

CITY COUNCIL
Alma Hernandez, Mayor
Princess Washington, Mayor Pro Tem
Jenalee Dawson, Councilmember
Marlon L Osum, Councilmember
Amit Pal, Councilmember



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

A G E N D A
REGULAR MEETING OF THE SUISUN CITY COUNCIL,
SUISUN CITY COUNCIL ACTING AS SUCCESSOR AGENCY TO THE
REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF SUISUN CITY,
AND SUISUN CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY
TUESDAY, AUGUST 27, 2024
5:30 PM

Suisun City Council Chambers - 701 Civic Center Boulevard - Suisun City, California

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN-PERSON, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IS ALSO AVAILABLE VIA ZOOM

ZOOM MEETING INFORMATION:

WEBSITE: <https://zoom.us/join>

*MEETING ID: **857 5912 8653***

CALL IN PHONE NUMBER: (707) 438-1720

*REMOTE PUBLIC COMMENT IS AVAILABLE FOR THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING BY EMAILING
CLERK@SUISUN.COM (PRIOR TO 4 PM), VIA WEBSITE, OR ZOOM CALL IN PHONE NUMBER (707) 438-1720*

*(If attending the meeting via phone press *9 to raise your hand and *6 to unmute/mute for public comment.)*

(Next Ord. No. – 810)

(Next City Council Res. No. 2024 – 127)

(Next Suisun City Council Acting as Successor Agency Res. No. SA2024 - 02)

(Next Housing Authority Res. No. HA2024 – 03)

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hernandez

ROLL CALL

Council / Board Members

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

APPROVAL OF REORDERING OF AGENDA

CONFLICT OF INTEREST NOTIFICATION

(Any items on the regular meeting agenda that might be a conflict of interest to any Councilmembers / Boardmembers should be identified at this time.)

REPORTS (Informational items only.)

1. City Manager Update - (Prebula: bprebula@suisun.com).
2. City Attorney Report - (Enright).

PUBLIC COMMENT

(Request by citizens to discuss any matter under our jurisdiction other than an item posted on this agenda per California Government Code §54954.3. Comments are limited to no more than 3 minutes unless allowable by the Mayor/Chair. Speaker cards are available on the table near the entry of the meeting room and should be given to the City Clerk. By law, no prolonged discussion or action may be taken on any item raised during the public comment period, although informational answers to questions may be given and matters may be referred for placement on a future agenda.)

PRESENTATIONS/APPOINTMENTS - NONE

(Presentations, Awards, Proclamations, Appointments).

COUNCIL COMMENTS

3. Council/Board Member Updates.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent calendar items requiring little or no discussion may be acted upon with one motion.

4. Council Review and Approve Letter of Response to 2023-2024 Solano County Grand Jury Report “Solano County Canine Officer Training, Handling & End of Career Policies” and Authorize Mayor to Sign Response Letter. - (Prebula:bprebula@suisun.com).

PUBLIC HEARING - NONE

GENERAL BUSINESS

5. Council Adoption of Resolution No. 2024-___: Declaring a Local Fiscal Emergency in Response to Ongoing Structural Deficits and Possible Severe Impact on Public Services - (Prebula: bprebula@suisun.com).

REPORTS: (Informational items only)

6. Non-Discussion Items.

ADJOURNMENT

Public Access To Agenda Documents

A complete packet of information containing staff reports and exhibits related to each item for the open session of this meeting, and provided to the City Council, are available for public review at least 72 hours prior to a Council/Agency/Authority Meeting at Suisun City Hall 701 Civic Center Blvd., Suisun City. Agenda related writings or documents provided to a majority of the Council/Board/Commissioners less than 72 hours prior to a Council/Agency/Authority meeting related to an agenda item for the open session of this meeting will be made available for public inspection during normal business hours. An agenda packet is also located at the entrance to the Council Chambers during the meeting for public review. The city may charge photocopying charges for requested copies of such documents. To the extent feasible, the agenda packet is available for online public viewing on the City's website: <https://www.suisun.com/Government/City-Council/Agendas>

The City Council/Agency/Authority hopes to conclude its public business by 10:00 p.m. No new items will be taken up after 10:00 p.m., unless so moved by a majority of the City Council, and any items remaining will be agendaized for the next meeting. The agendas have been prepared with the hope that all items scheduled will be discussed within the time allowed.

Accommodations

If you require an accommodation to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at (707) 421-7302 or clerk@suisun.com. The City's reasonable accommodation policy is available for review on the City's website at www.suisun.com/government/city-council/, you may request an electronic copy or have a copy mailed to you. Please note that for accommodations that are not readily available, you must make your request as soon as you can prior to the time of the meeting.

Decorum

All participants are expected to conduct themselves with mutual respect. Conduct that disrupts meetings will be addressed in accordance with Section 54957.95 of the Government Code.

Ordinances

Ordinances are city laws contained in the Suisun City Municipal Code. Enacting a new city law or changing an existing one is a two-step process. Government Code 36934 provides, except when, after reading the title, further reading is waived by regular motion adopted by majority vote all ordinances shall be read in full either at the time of introduction or passage; provided, however, that a reading of the title or ordinance shall not be required if the title is included on the published agenda and a copy of the full ordinance is made available to the public online and in print at the meeting prior to the introduction or passage.

Certification Of Posting

Agendas for regular and special meetings are posted in accordance with the Brown Act at Suisun City Hall, 701 Civic Center Boulevard, Suisun City, CA. Agendas may be posted at other Suisun City locations including:

- Suisun City Fire Station, 621 Pintail Drive, Suisun City, CA;
- Joe Nelson Center, 611 Village Drive, Suisun City, CA;
- Harbor Master Office, 800 Kellogg Street, Suisun City, CA.

I, Donna Pock, Deputy City Clerk for the City of Suisun City, declare under penalty of perjury that the above agenda was posted and available for review, in compliance with the Brown Act.

