

**SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Altamonte Springs Police Department Drug Trust Fund Grant Application

DEPARTMENT: Community Services **DIVISION:** Community Assistance

AUTHORIZED BY: Phillip C. Stalvey  **CONTACT:** David Medley  **EXT.** 3363
Director

Agenda Date <u>6/24/03</u> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Consent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work Session <input type="checkbox"/> Briefing <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing – 1:30 <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing – 7:00 <input type="checkbox"/>

MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Approval by the Board of County Commissioners of the attached Drug Trust Fund application in the amount of \$10,000.00.

BACKGROUND:

The Altamonte Springs Police Department has submitted an application for the Drug Abuse Trust Fund to assist in the procurement of 25 digital cameras for use in patrol cars to document and provide evidence for prosecution of drug and alcohol related offenses as well as domestic violence cases. Funds are available in current year budget from *undesignated resources within this fund*. Altamonte Springs PD will provide 25% matching funds toward the purchase.

Reviewed by: Co Atty: <u>S. Dietrich</u> DFS: <u>S. D. F...</u> Other: _____ DCM: <u>UM</u> CM: <u>JK</u> File No. <u>CCS01</u>
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6-11-03



SEMINOLE COUNTY
DRUG ABUSE TRUST FUND

GRANT APPLICATION

GOVERNMENT AGENCY: ALTAMONTE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

DATE: 4/22/03

Fiscal year: 2002/2003

AGENCY: Altamonte Springs Police Department

AMOUNT OF GRANT REQUEST \$10,000

Match Funds Provided by Agency \$2,500

FUNDS WILL BE USED FOR (Check one): New Expanded Service

Signature of Applicant:

Shell A. Walters

DESCRIBE PROPOSED SERVICE/ACTIVITY:

The Altamonte Springs Police Department is committed to excellence through partnership with the community. Two of the domestic crimes that we fight daily are Domestic Violence and Drug Abuse. Sometimes these crimes go hand in hand. We have found that professional documentation of these types of crimes increase the prosecution rate.

Technology has assisted law enforcement with this type of documentation in the field of digital photos. When police officer respond to a Domestic Violence involving intoxication or drug use, we can take photos of the injuries and the surrounding area. Most of the time, this would entail beer bottles, illegal drugs, and sometimes the improper use of prescription drugs.

When officers make a traffic stop and find illegal drugs in the vehicle, we would take a photo of exactly where we found the drugs so that we can show ownership or constructive possession.

If every police officer on the road had a digital camera the documentation for court prosecution would increase and more drug users would be placed in prison.

JUSTIFICATION:

What is the benefit to SEMINOLE COUNTY for these services?

Since 1999, the Altamonte Springs Police Department has documented 230,623 contacts with citizens, either through calls for service, traffic stops, or officer initiated activities. Five hundred eighty-three (583) driving under influence arrests since 1999, 6480 other arrests for crimes possibly involving drugs and alcohol since 1999.

The Altamonte Springs Police Department is aggressive in our approach to stopping drunk drivers. Digital cameras will let the officers document crimes with a detailed picture of the crime scene and illegal substances.

The old saying of 'a picture speaks a thousands words' seems to be true in the court system. The citizen of Seminole County would have a higher success in prosecution of Domestic Violence and Drug Abuse suspects.

In some Domestic Violence cases the victim's injuries have healed and the victims' memory of the pain they suffered has gone away also. The digital camera shows a perfect example of the injuries the victim sustained. We have received a support letter from Assistant State Attorney, Kipp Vugteveen, stating there are many advantages to using digital photography for evidentiary purposes. Once the officer has taken the photo it may quickly transferred to other locations via the internet or efficiently stored on a CD-Rom. The SAO uses emailed images at the defendants first appearance to argue for a higher bond.

The letter goes on to state, one of the main causes for domestic violence cases to be dropped is the lack of sufficient evidence. Due to uncooperative victim testimony or fails to show up for court. With digital photos the defendant is more inclined to enter a plea before trial.

What will be the negative consequences if these services are not provided?

Drug cases and domestic violence cases will not be prosecuted due to the victims uncooperative status or questions of possession of the drugs. The victims will then be re-victimized by the suspect due to lack of prosecution.

