



# MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Mayor and City Councilors

**FROM:** Rich Olson, City Manager  
Eddie M. Buffaloe, Jr. Chief of Police

**DATE:** August 7, 2015

**RE:** Consideration - Authorization to Accept Donation of Narcan Units

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**BACKGROUND:**

The Elizabeth City Police Department, through its partnership with Albemarle Regional Health Services, has an opportunity to participate in a drug prevention grant program entitled “*Project Lazarus*.” Albemarle Regional Health Services, as the grant recipient, has applied for Project Lazarus and has been tentatively notified that funds are available for this region. Funding will be awarded directly to ARHS so the City of Elizabeth City will not be involved as either a primary or sub-recipient of this grant.

By way of a Memorandum of Understanding, ARHS would be able to donate items received through this grant funding, including medication drop boxes; medication incinerators; Naloxone/Narcan units for all patrol cars; and training in the area of crisis intervention. All of these possible opportunities would greatly benefit both the Elizabeth City Police Department and the citizens of Elizabeth City; therefore, the Department is requesting Council’s permission to accept any and all donations available through Project Lazarus; said donations will be given to the Department by Albemarle Regional Health Services as the prime recipient and executive official of this grant.

**ANALYSIS:**

In response to a growing heroin problem in Pasquotank County and surrounding counties over the last 18 months, Albemarle Regional Health Services reached out to its law enforcement partners to determine if there was a need to apply for grant opportunity “Project Lazarus.” It was easily determined there is a need in this region to take a pro-active stance against heroin abuse and ensure that agencies are equipped with tools in their “tool box” to aide in this process on a daily basis and in the field where first response matters most. Available through this funding are medication drop boxes and medicine incinerators, which are useful in securing drugs and disposing of drugs. In addition, Naloxone – also referred to as “Narcan” in the medical profession for its

generic prescription name – is available through Project Lazarus. Narcan is an opiate antidote that can save the life of someone experiencing a heroin overdose. In the past year, Elizabeth City Police Officers have encountered at least two individuals experiencing a drug overdose. Thankfully, medical professionals (with initial first responder aide) were able to revive these individuals, but it might just as easily not been the case.

By outfitting every officer with a Narcan unit in their patrol car, any officer coming upon an individual experiencing a possible heroin overdose could potentially save the individual's life by administering Narcan; results can be observed in literally less than a minute. Further, in the ARHS grant application submitted, the local health department reports "7,000 or 5.16% of the residents in the Albemarle region are affected or impacted by substance use and abuse." Unfortunately, the street value of heroin has decreased and allowed it to be more accessible to opiate users. Law enforcement is now dealing with this issue on almost a daily basis. Arrests are growing in number both in Elizabeth City and the surrounding areas of northeastern North Carolina.

***FINANCIAL:***

The Finance Committee discussed this matter during their meeting of August 7, 2015. Upon motion made by Mayor Peel, seconded by Councilman Donnelly, the committee unanimously recommended approval by the City Council.

***STAFF RECOMMENDATION:***

By motion, authorize acceptance of the donation of Narcan (opiate antidote units) to be outfitted in all patrol cars, as well as any other donations that become available through the "*Project Lazarus*" Project, including medication drop boxes, a medication incinerator, and crisis intervention training.

RCO/vdw