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AGENDA TRANSMITTAL

MEETING DATE: August 27, 2024

AGENDA ITEM: Council Review and Approve Letter of Response to 2023-2024 Solano County Grand Jury Report “Solano County Canine Officer Training, Handling & End of Career Policies” and Authorize Mayor to Sign Response Letter.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Provide Good Governance, Ensure Public Safety.

BACKGROUND: The Solano County Civil Grand Jury issued a report on June 21, 2024 titled "Solano County Canine Officer Training, Handling & End of Career Policies." The recent report highlights deficiencies and areas for enhancement in the Canine Officer programs countywide. Suisun City is included in the list of affected agencies that are required to submit a response by September 18, 2024.

STAFF REPORT: The recent Solano County Grand Jury Report has identified several areas for improvement, and proposes specific recommendations to address these issues, including establishing a canine officer retirement plan, enhancing training, providing medical coverage, and increasing canine staffing countywide. The report shows a lack of consistency throughout the County and provides Findings and Recommendations.

On July 15, 2024, the Suisun City Police Department provided a written response to the Grand Jury Report. The city has prepared a written response letter to the Grand Jury Report which is attached for your review and approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Council Review and Approve Letter of Response to 2023-2024 Solano County Grand Jury Report “Solano County Canine Officer Training, Handling & End of Career Policies” and Authorize Mayor to Sign Response Letter.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

1. Draft City Council Grand Jury Response Letter to Canine Officer Program
 2. Suisun City Police Department Grand Jury Response to Canine Officer Program
 3. Solano County Civil Grand Jury Report: "Solano County Canine Officer Training, Handling, & End of Career Policies"
-

PREPARED BY:

Bret Prebula, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1, [City Council Grand Jury Response Letter to Canine Officer Training and Handling](#)
2. [Police Department Grand Jury Response Letter to Canine Officer Program](#)

3. Solano County Civil Grand Jury Report: Canine Training Handling and End of Career Policies

CITY COUNCIL
Alma Hernandez, Mayor
Princess Washington, Mayor Pro-Tem
Jenalee Dawson
Marlon L. Osum
Amit Pal



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

First and Third Tuesday
Every Month

CITY OF SUISUN CITY

701 Civic Center Blvd.
Suisun City, California 94585
Incorporated October 9, 1868

August 27, 2024

Wayne B. Goodman, Foreperson
2023-24 Solano County Civil Grand Jury
600 Union Avenue
Fairfield, CA 94533

RE: Grand Jury Report from the Solano County Grand Jury for 2023-2024 titled: **Solano County Canine Officer Training, Handling & End of Career Policies June 21, 2024**

Dear Foreperson Goodman

The City of Suisun City wishes to thank the members of the Solano County Grand Jury for their report and bringing this to our attention. Staff has reviewed the findings and recommendations which are applicable to Suisun City and submitted the response to the City Council for approval.

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS by Suisun City, City Council:

FINDING 1 – *On-going in-service training with canines and canine handlers is currently taking place, but not consistent across all agencies throughout the County. Canine pre-deployment training has generally been through a third party outside of the law enforcement agency. In the past, pre-deployment training practices had been a harsh environment for the canine. Occasionally severe discipline was used to train the canine causing the canine a high level of stress during and after the training period.*

Respondent has no current Solano County Agency canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – *Use an outside agency for pre-deployment training only if the training facility and trainers are adhering to Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) training.*

Recommendation would appear to be a best practice followed if Suisun City were to employ canine teams moving forward.

DEPARTMENTS: AREA CODE (707)

ADMINISTRATION 421-7300 ■ DEVELOPMENT SERVICES 421-7335 ■ BUILDING 421-7310 ■ FINANCE 421-7320
FIRE 425-9133 ■ RECREATION & COMMUNITY SERVICES 421-7200 ■ POLICE 421-7373 ■ PUBLIC WORKS 421-7340
SUCCESSOR AGENCY 421-7309 FAX 421-7366

FINDING 2 – *While there is a retirement plan for the Patrol Officers, there is no standard Canine Officers retirement plan available. This leaves the canine handler to cover all medical costs which may include injuries that occurred while in service.*

Respondent body has no current Solano County Agency canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – *Provide all retired Canine Officers with medical insurance coverage at time of retirement, similar to that of the Patrol Officers. Medical coverage must cover both the scheduled routine medical issues and emergency medical services if ever needed. A meal allowance must also be in place for all retired Canine Officers.*

Create a standardized procedure in place for handling of retired Canine Officers until end of life. In the placement of a retiring Canine Officer the current handler should be given first choice. In the event that they cannot take on that role, there needs to be a process in place for continued care.

Recommendation would appear to be both an MOU and city policy issue to be reviewed by all stakeholders and Council Members.

FINDING 3 – *Not all law enforcement agencies within the county have Canine Officers. The law enforcement agencies that do see multiple benefits of having the Canine Officers on staff. In some cases, an increase in non-confrontational apprehensions is as much as ten times over those of a non-Canine Team.*

Respondent body agrees with the finding that not all agencies have canine officers, as Suisun City PD does not have any. Respondent body is not a subject matter expert in this field and would need to have the appropriate staff review this topic and make recommendations should this become a discussion appropriate for the Suisun City, City Council.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – *Increase Canine Officer staffing throughout the County. All law enforcement agencies should have at least one Canine Officer per shift. For the larger agencies, more Canine Officers may be needed to cover all needed situations and areas. Canine Officer/population ratio should be at least one Canine Officer per 15,000 population.*

Respondent body is not a subject matter expert in this field and would need to have the appropriate staff review this finding and make recommendations should this become a discussion appropriate for the Suisun City, City Council.

FINDING 4 – *There are only a few Peer Support Canines available to assist in emotional and behavioral support within a few agencies. Peer Support Canines play an important role in monitoring and recognizing the emotional and behavioral needs within high stress events and are able to soothe and support through their calming and caring personalities.*

Respondent body agrees with the finding and sees the value that emotional support animals can have after high stress events.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – *Increase Peer Support Canine staffing. All law enforcement agencies need to have at least one Peer Support Canine per shift.*

Respondent body is not a subject matter expert in this field and would need to have the appropriate staff review this topic and make recommendations should this become a discussion appropriate for the Suisun City, City Council.

