

CITY OF YUBA CITY
STAFF REPORT

Date: September 6, 2022
To: Honorable Mayor & Members of the City Council;
From: Police Department
Presentation By: Brian Baker, Police Chief

Summary

Subject: Revised Lateral Police Officer and Lateral Dispatcher Recruiting Incentive Program

Recommendation: Adopt a Resolution authorizing a revised Lateral Officer and Lateral Dispatcher Recruiting Incentive Program

Fiscal Impact: No additional costs are associated with the increased incentive to the recruiting incentive program which is already in place. The increase in the program will be funded by salary savings out of the General Fund from existing vacancies within the police department and savings from the Police Academy Cadet account 2140-65103. There are no other anticipated impacts to the City's General Fund.

Purpose:

To maintain the Police Officer staffing level at the Police Department in a very competitive market, by offering incentives to encourage highly qualified lateral officers and lateral dispatchers to apply for employment with the Yuba City Police Department.

Council Priority

Public Safety.

Background:

Over the past few years, it has become increasingly difficult to hire qualified lateral police officers and dispatchers throughout the country. In an effort to hire qualified candidates, in September 2016, the Police Department implemented a Lateral and Academy Graduate Recruiting Incentive Program, updated and revised the program in July 2021 in an effort to make it more effective, and in September 2020, implemented a Lateral Dispatcher Recruiting Incentive Program. Details related to each program are as follows:

Lateral and Academy Graduate Recruiting Incentive Program

- Referral Incentive of \$2,500 for Lateral Officer
- Hiring Incentive of \$15,000 for Lateral Officer plus initial bank of 40 hours of sick leave

- Hiring Incentive of \$5,000 for Academy Graduate Officer

Lateral Dispatcher Recruiting Incentive Program

- Referral Incentive of \$2,500 for Lateral Dispatcher
- Hiring Incentive of \$10,000 for Lateral Dispatcher plus initial bank of 40 hours of sick leave

The Yuba City Police Department is approaching a level of concern in regards to police officer staffing at this time. Within the past 9 months, the department has seen 2 officers resign, 1 to seek employment in the private sector and 1 with a state agency. We currently have 5 Police Recruits in the Field Training Program, and 1 lateral officer in the hiring process. There are currently 6 open positions in the police officer classification and there is anticipated pending retirement of 4 officers by the Spring of 2023. This would put the department at ten vacancies, which would put staffing at a critical level. Hiring only Police Recruits to fill these vacancies would greatly diminish the experience level in our Patrol Division.

The Police Department has three options when it comes to hiring potential Police Officers.

1. Hire recruits with no experience and sponsor them fully through the academy. This is the least expedient option, with a typical time frame of over a year from job announcement to end of the field training program where the officer is functioning in a solo capacity. The approximate salary with benefits of a police recruit to get through the police academy and the associated field training program is \$69,608. The cost of the police academy, which is paid for by the City, including uniforms and equipment is approximately \$10,000, plus a housing stipend while attending the academy of approximately \$3,000. This brings the total cost to \$82,608 to complete the police academy and field training program. In this scenario, these costs would have already been paid and the recruit would just be approaching the level of a solo officer. Since 01/01/2015, the department has hired 39 recruit police officers inclusive of the five that are currently in the field training program. Seventeen of those hires are still with the department (this does not include the five in the field training program). Seventeen police recruits are no longer with the organization, all but two of those hires were released from the field training program or on probation.
2. Hire an officer during or upon completion of the police academy. This is the most problematic option. Most academies are filled by sponsored cadets (already hired by an agency), which leaves a limited field to choose from for potential officers. Most police academies are run through the California Junior College system, with only two academies being conducted a year. There are very few candidates per class, and the best candidates are very often hired immediately upon the initiation of the new class. This is the most difficult and least successful option.
3. Hire lateral officers. Hiring officers that currently work for other agencies and have successfully completed a probationary period. We continue to have a limited success rate; currently we have one lateral officer in the hiring process. With some changes to the recruiting incentive for lateral officers, this will be the fastest option from hire to having an officer on the street within two to three months in a solo capacity with minimal supervision. The estimated investment with all available benefits and the proposed \$45,000 hiring incentive for a lateral officer from the point of hire, to operating as a solo officer is estimated at \$62,018. This is a savings of \$20,590.

