

STAFF REPORT

To: Mayor Julie Moore Wolfe
City Council Members
City Manager Scot Wrighton
From: Lieutenant Ed Hurst
Subject: Purchase of Short Barreled Rifles

BRIEFING ITEM

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Approve by resolution the expenditure of \$90,014.50 for the purchase of short-barreled rifles (SBR), and accessories which includes, vertical grip, sights, optics with mount, light, sling, magazines, soft case, and an Eotech PEQ-15 laser system.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Decatur Police Department has recognized the need for and value the use of a short-barreled rifle (SBR) equipped with a laser system for use by the Emergency Response Team (ERT). ERT is utilized for high-risk search warrants, hostage situations, barricaded gunman incidents, as well as a response team for active shooter situations. Between 2018-2020, the ERT assisted in executing 78 search warrants for guns, drugs or a combination of both. Since 2018, the ERT has mitigated 10 situations of armed subjects inside a residence. It is worth noting that in none of these incidents was deadly force utilized.

Currently ERT members use their own personal rifles while operating as an ERT member. These rifles are semi-automatic with a 16-inch barrel, and they are made by several different manufactures. All of the currently used rifles are outfitted differently with various accessories that also vary in manufactures. This causes several problems operationally with reliability and functionality. It also causes problems with commonality in training.

The short-barreled rifle is a similar platform to what is used currently, however the shorter barrel is beneficial to operation in close quarter situations and it is better balanced for operator use. The SBR has a 10.5-inch barrel compared to a 16-inch barrel on a standard AR-15 making it a more compact weapon system. Additionally, having each team member equipped with the same weapon allows for universal knowledge of one weapon system, rather than multiple weapon brands equipped with various makes and models of accessories. The laser system allows the operator the ability to function while utilizing night vision. Currently we are unable to utilize our night vision equipment due to the lack of a laser aiming system.

The Decatur Emergency Response Team is currently staffed at 21 members; thus, the recommendation is to purchase 21 weapons and accessories to equip each rifle universally. These rifles will be assigned to ERT members only and will be utilized during ERT operations.

The recommended Daniel Defense MK18 (SBR) and the accessories are known for their reliability and are used by SWAT teams across the nation. Daniel Defense brand weapons are used by members of the Decatur Police Department and are reliable and well manufactured weapons. These weapon systems will withstand the rigorous training environment and be a reliable system to deploy in the field compared to a cheaper weapon. This weapon system is robust and can be maintained easily to stand the test of time of deployment and training operations.

Bids were taken for the weapons and accessories, with three companies providing a response. The bid proposal from Ray O'Herron Company was the most inclusive with the requested items, and they provide the option of a single source purchase. This purchase would not require the use of General Fund monies.