FINDING 5 – *Canine activity and incident tracking throughout the county differs between agencies. Although being tracked, the agencies have adopted their own manner of tracking and documenting. This allows the media to exploit only the rare aggressive activities with little exposure to the positive side of the Canine Officer's contribution.*

Respondent body has no current Solano County Agency canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – *Activity and incident tracking within the county for Canine Teams need to be consistent. Have Canine Team activity reports readily available to the public.*

Respondent body believes consistency in activity reports would be helpful in order to increase transparency and understanding of canine activity.

FINDING 6 – *Canine Officers no longer engage in crowd control, as having canines in large crowds over stressed the Canine Officer, causing confusion.*

Respondent body has no current Solano County canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 6 – *Continue using the Canine Officers only in patrol, detection and search and rescue.*

Respondent body believes this would be a best practice with regard to canine officer deployment that would also be discussed and presented by staff should Suisun City be in a position to employ canines at a future date.

I hope this response adequately addresses, the findings and recommendations made by the Grand Jury. Please feel free to contact me at ahernandez@suisun.com if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Alma Hernandez, Mayor
City of Suisun City



CITY OF SUISUN
POLICE DEPARTMENT

701 Civic Center Blvd.
Suisun City, CA 94585

Aaron Roth
Chief of Police



July 15, 2024

2023 – 2024 Solano County Grand Jury

Wayne B. Goodman, Foreperson
Solano County Grand Jury
California Superior Court
Office: 707-435-2575
Fax: 707-435-2566

RE: Written Response to Grand Jury Report

Dear Mr. Goodman:

I am in receipt of the Grand Jury Report from the Solano County Grand Jury for 2023 2024 titled: Solano County Canine Officer Training Handling & End of Career Policies

I have attached a written response to this report as required.

If you need anything further from me, please call me at (707)421-7383 or email me at aroth@suisun.com.

Sincerely,

Aaron Roth
Chief of Police

DIVISIONS: AREA CODE (707)

DISPATCH / RECORDS 421-7373 ■ ADMINISTRATION 421-7350 ■ CODE ENFORCEMENT 421-3223
FAX 422-8074

Regarding Grand Jury Report from the Solano County Grand Jury for 2023-2024 titled:
Solano County Canine Officer Training, Handling & End of Career Policies
June 21, 2024

RESPONSE TO FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
by Suisun City Police Chief Aaron Roth:

FINDING 1 – *On-going in-service training with canines and canine handlers is currently taking place, but not consistent across all agencies throughout the County. Canine pre-deployment training has generally been through a third party outside of the law enforcement agency. In the past, pre-deployment training practices had been a harsh environment for the canine. Occasionally severe discipline was used to train the canine causing the canine a high level of stress during and after the training period.*

Respondent has no Solano County Agency canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – *Use an outside agency for pre-deployment training only if the training facility and trainers are adhering to Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) training.*

Recommendation would appear to be a best practice followed if Suisun City were to employ canine teams.

FINDING 2 – *While there is a retirement plan for the Patrol Officers, there is no standard Canine Officers retirement plan available. This leaves the canine handler to cover all medical costs which may include injuries that occurred while in service.*

Respondent has no Solano County Agency canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – *Provide all retired Canine Officers with medical insurance coverage at time of retirement, similar to that of the Patrol Officers. Medical coverage must cover both the scheduled routine medical issues and emergency medical services if ever needed. A meal allowance must also be in place for all retired Canine Officers. Create a standardized procedure in place for handling of retired Canine Officers until end of life. In the placement of a retiring Canine Officer the current handler should be given first choice. In the event that they cannot take on that role, there needs to be a process in place for continued care.*

Recommendation would appear to be both an MOU and city policy issue to be reviewed by all stakeholders.

FINDING 3 – *Not all law enforcement agencies within the county have Canine Officers. The law enforcement agencies that do see multiple benefits of having the Canine Officers on staff. In some cases, an increase in non-confrontational apprehensions is as much as ten times over those of a non-Canine Team.*

Respondent agrees with the finding that not all agencies have canine officers, as Suisun City PD does not have any. Respondent would also agree that there are studies showing apprehensions of violent individuals by canine officers to be less confrontational overall than apprehensions without canine officers.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – *Increase Canine Officer staffing throughout the County. All law enforcement agencies should have at least one Canine Officer per shift. For the larger agencies, more Canine Officers may be needed to cover all needed situations and areas. Canine Officer/population ratio should be at least one Canine Officer per 15,000 population.*

Respondent has not been able to implement a canine officer program due to both staffing and budgetary constraints and is currently unable to follow recommendation.

FINDING 4 – *There are only a few Peer Support Canines available to assist in emotional and behavioral support within a few agencies. Peer Support Canines play an important role in monitoring and recognizing the emotional and behavioral needs within high stress events and are able to soothe and support through their calming and caring personalities.*

Respondent agrees with the finding.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – *Increase Peer Support Canine staffing. All law enforcement agencies need to have at least one Peer Support Canine per shift.*

Respondent is not able to implement peer support canine staffing due to both staffing and budgetary constraints.

FINDING 5 – *Canine activity and incident tracking throughout the county differs between agencies. Although being tracked, the agencies have adopted their own manner of tracking and documenting. This allows the media to exploit only the rare aggressive activities with little exposure to the positive side of the Canine Officer's contribution.*

Respondent has no Solano County Agency canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – *Activity and incident tracking within the county for Canine Teams need to be consistent. Have Canine Team activity reports readily available to the public.*

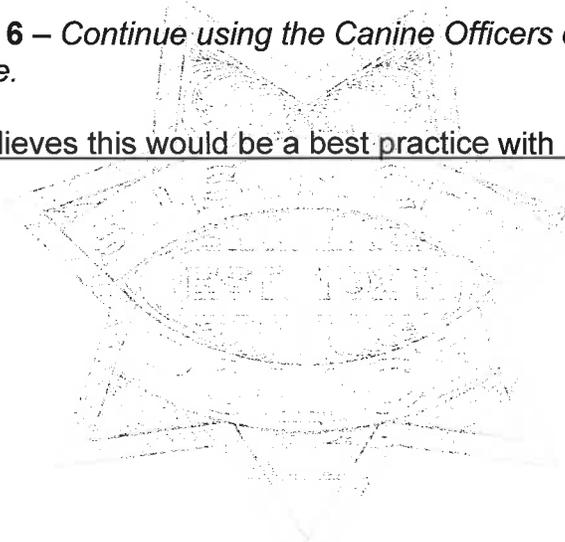
Respondent believes consistency in activity reports would be helpful if the cities all trained together. As with many types of documents, canine team activity reports would appear to be a document readily available to the public to increase transparency.