Describe how this program will directly benefit the effort to reduce substance abuse within Seminole County.

Higher prosecution rates for drug abusers, possible violation of probation for second time drug offenders, and increasing the knowledge of our street officers. Besides giving the pictures to the State Attorney Offices to use in court, the Altamonte Springs Police Department will add every picture taken of drugs into a 'handbook'. The handbook already exists and this type of professional technology will let us expand the knowledge of our officers with a visual reference guide.

The Altamonte Springs Police Department recently arrested a drug dealer with several grams of cocaine, crack, marijuana, and a firearm. The defendant was a convicted felon therefore Operation Cease Fire was used and due to the professional evidence collection, digital photos of where all the drugs and firearm was located in the vehicle, the case went Federal and the defendant was found guilty.

The digital camera's will be used to take detailed photo's of all drugs confiscated and placed in a educational album for all officers to view. This type of education will keep the officers informed of the drugs in our area.

BUDGET:

Describe in detail below the total budget for the service/activity requested including any additional revenue (match)—Number of services, unit cost, anticipated contracts, etc.

The digital cameras we wish to purchase are 3.2 megapixel, 3X optical/4X zoom lens, Li-ion battery with charger, steel frame with weatherproof seals, 40 second video capabilities, auto connect USB port for easy transfer to a computer for emailing appropriate divisions, and 256 XD Picture Card.

25 Digital Cameras @ \$400.00

4 year contract/warranty on each camera for full service and prevention twice a year.

Contracts Service Agreements @ \$60.00

Upgrade each cameras originally memory card so that officers can take all the pictures necessary for one event without using two cards. Carrying case will protect the camera from heat and being stored in the vehicle there is a possibility of being knocked around. We need to order extra memory cards, battery charger, and batteries so that the cameras do not go down due to normal repairs.

Misc daily needs total \$1000.00

Carrying Case	\$12.00@ 25
Battery Charger	\$30.00@ X 2
256 MB XD card	\$120.00@ X5
Lens cleaning Supplies	\$40.00

Total \$12, 500.00

OFFICE OF THE STATE ATTORNEY

EIGHTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF FLORIDA
BREVARD AND SEMINOLE COUNTIES

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Titusville Office
400 South Street
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Seminole County Office
100 East First Street
Sanford, FL 32771
(407) 665-6000

Seminole Juvenile Center
190 N. Bush Blvd.
Sanford, FL 32773
(407) 665-5454

NORMAN R. WOLFINGER
STATE ATTORNEY



Reply To: Seminole County

May 5, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to support the Altamonte Springs Police Department's application for funding to purchase digital camera equipment. Photographic evidence assists not only in the review of cases for filing but also in the ultimate prosecution of cases. This is particularly true in cases involving personal injury or property damage.

The use of digital camera technology for this purpose has several advantages. Storage media for the photographs is relatively inexpensive. Photographs may be downloaded onto the hard drive of a computer or copied to a floppy disk or CD-ROM. Once downloaded, the images may easily be sent to other locations via electronic mail. In domestic violence cases, this allows us to use these photographs at the defendant's first appearance to argue for higher bond amounts and ask for no contact provisions. In the discovery process it enables us to forward images to defense attorneys without having to print copies. Because digital images may be viewed on any computer with the appropriate software it is often not necessary to print the images at all.

Image quality is important with photographic evidence. With traditional photographs, the image may be viewed only after the film is processed. A digital image may be viewed immediately on the camera itself allowing an officer in the field to retake the photo if necessary. Digital photographs may also be easily enlarged using computer software. At trial, we can even project the images onto a screen in the courtroom. Because the quality of an image degrades with enlargement, it is important to start with a picture that is as clear as possible. The use of quality equipment and the officer's ability to retake photographs while still at the scene allows for better quality photographs without the waste associated with instant cameras.

One of the main causes for domestic violence cases to be dropped is the lack of sufficient evidence. We are better able to prosecute cases without the cooperation of victims if there is enough other evidence to overcome uncooperative testimony or the victim's failure to appear in court. Defendants are also more inclined to enter a plea before trial in cases in which photographs are available. I can attest that photographic evidence positively impacts our ability to prosecute these cases.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kipp Vugteveen".

KIPP VUGTEVEEN
Assistant State Attorney
Domestic Violence Division