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Sheriff-Coroner



**Undersheriff Darren Brewster**

**Captain Gregory L. Van Patten**  
*Field Services*

**Captain Tim Pearce**  
*Corrections*

## **County of Mendocino Office Of The Sheriff-Coroner**

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May 26, 2021

TO: CEO Budget Team/ CEO Carmel Angelo

FROM: Undersheriff Darren Brewster

**PURPOSE:** PG&E monies for needed patrol vehicles, and vehicle radio systems.

On 05/21/2021 the Sheriff's Office was informed by the Chief Executive Office that our budgeted funds for our vehicle replacement for 2021-2022 (\$1,100,000) has been denied. For this reason the Sheriff's Office is requesting that the Executive Office, along with the Board of Supervisors, allocate the much needed \$1,100,000 for vehicle replacement through PG&E funds.

The Sheriff's Office believes these PG&E funds were given to the County of Mendocino due to the very fires (emergencies) our county faced. During these emergencies the Sheriff's Office played and continues to play a very instrumental role in protecting the lives of the citizens of Mendocino County.

During the fires in 2017 a Patrol Sergeant with the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office was patrolling in the area of Potter Valley. This Sergeant was the first to observe the fire in Potter Valley and was then able to call out the needed fire personnel, medical and law enforcement response.

Due to these actions, countless lives were saved and evacuations were able to begin much quicker because this Sergeant was patrolling in a Sheriff's Office patrol vehicle. The Sheriff's Office would hate to think what might of transpired during these types of emergencies if there were not enough patrol vehicles to canvas the needed areas during these emergencies, or if the vehicles needed to patrol were broken down and waiting to be fixed.

During all emergencies and to be specific, the major fires of 2017 through the current day the Sheriff's Office has assisted in saving lives, performing evacuations, patrolling all affected fire areas for looting, and safe guarding the general wellbeing of its citizens.

The massive amount of mileage which accumulate on our vehicles, as well as the wear and tear that happens during these emergencies and during the normal patrol week (remember the Sheriff's Office patrols 24 hours a day and seven days a week) makes upkeep of its vehicles paramount.

The job of the Sheriff's Office in its patrol capacity is to help keep the citizens of our great

county safe. The Sheriff's Office takes immense pride and responsibility in this and needs the help and support of the Executive Office and the County Board of Supervisors to make sure this continues.

Below is an overview of what has transpired with the Sheriff's Office patrol fleet:

There has been a constant problem in replacement of Sheriff's Office vehicles mainly in the 2310 budget unit due to postponement issues.

Approximately 10 years ago the County deviated from the vehicle replacement fund (in essence mileage fees being placed into a specific fund to replace department vehicles the following budget cycle) to an allotment of funding per department during the yearly budget process.

The law enforcement industry standard has been to decommission emergency response vehicles from the fleet at or before the 100,000 mile mark. We have been using the 100,000 mile mark as being the standard for the Sheriff's Office for about the past 13 years.

Approximately 3-years ago (budget cycle 2018-19) there was an ordering issue that occurred with General Services. They ordered 7 patrol vehicles but no staff from General Services checked in with the vendor (Redwood Ford) to ensure they received the purchase order.

Due to this miscommunication with Redwood Ford they had not discovered that they did not receive the purchase order of the 7 patrol vehicles for several months. By the time the matter was resolved the manufacturing of the patrol vehicles was delayed from Ford Motor Company because we had missed their production line schedule and months of other orders were placed in front of our orders.

The following year (2019-20), our vehicle orders were received by the vendor, but the Ford Motor Company updated the model and had to shut down and retool the production line once our orders were received, which caused additional delays.

This year (2020-21) the Ford Motor Company production line was briefly delayed due to COVID-19 issues.

In essence, the Sheriff's Office emergency equipment up-fitting vendor (LEHR) has just recently completed building the patrol vehicles which were purchased during 2018-19 and 2019-20. We are currently beginning the process of up-fitting the patrol vehicles purchased during 2020-21.

In summary the reason for the excessive amount of mileage on our patrol vehicles is because the geography of the county which causes Deputies to often times travel hundreds of miles during a normal shift. We have been understaffed (for various reasons) which cause Deputies to handle a larger beat area and this requires more travel. Also in the last several years, Mendocino County has been impacted with wildfires which require significant field work (evacuations, fire response, theft patrols, etc.) which amass more miles on the patrol vehicles than during a "normal" fiscal year.