FINDING 6 – *Canine Officers no longer engage in crowd control, as having canines in large crowds over stressed the Canine Officer, causing confusion.*

Respondent has no Solano County canine experience and cannot agree or disagree with finding.

RECOMMENDATION 6 – *Continue using the Canine Officers only in patrol, detection and search and rescue.*

Respondent believes this would be a best practice with regard to canine officer deployment.





SOLANO COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY

2023-2024

**Solano County Canine Officer Training,
Handling & End of Career Policies**

June 21, 2024

Solano County Canine Training, Handling & End of Career Policies

Solano County Civil Grand Jury 2023-2024

I. SUMMARY

Many are led to believe that canines used in law enforcement are overly aggressive and out of control. That is not true.

The Solano County Civil Grand Jury (SCCGJ)'s in-depth investigation contradicted what the media has portrayed. The Jury found the duties for canines working in law enforcement are widespread and extremely valuable to law enforcement agencies.

The Jury undertook an investigation of the Canine Officers training and handling policies and procedures. In the past, pre-deployment training practices by vendors had been aggressively harsh and overly demanding. National attention on canine training and handling by patrol officers has been portrayed as overly aggressive.

Both pre- and post-deployment training, along with proper handling, is critical to the day-to-day care of Canine Officers.

The Jury reviewed overall canine usage and staffing with all law enforcement agencies throughout the county.

II. INTRODUCTION

Solano County's Civil Grand Jury investigation on canine activity and duties contradicted much of what the media presents. Canine training has been updated to a positive reinforcement training curriculum with improved results. Apprehensions are much higher with a canine unit than those without canines. The Grand Jury received information indicating that apprehensions were as much as ten times greater with an officer / canine team than without. In many cases, the canine officer was never deployed, but being on-site deterred the suspect through intimidation.

An in-depth review of Canine Officer's career policies throughout Solano County included:

- Breeds
- Initial canine training
- Handler training
- Canine responsibilities
- Training within specialty areas/services
- Monthly training
- Medical care
- Canine monthly/annual activity statistics
- Canine apprehension rates
- End of career handling

III. STATEMENT OF FACTS

The phrase “Canine Officer” used in this report, refers to the County’s well-trained canines. The phrase “Handler” refers to the sworn human officer who works with the Canine Officer on a day-to-day basis as the other half of a well-trained team. “Canine Team” refers to a Canine Officer and its Handler. The phrase “Peer Support Canines” refers to canines who have been trained to identify emotional and behavioral situations.

Solano County Canine Officers activity “annualized:”

Detection refers to using the canines for searching narcotics, explosives, firearms, or articles recently discarded.

- Detection
 - Canine Officer Deployments 1,475
 - Search Areas 188
 - Alerts / Indications 57
 - Seizure Incidents 72

Patrol refers to using the canines to search for a person.

- Patrol
 - Canine Officer Deployments 1,567
 - People Found 179
 - Apprehensions with Bites 11 (less than 1%)

Less than one percent of the apprehensions with a Canine Team is a takedown with bites.

Canine Team apprehension rates show they are up to ten times higher than that of non-Canine Officers. It was stated that many perpetrators are intimidated and surrender due to the presence of a Canine Officer.

Canine pre-deployment training has generally been through a third party outside of the law enforcement agency. In the past, pre-deployment training practices had been a harsh environment for the canine. Occasionally severe discipline was used to train the canines, causing a high level of stress during and after the training period.

Pre- and post-deployment training practices have shifted from negative, harsh, and forceful training to more positive reinforcement with improved results.

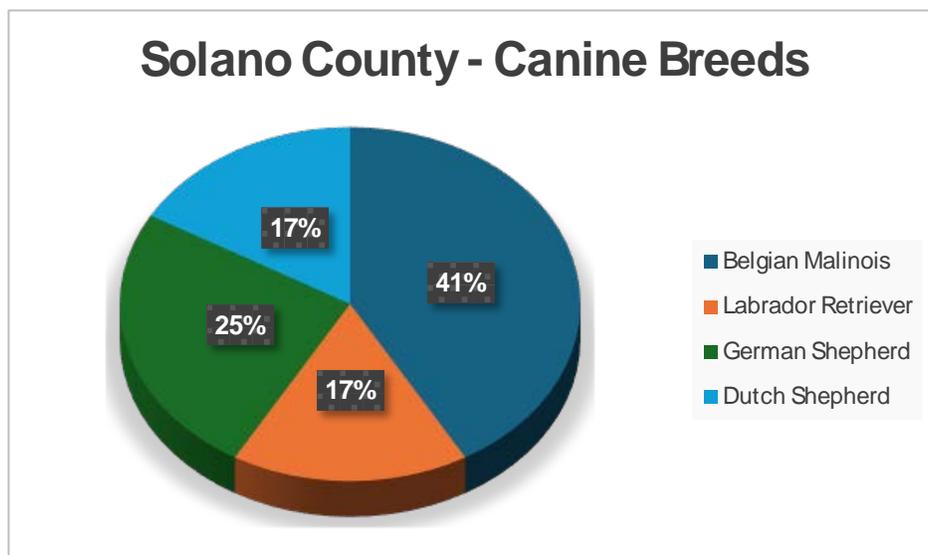
Male canines tend to be bigger and stronger than females, making them a better fit to the needs of the agencies.

