



# Agenda Report

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, March 23, 2021

**TO:** City Council

**FROM:** POLICE CHIEF HONDA

**SUBJECT:** TOBACCO GRANT PROGRAM

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## **STATEMENT OF ISSUES:**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, cigarette smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death and disability in the United States and reported that in 2019, 4% of middle school students and 11.5% of high school students indicated current use of two or more tobacco products. It is important to prevent and reduce the use of tobacco products among youth.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager or his designee to accept and appropriate the California Department of Justice, Office of Attorney General, Tobacco Grant Program FY 2020-21 in the amount of \$512,719 to enforce state and local laws related to illegal sale and marketing of tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, to minors, and to execute all required documents, future amendments, if any, and appropriate funds to the grant fund.

## **DISCUSSION:**

Approved by California voters in 2016, Prop. 56 increased taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco products by \$2 starting in April 2017. This initiative allocates a portion of annual revenue to the California Department of Justice to support local enforcement efforts to reduce the illegal sale of tobacco products to minors. In accordance with the State Budget Act and the California Healthcare, Research and Prevention Tobacco Tax Act of 2016, as added by Proposition 56, the Attorney General released a Tobacco Grant Program request for proposal due on August 7, 2020. The California Department of Justice Tobacco Grant Program application process was highly competitive and it intended to distribute \$28.5 million to eligible local law enforcement agencies for qualifying tobacco enforcement purposes. The Watsonville Police Department (WPD) applied and was awarded \$512,719 in Tobacco Grant Program funds. The grant term is from January 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024.

The Watsonville Police Department is committed to supporting the California Department of Justice Tobacco Grant Program to promote a healthier California by focusing on the following goals:

- (1) Reducing illegal sales of tobacco products to minors
- (2) Increasing education among youth, parents and community members regarding the negative effects of underage tobacco use

Effectively enforcing laws against cigarette sales to minors throughout regular compliance checks and penalizing retailers that sell to minors can significantly reduce youth smoking. This grant would allow adequate funding to have frequent enforcement and compliance checks. The WPD will be conducting tobacco retail license inspections, tobacco-related enforcement operations, shoulder tap operations, will be educating retailers to ensure they comply with tobacco laws and will provide roll call training on tobacco-related issues to all sworn personnel on a regular basis.

The WPD will be collaborating with the Pájaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance Program (PVPSA), a nonprofit that has over 30 years of experience in health education and tobacco use prevention services in Watsonville. PVPSA will take the lead in providing tobacco prevention education to youth, parents, teachers, school nurses, administrators, community members and law enforcement by providing evidence-based programs. PVPSA is a certified provider of the evidence-based program, Too Good for Drugs which fosters life skills, character values, resistance skills to negative peer influence, and resistance to the use of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

The Tobacco Grant Program funding will allow the Watsonville Police Department to accomplish its program goals by using a comprehensive approach in combining tobacco-related enforcement and collaborating with PVPSA, who will take the lead in increasing education in the negative effects of underage tobacco use.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The Tobacco Grant Program supports the strategic plan priority of public safety. This grant will allow the Watsonville Police Department to focus its efforts on problematic retailers of tobacco products with an effort to reduce illegal sales to minors.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The Tobacco Grant Program in the amount of \$512,719 does not require any local match funds and has no financial impact to the General Fund.

**ALTERNATIVE ACTION:**

No reasonable alternatives are known at this time.

**ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):**

None.