

City approves \$122K police purchase

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By ROBERT PIERCE • Leader & Times In order to maintain a full state of readiness for its line cars, the Liberal Police Department needed to purchase three new cars and trade off three of its older models. At last Tuesday's city commission meeting, the LPD did just that, along with the purchase of more items, as the board voted to approve several items worth a grand total of around \$122,000.

Police chief Al Sill said some of the money used to buy the items was budgeted for, and still other financing came from police supplier credit.

Included in the budgeted items were three new 2013 Chevy Tahoes, and Sill said the decision to buy the vehicles came after considerable research.

"We decided it would be to our benefit to move away from the four-door sedans we once always used into more of a utility type vehicle," he said. "Going through our state bid contract system, we were able to do that with a little increase to what we were once paying for the four-door sedan."

The bid for the new Tahoes came from Don Hatton Chevy of Wichita, which was among six different dealerships submitting bids, including Stu Emmerts and Foss Ford, both of Liberal.

Don Hatton's package included the trade in of three former Crown Victorias, and Sill said the Tahoes have a better end life value than the Ford models they replace.

"To us, it was a wise choice," he said.

The total cost of the purchase with trade ins was \$73,200.

The next item the commission approved was 10 AR-15 rifles for the LPD's Special Response Team, which Sill said replace older weapons the team had in place.

"We had to make a number of repairs on them over the years," he said of the older guns. "It just became time for us to replace those."

The purchase price of the 10 rifles from OMB Guns of Olathe was \$11,850. With the trade in value of the older weapons of \$6,000, the actual cost was \$5,850.

With the purchase of the new Tahoes, new equipment was necessary as well, and Sill outlined what the department is purchasing in that area.

"Light bars, the prisoner transport cage system and the computer mounts, console, all of the police equipment that's going to fit inside that car," he said. "We purchased up to date video systems that are going to be installed in those cars as well."

The purchase of the new video systems replace older systems that are not compatible with a new Digital Eyewitness Media Management System LPD had installed a couple of years ago.

The cost of the new line car equipment was just more than \$35,000.

Sill said the department is looking to replace some other budgeted items in the near future.

"Typically, what we try to do is we have a number of pieces of equipment, and in order to keep that equipment at a state of readiness and operational, we need to rotate some of the old equipment out and bring in new equipment," he said.

Sill said LPD's equipment is put on a rotation and includes things such as computers, radios and tasers.

"What we do each year when we figure out our budget, we factor in how many of the old equipment do we need to replace this year in order to keep everything operational rather than trying to replace everything all at once," he said.

One purchase the department will soon be making is new bullet resistant vests for officers, something Sill said LPD does annually.

"We do that with federal grant money where we buy the vests, and we get reimbursed 50 percent of that," he said.

New tasers are something that is being budgeted for this year, as well as some other equipment.

"We've had the tasers in use for quite a number of years," Sill said. "We need to replace some

old computers that are about seven years old. Other equipment we're looking at is some scanners for our records division."

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