Countywide

- 24 Canine Officers and Peer Support Canines are all male dogs.
 - Canine Officers
 - 10 (41%) - Belgian Malinois
 - 6 (25%) - German Shepherd
 - 4 (17%) - Dutch Shepherd
 - Peer Support Canines
 - 4 (17%) - Labrador Retriever

Many of the Canine Officers have been trained in dual roles such as standardized patrol service and apprehension, narcotic detection, explosives, search and rescue, specialized detection, and cadaver detection.

Canine Teams are trained to protect the public as well as each other. When needed the Handler can release the Canine Officer from the car with a belt mounted door button. This enables the Canine Officer to deploy and locate their Handler to provide aid.



- Eight Agencies:
 - Benicia Police Department
 - Dixon Police Department
 - Fairfield Police Department
 - Rio Vista Police Department
 - Solano County Sheriff 's Department
 - Suisun City Police Department
 - Vacaville Police Department
 - Vallejo Police Department

Solano County Sheriff's Department

- Canine Officer # 1 – 4 years old Belgian Malinois
- Canine Officer # 2 – 6 years old Belgian Malinois
- Canine Officer # 3 – 4 years old Belgian Malinois
- Canine Officer # 4 – 3 years old Belgian Malinois
- Canine Officer # 5 – 2 years old Belgian Malinois
- Canine Officer # 6 – 2 years old Dutch Shepherd
- Peer Support Canine # 7 – 6 years old Labrador Retriever

Benicia Police Department

- Canine Officer # 1 – 5 years old Belgian Malinois

Dixon Police Department

- Canine Officer # 1 – 4 years old Belgian Malinois

Fairfield Police Department

- Canine Officer # 1 – 3 years old German Shepherd
- Canine Officer # 2 – 2 years old Dutch Shepherd
- Canine Officer # 3 – 9 years old German Shepherd
- Canine Officer # 4 – 2 years old German Shepherd
- Peer Support Canine # 5 – 2 years old Yellow Labrador Retriever
- Peer Support Canine # 6 – 2 years old Black Labrador Retriever

Rio Vista Police Department

- Canine Officer # 1 – 2 years old Dutch Shepherd

Suisun City Police Department

- Currently no Canine Officers nor Peer Support Canines

Vacaville Police Department

- Canine Officer # 1 – 3 years old Dutch Shepherd
- Canine Officer # 2 – 3 years old Belgian Malinois
- Canine Officer # 3 – 2 years old Belgian Malinois
- Peer Support Canine # 4 – 2 years old Labrador Retriever

Vallejo Police Department

- Canine Officer # 1 – 4 years old Belgian Malinois
- Canine Officer # 2 – 1 year old German Shepherd
- Canine Officer # 3 – 6 years old German Shepherd
- Canine Officer # 4 – 7 years old German Shepherd

Solano County	Population	% of the County	Canines / Population
• City of Benicia	26,819	5.9%	1 Canine per 26,819

• City of Dixon	18,974	4.2%	1 Canine per 18,974
• City of Fairfield	119,706	26.5%	1 Canine per 19,951
• City of Rio Vista	10,533	2.3%	1 Canine per 10,533
• City of Suisun City	29,165	6.5%	N/A
• City of Vallejo	124,886	27.6%	1 Canine per 24,977
• City of Vacaville	103,078	22.9%	1 Canine per 51,539
• Unincorporated Areas	18,556	4.1%	N/A
○ (Elmira & Birds Landing)			
• Solano County	451,716	100.0%	1 Canine per 19,640

Canine Officers are no longer used for crowd control. Canines are directed by their handlers generally with a single task and/or direction.

Peer Support Canines have been trained to identify emotional and behavioral situations. They have the ability to respond to the emotional needs of individuals with their caring nature or a simple wag of their tail. Peer Support Canine acquisition in many cases come from the local SPCA and/or animal shelters. Many are rescue canines being placed back into society with a purpose to serve the public.

Canine support training is currently taking place at California Medical Facility (CMF) and California State Prison (CSP).

Inmates working through their rehabilitation to reenter society are currently training canines for several public and emotional service needs.

Every department or agency has a form of reporting of canine activity, we found a lack of consistency throughout Solano County. We also found very little visibility to the public.

As the Canine Officers and Peer Support Canines age and retire from service, retirement benefits are lacking to cover the cost of canine health care and much of their day-to-day handling cost. Much of this cost becomes the current handler’s responsibility. This is in contrast to human sworn officers whose retirement benefits include health care.

IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDING 1 – On-going in-service training with canines and canine handlers is currently taking place, but not consistent across all agencies throughout the County. Canine pre-deployment training has generally been through a third party outside of the law enforcement agency. In the past, pre-deployment training practices had been a harsh environment for the canine. Occasionally severe discipline was used to train the canine causing the canine a high level of stress during and after the training period.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – Use an outside agency for pre-deployment training only if the training facility and trainers are adhering to Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) training

practices with positive reinforcement. For on-going in-service training, continue monthly training of the canine team through positive reinforcement. Train for a minimum of 16 hours a month, or 192 hours annually on current skills and new techniques. Elements of the training techniques should be made available to the public.

FINDING 2 – While there is a retirement plan for the Patrol Officers, there is no standard Canine Officers retirement plan available. This leaves the canine handler to cover all medical costs which may include injuries that occurred while in service.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – Provide all retired Canine Officers with medical insurance coverage at time of retirement, similar to that of the Patrol Officers. Medical coverage must cover both the scheduled routine medical issues and emergency medical services if ever needed. A meal allowance must also be in place for all retired Canine Officers. Create a standardized procedure in place for handling of retired Canine Officers until end of life. In the placement of a retiring Canine Officer the current handler should be given first choice. In the event that they cannot take on that role, there needs to be a process in place for continued care.

FINDING 3 – Not all law enforcement agencies within the county have Canine Officers. The law enforcement agencies that do, see multiple benefits of having the Canine Officers on staff. In some cases, an increase in non-confrontational apprehensions is as much as ten times over those of a non-Canine Team.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – Increase Canine Officer staffing throughout the County. All law enforcement agencies should have at least one Canine Officer per shift. For the larger agencies, more Canine Officers may be needed to cover all needed situations and areas. Canine Officer/population ratio should be at least one Canine Officer per 15,000 population.

