

ELM GROVE POLICE DEPARTMENT

DATE: April 9, 2019

TO: DAVID A. DEANGELIS, VILLAGE MANAGER

FROM: JAMES P. GAGE, CHIEF OF POLICE

SUBJECT: Rescue vehicle purchase for the Suburban Critical Incident Team (SCIT)

Sir:

On January 31, 2019, I attended the annual Suburban Critical Incident Team (SCIT) meeting. As a reminder, the SCIT consists of selected officers from the Brookfield, Chenequa, Delafield, Elm Grove, Hartland, Mukwonago, Muskego, New Berlin and Pewaukee Police Departments who are trained to handle highly critical calls, such as armed barricaded persons, negotiations, serving high risk search warrants and implementing hostage rescue operations. The shared expertise and equipment make these types of joint efforts cost effective and provide an excellent service to our communities. Our department provides two officers, as tactical operators, to this team. Officers are assigned to the team from the various departments at rates proportional to their department size.

During this meeting the Policy Group, which consists of the Chiefs of Police from the nine participating law enforcement agencies, discussed the possibility of adding an armored rescue vehicle as a resource to the SCIT. The armored rescue vehicle that was discussed was a Lenco Bearcat, which is the primary armored rescue vehicle for tactical/rescue teams across the country. This vehicle is not a military retrofit armored vehicle. It is a civilian law enforcement armored rescue vehicle, designed to move and protect, both officers and civilians, in highly dangerous situations. I attached a picture below for your reference. As tactics have developed over the years, the use of an armored rescue vehicle has become an integral piece of equipment in bringing a critical incident to a safe resolution. The Waukesha County Sheriff's Department does have a Bearcat that the SCIT has utilized in the past, during critical incidents. However, the vast majority of critical incidents require the use of at least two Bearcats to effectively contain the problem and provide for proper personnel and equipment deployment. While there are Bearcats located in the surrounding counties of Milwaukee, Washington, and Walworth, there are issues with how long it takes to get the resource in place and there have been times they are not available to respond.

While there is definitely a need for an armored rescue vehicle when handling high risk critical incidents, it becomes difficult to figure out how to purchase one due to the cost. The cost for a Bearcat is approximately \$300,000 with a life expectancy of approximately twenty-five years. We believe we would be able to secure a portion of the funding through donations from community groups and businesses, but are not optimistic enough to believe we would be able to secure donations for the entire purchase amount.

During our April 3, 2019, special SCIT Board meeting, the chiefs met to discuss possible financing plans. We recognized that each community has different budget procedures and different limitations in accepting citizen donations. As a result of this meeting, team leadership has been directed to select a final product, with needed options, to obtain a solid quote. Agencies that allow for various levels of community support are to approach their perspective donors and report back to the Board, by November 1, 2019, with donation commitments. Agencies are to approach their respective governing boards to obtain budgetary approval for their potential portion of the costs (\$34,000.00). Donations are to be pooled for the SCIT members as a whole and not specific to the agency raising the funds. Once approved and ordered, the build out timeline is approximately nine months to delivery. Realizing that agencies have different budgeting strains, I suggested the option that we discussed in obtaining a low interest government loan, to allow for expediting the purchase and to create a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the team agencies to achieve payback of the loan through our respective capital budgets. As we discussed, the Village of Elm Grove would hold the loan and the nine agencies would pay approximately \$7,000.00 a year to the loan, based on the MOU, assuming a five year loan.

I would like to present this for consideration to our Village Board in May. If I am able to schedule the May Village Board meeting, with our SCIT team leadership, I also plan to have them in attendance to present their needs assessment and answer any operational questions for the Board of Trustees.



James P. Gage
Chief of Police