difficult to fill vacant Police Officer positions. In fact, the California Background Investigators Association—the professional organization dedicated to ensuring law enforcement agencies only hire individuals who meet the qualifications for peace officers under state law—estimates that there are currently 10,000 sworn peace officer vacancies throughout the state of California. The following table demonstrates that many of the cities that Beverly Hills normally competes with for local talent also have a significant number of Police Officer vacancies.

CITY	# SWORN AUTHORIZED	# SWORN VACANCIES
Beverly Hills	127	12
Burbank	159	15
Culver City	105	2
Glendale	254	2
Pasadena	241	17
Santa Monica	216	20
Torrance	225	9

It is not an overstatement to say that all of the above listed agencies are in competition with each other to hire the top law enforcement candidates in the region. Well-qualified, career-oriented Police Officer candidates know that they are in high demand and apply simultaneously with multiple police departments, oftentimes receive multiple job offers.

Historically, the City has not had a difficult time filling Police Officer positions. The Beverly Hills Police Department (BHPD) has been well-positioned in the market due to its reputation for providing excellent, proactive local law enforcement services, the outstanding support it receives from the community, and the exceptional working conditions enjoyed by its employees. And while these strengths certainly still carry-on, the region's intense competition for well-qualified Police Officer candidates has exposed some of the challenges unique to Beverly Hills in regards to attracting top talent for Police Officer positions. These challenges include its geography and relatively low crime rate.

As it is for many prospective candidates considering open positions within the City, geographic accessibility and cost of living in the surrounding areas are factors that influence Police Officer candidates' desire to work in Beverly Hills. However, because nearly every police department in Southern California is actively recruiting for Police Officers, this problem is intensified for Police Officer recruitments. Well-qualified candidates can choose to work in cities that can be easily commuted to or are in close proximity to where they reside. Many prospective candidates do not recognize Beverly Hills as having a competitive advantage to overcome this challenge of geography.

Additionally, one of the City's crowning accomplishments for decades has been its low crime rate. And while this strength has attracted both residents and businesses to the

City, it oftentimes is considered as a weakness by potential applicants who are considering law enforcement careers. Rather than understanding the City as a unique community almost entirely surrounded by the City of Los Angeles where Police Officers have the opportunity to do proactive police work, suppress crime, apprehend criminals, and impact the lives of nearly 300,000 people on a daily basis, many prospective candidates wrongfully assume that Beverly Hills is a sleepy town where crime rarely occurs and where they would not have the opportunity to do "real" police work. BHPD recruiters have the ability to address this challenge and have been successful in doing so. But their opportunity to do so relies on getting personal contact with, or literature into the hands of, potential candidates to combat the misconceptions that many have about a law enforcement career in Beverly Hills.

Since 2011, the recruitment of Police Officers has been one of the City's top priorities. In collaboration with Human Resources, the Police Department has thoroughly re-evaluated its recruitment process and streamlined systems to narrow timelines associated with processing candidates. Changes include transitioning to a new written exam, offering written and physical agility testing throughout the month, and assigning additional personnel to expedite background investigations. Additionally, staff has critically evaluated the City's expectations for these candidates in light of society's changing norms and values, adjusting screening processes and approaches to salient issues without compromising the high standards required to become a BHPD Police Officer. The City also implemented a Signing Bonus Program for "difficult-to-fill" positions that allows candidates who are successfully hired as Police Officers to receive a bonus of up to 10% of the position's annual base salary.

Another key change has been the revitalization of the department's Police Cadet Program. Changes recently implemented in this program allow for individuals who have completed college but are not ready to become Police Officers to be hired in a part-time capacity and receive training to prepare them for future full-time law enforcement service. Additionally, funds appropriated by the City Council in FY14/15 have allowed for the expansion and enhancement of this program. With these new enhancements, the City has the ability to mentor up to 14 young adults and expose them to the various facets of the Police Department. The City's investments in the Police Cadet Program have already begun to pay dividends, as three (3) of the four (4) new recruits in the academy were once participants in this program.

Despite the changes that have been implemented to assist with recruitment, a significant number of Police Officer positions still remain vacant, and—considering recent trends and impending retirements—the department anticipates continuously recruiting for these positions for the next many years. There are plenty of applicants in the candidate pool. The City's problem relates to not having enough *well-qualified* applicants in this pool. For example, a total of 2,568 candidates applied for the Police Officer position in FY13/14 (2,452 entry levels and 116 laterals). Of these, only eight (8) candidates (including four laterals) were ultimately hired as Police Officers. This means that over 99% of the candidates were disqualified or voluntarily withdrew at some point during the screening process.

In light of the City's current number of Police Officer vacancies (12) and anticipated retirements in the coming years, the Police Department believes that it will take two (2) to four (4) more years to fill all of its Police Officer positions. The City Council has requested staff to develop a plan to reduce this timeline to six (6) months. Without reducing its standards, the Police Department would need to advance 18 to 24 *well-*

qualified applicants into its background investigation process by February 2015 to meet this goal. To do so, according to recent trends, the City would need approximately 600 applicants to participate in each physical agility testing and interview session that is planned during December 2014 and January and February of 2015. This needed applicant pool is much larger than the 10 to 20 applicants that typically participate in these sessions.

In order to address this problem and immediately close the recruitment gap, staff recognizes that the City needs to attract many more *well-qualified* Police Officer candidates into the recruitment process. The Police Department has identified a number of solutions that would help address this problem. While some are tactical/administrative in nature, others relate to policy issues and would require direction from the City Council for implementation. Potential initiatives to improve Police Officer recruitment timelines that will be presented to the City Council for review and consideration at its January 13, 2015 meeting include:

- Scholarship Program
  - The establishment of formal relationships with criminal justice programs at colleges and/or universities may provide Police Department recruiters with more opportunities to market the City as a law enforcement career destination to young adults who are preparing themselves for this career path.

- Signing Bonus Program
  - The City's current program to provide signing bonuses in the amount of 10% of base salary for "difficult-to-fill" positions has been in-place for approximately 18 months and can help to persuade Police Officer candidates to choose to work in Beverly Hills instead of another competing agency. An increase to this bonus amount may improve the program's effectiveness and help to City to attract more *well-qualified* candidates.

- Referral Program
  - The Police Department has known for many years that the City's employees are its best resource for recruiting for Police Officer positions. According to a recent survey, approximately 50% of the department's employees indicated that they were referred to BHPD by another person employed by the City. Implementing a program that validates this resource and provides employees with incentives to act as informal recruiters could assist with the City's efforts to hire Police Officers.

Although the City does have a considerable number of Police Officer vacancies, the Police Department is steadfastly committed to deploying officers in a manner that ensures public safety and addresses the City's quality of life issues while these recruitments are underway. The department is currently working with representatives of the Beverly Hills Police Officers Association to reorganize its deployment of officers in the field to address concerns recently raised by the City Council. These changes are targeted for implementation in January 2015.

Meeting Date: December 2, 2014

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time.

RECOMMENDATION

No action needed as this is an informational item.

David L. Snowden, Chief of Police
Approved By