FINDING 4 – There are only a few Peer Support Canines available to assist in emotional and behavioral support within a few agencies. Peer Support Canines play an important role in monitoring and recognizing the emotional and behavioral needs within high stress events and are able to soothe and support through their calming and caring personalities.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – Increase Peer Support Canine staffing. All law enforcement agencies need to have at least one Peer Support Canine per shift.

FINDING 5 – Canine activity and incident tracking throughout the county differs between agencies. Although being tracked, the agencies have adopted their own manner of tracking and documenting. This allows the media to exploit only the rare aggressive activities with little exposure to the positive side of the Canine Officer's contribution.

RECOMMENDATION 5 – Activity and incident tracking within the county for Canine Teams need to be consistent. Have Canine Team activity reports readily available to the public.

FINDING 6 – Canine Officers no longer engage in crowd control, as having canines in large crowds over stressed the Canine Officer, causing confusion.

RECOMMENDATION 6 – Continue using the Canine Officers only in patrol, detection and search and rescue.

COMMENTS

Solano County’s Civil Grand Jury investigation on canine activity and duties contradicted much of what the media is presenting. Canine training has been updated from past years to a positive reinforcement training curriculum with improved results. Apprehensions are much higher with a canine team than without. Data shows as much as ten times more apprehensions with a Canine Team than without. In many cases, the Canine Officer was never deployed, but being on site deterred the suspect through intimidation.

We applaud the use of Brady’s K-9 Fund or similar agencies and grants to support Canine Officers’ needs, both while in-service and retired.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

Solano County Board of Supervisors	Findings 1-6
Solano County Sheriff	Findings 1-6
Chief of Police	
City of Benicia	Findings 1-6
City of Dixon	Findings 1-6
City of Fairfield	Findings 1-6
City of Rio Vista	Findings 1-6
City of Suisun City	Findings 1-6
City of Vacaville	Findings 1-6
City of Vallejo	Findings 1-6
City Council	
City of Benicia	Findings 1-6
City of Dixon	Findings 1-6
City of Fairfield	Findings 1-6
City of Rio Vista	Findings 1-6
City of Suisun City	Findings 1-6
City of Vacaville	Findings 1-6
City of Vallejo	Findings 1-6

COURTESY COPIES

Congressman
 John Garamendi
 Mike Thompson
State Senators
 Dave Min

Brian Dahle
State Assemblymembers 1021 O Street Sacramento, CA 95814
Alex Lee Suite # 6330
Ash Kalra Suite # 4610
Corey Jackson Suite # 6120
Isaac Bryan Suite # 5360
Robert Rivas Suite # 8330
Solano County Assemblymember
Lori D. Wilson

V. METHODOLOGY

- Data received from the following agencies.
 - Benicia Police Department
 - Brady’s K9 Fund
 - Brian Peterson @ All Duty Canine
 - Dixon Police Department
 - Fairfield Police Department
 - Fairfield Police Department – 2022 Annual Report
 - Fairfield PD Gets a Therapy Dog – The Reporter – August 25, 2022
 - Rio Vista Police Department
 - Solano County Sheriff Department
 - Suisun City Police Department
 - Therapy Dog Playing Roles – Fox 11 – July 1, 2022
 - Vacaville Police Department
 - Vallejo Police Department
 - 2021 U.S. Census
 - Capital Weekly – April 30, 2023
 - Assemblymember’s Home Page
 - The Reporter – Cort Retires - March 8, 2024

VI. ATTACHMENT

Vacaville “The Reporter” March 8, 2024

Fairfield PD’s K-9 Cort retires from service.

Fairfield Police Department Sergeant Michael Pena with K-9 Cort, along with Fairfield Mayor Catherine Moy and his family during the Fairfield City Council meeting March 5 after a proclamation was issued declaring the day "Cort Day" upon recognition of K-9 Cort's retirement.

With nearly nine years of dedicated service under his collar, Fairfield Police Department K-9 Cort has retired from law enforcement.

“Cort quickly became a favorite around the department and community,” said Jennifer Brantley, Public Information Officer for the Fairfield PD. “With his friendly personality he was always up for socializing during public demonstrations or just greeting fellow

employees around the department. Even though he had this soft playful side to him, he would quickly change and get down to business if commands were given by Sergeant Pena.”

According to Fairfield PD officials, Cort – born as Malínského Statku – was born on March 10, 2014, in the Czech Republic and came to the Bay Area in March of 2015 to be tested by the department. He was then paired with Sgt. Mike Pena one week before his first birthday and together, they went to a one-month basic K-9 handler school where they learned how to work as a team in both obedience and apprehension work.

While Cort demonstrated excellent work ethic during his lengthy career, Pena recalls the young pup beginning to test his handler’s patience back at handler school.

“At times during the training Cort would decide that he needed a well-deserved break,” said Fairfield PD officials during an awards ceremony held Feb. 28. “He would take off running from Sgt. Pena and head down to the waterfront to chase the ducks around while completely ignoring commands to come back.”

Still, Cort was a great learner and he and Sgt. Pena then attended a six-week explosive detection school, a two-week tracking and trailing school, one-week SWAT K-9 school, and one-week advanced patrol tactics school.

After completing patrol tactics school, Sgt. Pena and Cort would go on to receive additional training in other specialized areas to include tracking, explosives, and SKIDDS – specialized training for K-9s to be deploy with the SWAT Team. In 2016, Cort also became the department’s first K-9 to become certified in detecting explosives, according to officials.

“Once the initial certifications were complete, that unbreakable K-9 and handler bond began to form between this team,” said department officials.

During Cort’s nearly nine years of service, Fairfield PD officials said the K-9 achieved several impressive accomplishments, including over 2800 training hours; 433 field deployments; 35 suspect apprehensions; over 90 suspect surrenders; multiple activations with SWAT; and over 650 events.

