



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

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

Date: February 8, 2019

Subject: Consideration – Authorize Application to North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center’s “Alternative Fuel Vehicle Project” Grant to Seek Purchase of Electric Motorcycles for Elizabeth City Police Department

BACKGROUND:

The Elizabeth City Police Department continues to seek grant funding opportunities through outside sources including federal, state, local, and private entities for the purpose of enhancing operations and furthering the department’s mission of the pursuit of excellence. Recently, staff became aware of a grant opportunity through the North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center (NCCETC), whose mission, in part, is promotion of alternative fuel vehicles in an effort to provide an environmentally friendly state. Funding is available for electric motorcycles to be used in the field for the law enforcement community. Research shows these motorcycles provide a unique alternative for police officers while on patrol, at community events, and responding to police calls for service. If given approval, staff will request two electric motorcycles through this grant, as having two would enable officers to travel in pairs and be able to back one another up in case of a critical incident or threatening situation.

This grant does require a 50% match. The deadline to submit the grant application is February 15, 2019. As all required reporting and purchases must be made by June 30, 2019, the budget impact will occur during FY 2018-2019. The motorcycles of interest are 2019 Zero brand motorcycles, DSRP Police Package. The cost of each electric motorcycle is \$22,071.02; the total cost is \$44,142.04. Should the grant be award, the total budget impact will be \$22,071.02, which is 50% of the cost.

ANALYSIS:

Staff has investigated the benefits of using electric motorcycles within police departments. They can be used to patrol and investigate streets; to provide event safety and crowd control; to patrol “hot spot” crime areas; for local emergency calls for service; and stealth patrols. As the motorcycles have no gears, clutches or noticeable

noise, police officers are better able to focus on patrolling. They can perform highly technical maneuvers during intense situations where performance and agility are essential. While in crowds or indoors, the absence of exhaust eliminates ventilation concerns and opens up new patrolling scenarios. Additionally, acquisition of the electric motorcycles as an alternative fuel vehicle is an incredible opportunity for the Police Department to continue exploring the cutting edge of promising technologies. It would also support the City's goal of sustainability and help lower the City's carbon footprint. Staff believes this is a great opportunity offered by the North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center; and that a partnership with NCCETC would serve as a benefit for both the department and the City of Elizabeth City.

If acquired, the two electric motorcycles would be added to supplement the department's existing fleet; patrol officers assigned to the department's Traffic Safety Unit would use the motorcycles in conjunction with their job duties.

FINANCIAL:

The Finance Committee discussed this matter during their February 7, 2019 meeting. Upon motion made by Councilwoman Young, seconded by Councilwoman Hummer, the Committee unanimously recommended approval by the City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, authorize the Elizabeth City Police Department to apply for the North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center's Alternative Fuel Vehicle Project Grant, with the required 50% match of \$22,071.02 from the FY 2018-2019 if awarded.