



## **AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

Action Item for the City Council Meeting of July 16, 2024

**DATE:** July 16, 2024  
**TO:** Peter Zaroni, City Manager  
**FROM:** Mike Markle, Chief of Police  
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### **Purchase of a handheld mass spectrometer chemical detection system for the Corpus Christi Police Department**

#### **CAPTION:**

Motion approving the purchase of one new MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer for chemical detection of controlled substances from FarrWest Environmental Supply, of Schertz, Texas, through the HGAC Cooperative for the Corpus Christi Police Department for \$72,997.17, with FY 2024 funding in the amount of \$72,997.17 from the FY 2024 Police General Fund.

#### **SUMMARY:**

This motion approves the purchase of one new MX908 handheld Mass Spectrometer for chemical detection of known and unknown controlled substances for the Corpus Christi Police Department.

#### **BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:**

As part of their regular duties, Corpus Christi Police Department (CCPD) officers are required to collect fentanyl to test and store it. Currently, CCPD uses conventional field tests that require opening packages of unknown substances that possibly contain fentanyl or other hazardous substances. However, the District Attorney's Office does not accept conventional field tests for prosecution, but it will accept tests conducted with a mass spectrometer device. The MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer will not only allow for safer testing of substances but will make the submission of tested substances acceptable to the District Attorney's Office for prosecution.

The MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer is a handheld device that is used to identify known and unknown controlled substances including Fentanyl. It allows police officers to test controlled substances in a safe manner as compared to the conventional field tests that are currently used. The MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer works by sending electric and magnetic fields through the substance to determine its chemical properties. It then provides a reading of what the substance is to the person operating the device.

If testing is needed, the MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer will be deployed to the field for testing. If the suspected illicit substance tests positive, then it will be seized as evidence. The results of a positive test will be stored in the MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer. The MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer will then be brought back to the Narcotics Vice Investigation Division office where the results will be downloaded. Once downloaded, a report will be printed that includes the

positive results, and this report will be included in the case file that is submitted to the District Attorney's Office.

Another benefit to the MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer is that it will allow police officer to test pills. If the tested pills test positive for Fentanyl or other controlled substances, then the possession of the illegal pills can be increased from misdemeanor charges can be enhanced to a felony.

CCPD does not currently have a mass spectrometer. The MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer will be housed at Corpus Christi Narcotics Vice Investigation Division (NVID) office

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The alternative is not to approve the purchase of the MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer and to continue with the use of field tests. However, this will put police officers at a higher risk of direct exposure of illicit substances like fentanyl. It will also result in a less likelihood of the District Attorney's Office accepting cases for prosecution.

### **PROCUREMENT DETAIL:**

This procurement is through the HGAC Cooperative. Contracts awarded through the cooperative have been competitively procured in compliance with Texas Local and State procurement requirements.

Purchasing conducted an extensive search for other competitive quotes for several different mass spectrometer models; however, there were no other models that had all of the same capabilities and specifications as the MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer other than through the HGAC Cooperative and Fisher Scientific. (this equipment is not available locally). The table below provides a cost comparison between FarrWest Environmental Supply through the HGAC Cooperative and a competitive quote from Fisher Scientific.

Item	Fisher Scientific	HGAC Co-op Price (FarrWest Environmental Supply)	Variance in \$	Variance %
Mass Spectrometer MX908	\$103,787.79	\$72,997.17	\$30,790.62	29.66%

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The funds are available from the FY 2024 Police General Fund in the amount of \$72,997.17.

### **Funding Detail:**

Fund 1020  
Organization/Activity: 11740  
Department # 29  
Project # (CIP Only): N/A  
Account: 520090 - Minor Tools and Equipment  
Amount: \$72,997.17

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends submission of the purchase of the MX908 Handheld Mass Spectrometer, as

presented.

**LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:**

Price sheet