“Over the last several years Cort has exemplified the unwavering loyalty, bravery, and dedication that police dogs bring to law enforcement,” said officials.

Unfortunately, some of Cort’s deployments came with serious consequences.

In January 2019, Cort was searching a heavily brushed creek bed for a wanted violent criminal. After Cort and Sgt. Pena were ambushed, Cort was still able to locate and apprehended the suspect but was stabbed multiple times during the process. At the time of the incident, Peña credited Cort with saving his life by demonstrating bravery, while subduing the assailant despite his injuries.

Then in February 2020, Fairfield SWAT surrounded a home after a male severely beat a woman in a home the night before.

“A standoff lasted nearly six hours, so Cort was deployed to search for the now concealed suspect, quickly locating him hiding in the garage,” read the proclamation.” During the apprehension, Cort suffered a serious through and through laceration to his paw.

In 2022, Cort was deployed into a residence to search for a suspect who broke into a citizen’s home. During the search, Cort apprehended the suspect, and, in the process, he was bitten in the face and stabbed again. Despite being injured, Cort continued to engage

the suspect until officers were able to complete the arrest. For Cort's actions, he was the first Fairfield Police K-9 to receive the purple heart medal.

According to officials, K-9 Cort has also assisted neighboring agencies in searching for violent criminals, including conducting yard to yard searches in the City of Davis for Davis Police Officer Natalie Corona's killer, completing explosive detection searches for visiting presidential candidates, and assisting in dozens of SWAT operations.

"While searching for a parolee at large, K-9 Cort was deployed along with police officers to search a residence," said Moy. "Cort pushed through a partially open bedroom door, deploying a booby trap from above, which due to his quick movements, he avoided injury and therefore, protected officers from injury."

In addition to being honored by Fairfield Police Department officials during their 2023 awards ceremony Feb. 28, Cort was also recognized by the Fairfield City Council March 5 when Mayor Catherine Moy presented a proclamation declaring that day as "Cort Day" in Fairfield, to celebrate the many accomplishments that this police dog attained while wishing him a very well-deserved retirement.

"Cort's career is a story of resilience," said Moy. "Reaching a well-deserved retirement, K-9 Cort now spends most of his time relaxing poolside, socializing with his companion Riley and Officer Peña's wife and three children. Although his presence in the Fairfield community is ending, the memory of his life of service to this community will last for years to come."

AGENDA TRANSMITTAL

MEETING DATE: August 27, 2024

AGENDA ITEM: Council Adoption of Resolution No. 2024-___: Declaring a Local Fiscal Emergency in Response to Ongoing Structural Deficits and Possible Severe Impact on Public Services.

FISCAL IMPACT: The General Fund has a significant structural deficit. In FY 2024/25 40% of the General Fund Reserve was used to balance the budget. The city has reached a crossroad in that without the passing of a tax measure in November 2024, severe service delivery reductions will occur citywide. Additionally, if Measure S is not passed in November 2024, and any additional attempts fail before June 2026, an additional \$4 million will need to be cut from citywide service delivery.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Provide Good Governance.

BACKGROUND: In 2020 the City Council voted not to place a tax measure on the ballot, this decision began a long road of revenues not maintaining the growth of expenses. Additionally, COVID-19 had a disproportional impact on Suisun City because it lacked the commercial retail and income level/volume compared to surrounding cities in the region, thus the “spring back effect” was not as great comparatively. To that end, the city continues to have significant structural deficits and has placed a tax measure on the November 2024 ballot. Without the passing of the tax measure Suisun City will have significant service delivery cuts to all services throughout the city impacting the quality of life of our residents.

STAFF REPORT: On July 7, 2020, the City Council voted on the placement of a sales tax measure on the November 2020 ballot, and the motion failed, thus eliminating an additional possible source of revenue. Additionally, COVID-19 had a disproportional impact on Suisun City because it lacked the commercial retail and income level/volume compared to surrounding cities in the region, thus the “spring back effect” was not as great comparatively. To that end, the city continues to have significant structural deficits and has placed a tax measure on the November 2024 ballot. Without the passing of the tax measure, Suisun City will have significant service delivery cuts to all services throughout the city impacting the quality of life of our residents.

In the current fiscal year, the City is using one-time roll over funds and General Fund Reserves to balance the General Fund operating budget, but our existing cost structure is unsustainable based on our revenues. The issue is not one of cost management but rather revenue generation. Suisun City does not currently have the revenue per capita to compare to its similar sized city within the region. Currently, the revenue per capita within the General Fund is less than \$900 per resident, compared to similar cities in Solano County whose revenue per capita is near \$1,800 per resident.

Why is revenue per capita important?

Revenue per capita is important because it reflects the ability for a city to obtain the correct level of resources to maintain proper service delivery levels citywide, especially in areas of Police, Fire, Public Works, to name the largest three departments. With Suisun City being so dramatically low in per capita revenue maintaining even current service levels (which are insufficient to the community) are difficult

to maintain.

This impact of low revenue totals provides the lens that the city needs to increase its revenue sources in a variety of revenue categories, including property tax, sales tax, transient occupancy tax, utility user and franchise taxes. The city has a multi-phased resiliency plan to focus on taxes, development, and local tourism to generate additional revenues to provide the level of service demand desired in the community, but the city does not have the desired timeline to allow this plan to come to fruition. Thus, the Measure S ballot measure, if passed, provides some additional runway to allow this plan to be completed in the years to come. Without the measure passing, it will be difficult if not impossible to have enough time to allow the resiliency plan to be completed.

If the measure does not pass, the city will have another option to place a ballot measure in the 2025 ballot, but the law requires a fiscal emergency declaration approved by a unanimous vote of the City Council as one option to place a tax measure on the ballot in a non-general election period. If the measure does not pass in November 2024, although the city will have the possibility of an additional chance to place another measure on the ballot, there is not sufficient reserves to maintain service levels for another year, thus significant service cuts will occur while the city pursues an additional tax measure in 2025.

What does a fiscal declaration mean?