A recent survey evaluating recruiting incentives for lateral officers from other Northern California agencies are as follows:

Redding PD	\$40,000
Paradise PD	\$40,000
Chico PD	\$10,000
Yuba County SO	\$10,000
Dixon PD	\$30,000
Fairfield PD	\$20,000
Vacaville PD	\$20,000
Scotts Valley PD	\$40,000

Yuba City comes in at a \$15,000 lateral officer hiring incentive.

Lateral incentives are currently in place in numerous agencies throughout California. Some agencies provide a moving expense offset, a financial incentive for the lateral applicant, a financial incentive for the recruiting employee, a vacation bank leave bonus, or a sick leave bank leave bonus. Most agencies offering a bonus, offer a combination of the above items. The bonuses vary throughout the state with some incentives as low as \$400 and others as high as \$40,000. Other bonuses offered include free initial uniform costs, and transferring sick leave banks from their previous agencies (absent a payout).

Attracting qualified dispatchers is a problem that is not unique to the Yuba City Police Department, but rather regionally and across the State of California. The City of Chico has recently implemented a lateral dispatcher hiring incentive of \$20,000. While the police department currently has a \$10,000 lateral dispatcher hiring incentive, it has not proven to be successful. In the past 12 months the department has hired 2 lateral dispatchers and only 1 is still employed. Lateral dispatchers bring an experience level to the organization that can take entry level hires between 12 to 18 months to attain. Due to the current staffing levels in the dispatch center, hiring only entry level applicants would greatly diminish the experience level in our dispatch center. It is important to remember that while housed in the police department the dispatch center handles both police and fire related calls in the City of Yuba City.

Analysis:

To increase recruitment opportunities, the proposed program for the City of Yuba City would provide the following:

Proposed Lateral and Academy Graduate Recruiting Incentive Program

- Referral Incentive of \$2,500 for Lateral Officer – The City would compensate City employees who refer ultimately successful recruits for these positions with two payments: the first payment of \$1,250 would be made upon the City’s hiring of the lateral officer and the remaining \$1,250 would be made when the new employee successfully completes probation. Human Resources staff, the City Manager, Department Directors, the City Attorney, the Mayor and Councilmembers would not be eligible for the referral incentive. A lateral officer candidate would be able to identify only one employee eligible for a referral incentive, and it must be done with Human Resources at initial hiring.
- Hiring Incentive of \$45,000 for Lateral Officer - Paid to a lateral officer who successfully completes the hiring process with the City of Yuba City. The incentive would be paid in four payments as follows: \$12,500 upon hiring, \$10,000 upon successful completion of the field training program, an additional \$12,500 upon successful completion of 18 months of employment with the City of Yuba City, and an additional \$10,000 upon successful

completion of 36 months of employment with the City of Yuba City

- A lateral officer, upon successful hiring would also be given an initial bank of 40 hours of sick leave.
- Hiring Incentive of \$5,000 for an Academy Graduate Officer - Paid to an academy graduate officer who successfully completes the hiring process with the City of Yuba City. The incentive would be paid in two payments. The first payment of \$2,500 would be made upon the successful hiring of the candidate. The second payment would be upon the successful completion of the field training program.

Proposed Lateral Dispatcher Recruiting Incentive Program

- Referral Incentive of \$2,500 for Lateral Dispatcher - The City would compensate City employees who refer ultimately successful recruits for these positions with two payments: the first payment of \$1,250 would be made upon the City's hiring of the lateral dispatcher and the remaining \$1,250 would be made when the new employee successfully completes probation. Human Resources staff, the City Manager, Department Directors, the City Attorney, the Mayor and Councilmembers would not be eligible for the referral incentive. A lateral dispatcher candidate would be able to identify only one employee eligible for a referral incentive, and it must be done with Human Resources at initial hiring.
- Hiring Incentive of \$22,500 for Lateral Dispatcher - New lateral Dispatchers will receive: \$7,500 upon hiring, \$5,000 upon successful completion of the dispatch training program, an additional \$5,000 upon successful completion of 18 months of employment with the City of Yuba City, and an additional \$5,000 upon successful completion of 36 months of employment with the City of Yuba City. Staff is proposing to make the increased lateral dispatch hiring incentive to May 1,2022. This will impact one lateral dispatcher that was hired on May 15,2022, and recently cleared the training program.
- A lateral dispatcher, upon successful hiring, would also be given an initial bank of 40 hours of sick leave.

