



City of Huntington Beach

File #: 18-527

MEETING DATE: 2/4/2019

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBMITTED TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

SUBMITTED BY: Fred A. Wilson, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Robert Handy, Chief of Police

Subject:

Approve for introduction Ordinance No. 4163 amending Huntington Beach Municipal Code Chapter 5.56 related to Alarm Systems both residential and commercial, burglary alarms; and Adopt Resolution No. 2019-07 increasing fees for burglar alarm businesses and alarm system subscribers collected by the Police Department as established pursuant to Resolution No. 6656, and incorporating the increased fees into the Consolidated Comprehensive Citywide Master Fee and Charges Schedule as established by Resolution No. 2016-59, and amended by Resolution Nos. 2017-46, 2018-01, 2018-29, 2018-48, and 2018-55 (Supplemental Fee Resolution No. 8).

Statement of Issue:

False alarms in the City put undue stress on the Police Department's resources and a robust False Alarm Reduction Program is necessary for improved deployment and cost recovery. As part of the program, staff recommends adjusting the false alarm fees and amending Municipal Code Chapter 5.56 to make the sections more robust in seeking compliance for maintaining proper alarm systems, reducing improper or careless use, and requiring more of alarm installation and monitoring companies.

Financial Impact:

The recommended Ordinance and Resolution lowers the threshold at which false alarm fees are issued and establishes new fees for false alarms for those without an alarm permit. Alarm permits and false alarm fees generate approximately \$400,000 in annual revenue in the General Fund. Staff is recommending to increase, decrease and add new fees. Minimal changes are expected to revenues as a result of the proposed changes to the false alarm fees. The City is considering contracting out false alarm program services, which will allow the City to consistently enforce this Ordinance. Increased enforcement of this Ordinance should result in increased revenues, as well as a reduction in Police Department response to false alarm calls.

Recommended Action:

A) Approve for introduction Ordinance No. 4163, "An Ordinance of the City of Huntington Beach Repealing Chapter 5.56 of the Huntington Beach Municipal Code Relating to Burglar Alarms and

Adding Back a Revised Chapter 5.56 Relating to the Regulation of Burglar Alarms;" and,

B) Adopt Resolution No. 2019-07, "A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Huntington Beach Increasing Fees for Burglar Alarm Businesses and Alarm System Subscribers Collected by the Police Department as Established Pursuant to Resolution No. 6656, and Incorporating the Increased Fees Into the Consolidated Comprehensive Citywide Master Fee and Charges Schedule as Established by Resolution No. 2016-59, and Amended by Resolution Nos. 2017-46, 2018-01, 2018-29, 2018-48, and 2018-55 (Supplemental Fee Resolution No. 8)."

Alternative Action(s):

Do not approve and direct staff accordingly.

Analysis:

The Police Department responds to over 4,000 alarm calls each year and less than 1% are crime related. Of these calls, 85% are the first or second offense. These false alarms are a massive drain on Police Department resources. Our current ordinance and resolution does not allow for cost recovery of the first and second offense. Staff recommends charging \$25 for the first false alarm in a 12-month period to be waived if the resident attends an online alarm school and \$50 for the second occurrence. The third through fifth false alarm is proposed to decrease from \$130-\$200 to \$75-150. Staff also recommends adding a new false alarm fee for those without an alarm permit. These fees would range from \$250 to \$1,000 for the first through fourth occurrence. The first false alarm fee may be waived if an alarm permit application is submitted along with the alarm permit fee within 10 days. See Exhibit A of Resolution 2019-07 for the table of proposed fee changes.

The Police Department proposes a rewritten ordinance to expand the compliance of obtaining permit information on residential and commercial burglary alarms, clearly define timelines for appeals and the appeal process, and correcting nuisance alarms.

The ordinance also outlines an expectation to work with alarm installation, alarm monitoring companies, residents and business owners to boost compliance on proper maintenance of alarm systems, using an alarm system properly. The amending of the current Municipal Code is more specific in seeking compliance in maintaining properly functioning alarm systems.

Environmental Status:

N/A

Strategic Plan Goal:

Enhance and maintain public safety

Attachment(s):

1. Ordinance No. 4163, "An Ordinance of the City of Huntington Beach Repealing Chapter 5.56 of the Huntington Beach Municipal Code Relating to Burglar Alarms and Adding Back a Revised

Chapter 5.56 Relating to the Regulation of Burglar Alarms”

2. Legislative Draft - Ordinance 4163
3. Resolution No. 2019-07, “A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Huntington Beach Increasing Fees for Burglar Alarm Businesses and Alarm System Subscribers Collected by the Police Department as Established Pursuant to Resolution No. 6656, and Incorporating the Increased Fees Into the Consolidated Comprehensive Citywide Master Fee and Charges Schedule as Established by Resolution No. 2016-59, and Amended by Resolution Nos. 2017-46, 2018-01, 2018-29, 2018-48, and 2018-55 (Supplemental Fee Resolution No. 8)”