In California, when a government declares a fiscal emergency, it essentially acknowledges that it is facing a severe financial crisis that requires immediate action to avoid significant negative impacts on its ability to provide essential public services. This declaration is a formal acknowledgment that the usual financial management tools and budget-balancing strategies are insufficient to address the crisis.

Key Aspects of Declaring a Fiscal Emergency:

1. Legal Framework: Under California law, specifically the California Constitution and related statutes, local governments (such as cities, counties, and special districts) have the authority to declare a fiscal emergency.

2. Reasons for Declaration: A fiscal emergency might be declared due to various factors such as a sharp decline in revenues (e.g., from taxes), unexpected increases in expenditures, or economic downturns. Natural disasters, legal judgments, or unfunded mandates from higher levels of government could also contribute. In the case of Suisun City it is focused around the lack of revenue sufficient to support ongoing city services.

3. Implications:

Suspension of Certain Provisions: In some cases, declaring a fiscal emergency can allow the government to take extraordinary measures, such as bypassing certain labor agreements, reducing employee compensation, or modifying pension obligations. Although this is not the immediate intent of the city it is important to note that a fiscal emergency could provide such possibilities.

Immediate Actions: The government may take immediate steps to reduce expenditures, such as layoffs, furloughs, or cuts in services, and it might seek to increase revenues through tax hikes or fees.

4. Duration and Resolution: A fiscal emergency declaration is typically temporary, meant to address the immediate crisis. The local government will work on long-term solutions, such as restructuring debt, renegotiating contracts, and/or special elections to request increases of certain taxes by voters.

In essence, a fiscal emergency declaration is a tool for local governments in California to quickly address severe financial issues that threaten their ability to function effectively and provide essential services.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff is recommending the City Council approve Resolution No. 2024-___: Declaring a Local Fiscal Emergency in concept, but delay approval until the election results occur for the November 2024, directing staff to bring back the item for possible approval November 12, 2024.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

1. Resolution No. 2024-___: Declaring a Local Fiscal Emergency in Response to Ongoing Structural Deficits and Possible Severe Impact on Public Services.
 2. PowerPoint Presentation
-

PREPARED BY:

Bret Prebula, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. [Resolution Declaring Fiscal Emergency.doc](#)
2. [PowerPoint Presentation](#)

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Section 4. In the interest of the public health of its residents and employees, available resources and budgetary priorities require exigent reappraisal.

Section 5. The City Council directs City staff to investigate and recommend further actions necessary to alleviate impacts of the conditions supporting the findings herein and to develop local control over funds needed to protect essential city services.

Section 5. That City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this Resolution and enter it into the book of original Resolutions. This Resolution shall be effective immediately upon passage and adoption.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 27th day of August, 2024.

Alma Hernandez, Mayor

ATTEST:

Anita Skinner, City Clerk

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF SOLANO) SS:
CITY OF SOUTH SUISUN CITY)

I, Anita Skinner, City Clerk of the City of Suisun City, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution, being Resolution No. 2024-____ was passed and approved by the City Council of the City of Suisun City, at a regular meeting of said Council held on August 27, 2024 and that said Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers: _____
NOES: Councilmembers: _____
ABSENT: Councilmembers: _____
ABSTAIN: Councilmembers: _____

Anita Skinner, City Clerk

Fiscal Emergency

Impacts of Potential Service Cuts



1

Current Financial Challenges

- Suisun City faces a significant structural deficit, relying heavily on reserves to balance the budget.
- Sales tax revenues, including Measure S, are expected to be flat in FY 24/25
- Property tax revenues are expected to have mild growth (3%)
- Other taxes revenue (including Cannabis) and Franchise Fees are expected to see small levels of growth

2

Current Financial Challenges

- Suisun receives a blended property tax rate of 17% of each dollar paid into property tax



3

Current Financial Challenges

- Suisun receives a blended property tax rate of 17% of each dollar paid into property tax

\$500,000 Assessed Property Value

1% Property Tax Rate

\$5,000 Property Tax Bill

Suisun City Share= \$850

4

Slide 5 features a dark blue vertical bar on the left with the text "Current Financial Challenges" in white. To the right, three colored rounded rectangles contain text: a red one at the top, an orange one in the middle, and a green one at the bottom.

Current Financial Challenges

- Service Delivery levels below industry average due to staffing shortages which cause an inability to meet service demands of a 30,000 resident community.
- Revenue per capita in the General Fund is less than \$900 per resident; similar cities are as high as \$1,800 per resident.
- Revenue is due to lack of development, residential housing mix, lack of focus on a clear economic gameplan

5

Slide 6 features a dark blue vertical bar on the left with the text "Current Financial Challenges" in white. To the right, three colored rounded rectangles contain text: a red one at the top, an orange one in the middle, and a green one at the bottom.

Current Financial Challenges

- Expenditure reductions would mean lowering service levels further below industry standards increasing crime, increasing medical response times, increase blight, infrastructure breakdown, and significant reductions in resident quality of life.
- If Measure S doesn't pass an immediate \$3M reduction in services will be required
- If an additional attempt to pass the Measure fails an additional \$4 million in service delivery cuts would be required by July 2026

6

Current Financial Challenges

\$7 million in service delivery cuts in over 2 years

7

What If

- Increased crime rates
- Increased times for medical and fire calls
- Quality of life suffers
- Economic Development never materializes
- Parks are shut down or barely maintained
- Property Values FALL



8

What If

- Service Delivery Cuts would take many years to return if revenue eventually increased through future tax increases

9

Legal Requirements for Fiscal Emergency

Under California law, a fiscal emergency declaration requires a unanimous vote by the City Council in order to allow the city to place a tax measure on a special election ballot.

It can also allow contracts and employee union agreements to be reopened for negotiations (specific language in the agreements would need to currently exist).

10

Legal Requirements for Fiscal Emergency

It **would not** provide any specific bail out funds from the State or Federal Government.

If could impact the city's debt rating; at this time the city does not have plans for a debt issuance in the coming 24 months.

11

Staff Recommendations

- Approve the Resolution in concept and direct staff to be prepared to bring back the Resolution November 12, 2024 if the tax measure fails.

12