Fiscal Impact:

The estimated investment in hiring officer recruits and sponsoring them through the academy is approximately \$82,600. With the proposed \$45,000 hiring incentive for a lateral officer, the estimated cost to get the officer to the point that they can operate as a solo officer is \$62,000, resulting in a net savings of approximately \$20,600. The increase in the lateral dispatcher hiring incentive will cost the City \$12,500 more per dispatcher. However, there is sufficient salary savings in the Police Department budget to absorb the increase.

Alternatives:

Do not adopt the Resolution or provide staff with direction to amend the recommendation.

Recommendation:

Adopt a Resolution authorizing a revised Lateral Officer and Lateral Dispatcher Recruiting Incentive Program.

Attachment:

1. Resolution

Attachments:

1. Lateral Recruiting Incentives Final Resolution September 2022.doc

Prepared By:

Brian Baker
Chief of Police

Submitted By:

Diana Langley
City Manager

ATTACHMENT 1

RESOLUTION NO.

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF YUBA CITY
AUTHORIZING A REVISED LATERAL OFFICER AND LATERAL DISPATCHER
RECRUITING INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that in order to effectively address current challenges faced by the Yuba City Police Department with recruitment and hiring of Police Officers and Dispatchers, the revised Lateral Officer and Lateral Dispatcher Recruiting Incentive Program should be adopted; and

WHEREAS, a referral incentive will encourage current City employees to recommend qualified candidates to apply for lateral officer and dispatcher positions that have been difficult to fill; and

WHEREAS, a hiring incentive will encourage lateral officer and lateral dispatch candidates to accept positions with the Yuba City Police Department.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Yuba City adopts the revised Lateral Officer and Lateral Dispatcher Recruiting Incentive Program as follows:

1. An eligible City employee who refers a candidate for a lateral Police Officer or lateral Dispatcher positions will receive \$1,250 upon hiring of the candidate and additional \$1,250 upon the new employee's successful completion of the probationary period.
2. New lateral Police Officers will receive \$12,500 upon hiring, \$10,000 upon successful completion of the field training program, an additional \$12,500 upon successful completion of 18 months of employment with the City of Yuba City, and an additional \$10,000 upon successful completion of 36 months of employment with the City of Yuba City
3. New lateral Dispatchers will receive: \$7,500 upon hiring, \$5,000 upon successful completion of the dispatch training program, an additional \$5,000 upon successful completion of 18 months of employment with the City of Yuba City, and an additional \$5,000 upon successful completion of 36 months of employment with the City of Yuba City.
4. New lateral Police Officer and lateral Dispatcher hires will receive 40 hours of sick leave placed in their leave bank upon being hired.
5. For the purposes of this program, a lateral Police Officer is defined as a current or former California Peace Officer in good standing the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and who possesses a valid POST police academy certificate and a POST Basic Peace Officer certificate.
6. For the purposes of this program, a lateral dispatcher is defined as a current or former dispatcher in good standing the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) and who has at least one year of dispatcher experience. Experience gained as a dispatcher in another State in the United States will be evaluated on a case by case basis and a determination will be made

by the department if that person meets the standards of that of a lateral dispatcher as described above.

7. The Officer Recruiting Incentive program applies to lateral officers hired on or after this resolution is successfully passed.
8. The Lateral Dispatch Recruiting Incentive program applies to lateral Dispatchers hired on or after May 1,2022.
9. The City Manager is authorized to administer this program.

The foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly introduced, passed, and adopted by the City Council of the City of Yuba City at a regular meeting thereof held on the 6th day of September 2022.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

Dave Shaw, Mayor

ATTEST:

Ciara Wakefield, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM
COUNSEL FOR YUBA CITY

By _____
Shannon Chaffin, City Attorney
Aleshire & Wynder, LLP