It should be noted in the 2020 fires the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office fleet put over 200,000 miles on its vehicles in just over a month's time. This equates in mileage to two (2) new patrol vehicles.

Because of the 2018-19 order/build delays the following specific vehicle replacements with higher than normal deadline mileages (100,000 mile mark) consisted of the following:

23-443: 2013 Ford Expedition K9 with 189,844 miles

23-444: 2013 Ford Expedition K9 with 144,013 miles  
23-447: 2014 Ford Utility SUV with 178,232 miles  
23-448: 2014 Ford Utility SUV with 173,002 miles  
23-449: 2014 Ford Utility SUV with 165,153 miles

Estimated cost amount used during the budget process is \$65,000 for a K9 vehicle (purchase, up-fitting equipment purchase and installation cost) and \$55,000 for a standard patrol vehicle (purchase, up-fitting equipment purchase and installation cost).

An analysis of two different vehicle replacements this year showed the following actual costs according to purchase order and build invoice:

23-520: 2020 Ford Utility K9 for a total of \$58,963.60 which was approximately \$6,000 under estimated cost but vehicle's WatchGuard and mobile radio did not need replacement (approximately \$8,500 cost).

23-527: 2020 Ford Utility standard patrol vehicle for a total of \$53,963.31 which was approximately \$1,000 under estimated cost but vehicle's WatchGuard, mobile radio and light bar did not need replacement (approximately \$10,000 cost).

The seventeen (17) vehicles, which will not be ordered now due to the Sheriff's Office vehicle request being denied through the county's budget process, will place the citizens of Mendocino County in jeopardy. This funding for the Sheriff's Office vehicle's was there to assist in the buying of new vehicles, and to replace the antiquated data infrastructure the patrol deputies need to be able to complete their jobs in the consistent and exemplary manner they are accustomed to; the citizens of our county expect no less.

An important aspect in keeping Deputy Sheriff's safe and also being able to continue to keep the citizens of Mendocino County safe are the radio systems, which are within all sworn Sheriff's Office vehicles. The Sheriff's Office radio components within each sworn Sheriff's office vehicle are at their end of life and need to be replaced.

If the Sheriff's Office receives new vehicles, but there is not enough funds to replace the dying radios and their attachments this would greatly hinder the Sheriff's Office Deputies from being able to perform their functions of protecting life and property for this county. The reason being, if they are unable to receive calls for service from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Dispatch Center, and unable to communicate with other law enforcement officers, they would not be able to complete their job as needed, and Deputy Sheriff safety would be greatly compromised.

On October 12, 2020, The California Department of Justice (DOJ) issued an Information Bulletin #20-09-CJIS, which sets forth legal mandates and guidelines regarding the "Confidentiality of Information from California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS)." The guidelines require law enforcement agencies to protect Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and Criminal Justice Information (CJI). PII is information such as an individual's first and last name in combination with more specific data such as driver's license number or date of birth. CJI is information such as wants/warrants, restraining orders, and/or details related to an individual's probation or parole status.

The radios which are in all sworn Sheriff's Office vehicles are unable to accommodate this mandate from DOJ, due to their inability to be encrypted radio systems. This is another reason why the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office is in such need for these newer radio systems to be implemented.

Without the necessary funds for the replacement of the Sheriff's Office radios, there are no Sheriff's Office monies to buy the very needed equipment. In speaking with Greg Glavich, who is the expert in our radio systems for the County of Mendocino, I was advised the total needed funds for the replacement of Sheriff Office sworn vehicles, and the attachments needed would come to \$286,110.

The Sheriff's Office total ask of the PG&E monies would be as follows;

- 1) Vehicle replacement (including computer mobile devices) - \$1,100,000
- 2) Radio systems for sworn Sheriff's Office vehicles - \$286,110

**Total ask for PG&E monies would then be \$1,386,000.**

As stated within this memorandum PG&E monies came into this county due to the devastating fires which caused loss of life, and major property damage throughout Mendocino County. The monies asked by the Sheriff's Office would assist us in our continuing efforts to protect all life and property during these catastrophic emergencies. I truly hope the Executive Office and the Board of Supervisors seriously think about what is the most important thing in life, and the Sheriff's Office believes that answer is life itself.

I want to thank the Executive Office and the Board of Supervisors for giving the Sheriff's Office this opportunity to help keep our citizens safe in a time of crisis.

Sincerely,

Undersheriff Brewster

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