



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

NATHAN FLETCHER
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: November 15, 2022

02

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

SHERIFF – REQUEST FOR SINGLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT OF AN AUTOMATED LIQUID HANDLING PLATFORM FOR CRIME LAB (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

On February 9, 2021 (4), the Board of Supervisors authorized the San Diego County Sheriff's Department to apply for and accept funding from the California Highway Patrol (CHP) for the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Cannabis Tax Fund Grant Program. On May 19, 2021, the Sheriff's Department received notice of the grant award in the amount of \$2,653,500. A portion of funding from this grant will enable the San Diego County Sheriff's Department Regional Crime Laboratory to implement an in-house toxicology program through the purchase of instrumentation, minor equipment, consumables, and upgrades to existing infrastructure which will advance the standardization of toxicology practices and phase out the outsourcing of toxicology testing.

Hamilton Robotics qualifies for a single source contract to provide an automated liquid handling platform pursuant to Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurement:

Section D-6 Continuity: The procurement is for goods and/or services where continuity of providers will provide efficiency or critical knowledge, and other providers of the goods and/or services cannot provide similar efficiencies or critical knowledge.

Today's action requests the Board to authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting to enter into negotiations with Hamilton Robotics, and subject to successful negotiations and determination of a fair and reasonable price, award a contract for a Hamilton Microlab STAR automated liquid handling platform for use in implementation of an in-house drug toxicology program.

RECOMMENDATION

SHERIFF

In accordance with Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurement, approve and authorize the Director of the Department of Purchasing and Contracting to enter into negotiations with Hamilton Robotics and subject to successful negotiations and a determination of a fair and reasonable price, award a contract for an automated liquid handling platform, Hamilton Microlab STAR for the

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Sheriff's Department Regional Crime Lab (Regional Crime Lab) Forensic Toxicology Section, which includes a one year warranty and six months of preventative maintenance, and to amend the contracts as needed to reflect changes to requirements and funding.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Procuring the most advanced and industry-leading platform for the Regional Crime Lab's in-house drug toxicology program benefits the residents in San Diego County, especially those victims of crimes where there is suspected use of, or presence of, drugs. Necessary and timely toxicology testing ensures the accountability of offenders and allows for the delivery of justice on behalf of victims. The ability to test for drugs and substances is critical in the prosecution of cases. Successful prosecution is a step in bringing healing for the victims of crimes, many of whom may have been impacted by community inequities and inequalities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed action to pursue a single source procurement of Hamilton Microlab STAR will allow the Regional Crime Lab to progress towards developing its in-house drug toxicology program and contribute to the County's Sustainability Goal to provide just and equitable access. The Regional Crime Lab requires toxicology testing services on an on-going basis and the procurement of the technology for in-house toxicology will create more efficiency of time and cost, in the process.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Operational Plan for the Sheriff's Department. If approved, this request will result in current year estimated costs and revenue of \$325,000. The funding source is grant revenue from the California Highway Patrol Fiscal Year 2021-22 Cannabis Tax Fund Grant Program (\$325,000) in the Sheriff's Department. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

N/A

BACKGROUND

On February 9, 2021 (4), the Board of Supervisors authorized the San Diego County Sheriff's Department to apply for and accept funding from the California Highway Patrol (CHP) for the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Cannabis Tax Fund Grant Program. On May 9, 2021, the Sheriff's Department received approval of the grant in the amount of \$2,653,500. Funding from this grant is to add in-house toxicology services at the Sheriff's Regional Crime Lab by the purchase of instrumentation, minor equipment, consumables, and upgrades to existing infrastructure. A portion of the funding is for an automated liquid handling platform for the extraction of biological samples for toxicology testing.

The Forensic Toxicology Section of the Sheriff's Regional Crime Lab seeks to purchase a Hamilton Microlab STAR automated liquid handling platform for use in the on-going development

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of the in-house drug toxicology program. Each year, the Forensic Toxicology Section processes approximately 8,000 samples. As the drug toxicology caseload is brought in-house, Hamilton Microlab STAR liquid handling platform will allow for automated workflows and higher throughput analysis with efficient turnaround times. Hamilton's unique technology and versatile, customizable options make it the only automated liquid handling platform manufacturer that can meet the Forensic Toxicology Section's needs.

The Microlab STAR by Hamilton is an industry-leading automated liquid handling platform. This instrument is customizable, has a high-capacity deck with a wide range of labware and automated devices that can easily be exchanged to support multiple assays on one platform and accommodate changing workflows. The Microlab STAR has been authorized to be integrated with the Regional Crime Lab's existing Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). Integration into LIMS is a crucial component to this piece of equipment. LIMS is the Regional Crime Lab's sole software system that controls all lab data management, enforces adherence to strict quality assurance standards, while improving efficiency and turnaround times. Configuration of internal Crime Laboratory systems have already been optimized by the Forensic Advantage LIMS. The automated process would be impaired without the sequence and results files needed for the toxicology batching process that only Hamilton Robotics can provide. Hamilton Robotics is partnered with top leaders in the biotechnology industry to provide commonly automated applications without the additional time required for development. The Microlab STAR has an automatic loading functionality with a barcode reader capable of reading identification masks on robot deck components in both vertical and horizontal positions. This feature allows the Microlab STAR to verify correct positioning of all components required to successfully process samples. The barcode scanning also allows for full sample tracking capabilities and a traceable, digital audit trail for chain-of-custody processing.

The Sheriff's Regional Crime Lab Forensic Biology Section currently has Hamilton Microlab STAR platforms for automated DNA sample processing. Purchasing an additional Microlab STAR for the Forensic Toxicology Section will allow the Crime Lab to combine their service and consumable contracts. Hamilton Robotics qualifies for a single source contract to provide an automated liquid handling platform pursuant to Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurement:

Section D-6 Continuity: The procurement is for goods and/or services where continuity of providers will provide efficiency or critical knowledge, and other providers of the goods and/or services cannot provide similar efficiencies or critical knowledge.

A single source procurement is requested to ensure both standardization and continuity of services provided. The necessity in on-boarding the same automated platforms for the Crime Lab is critical. Development, training, and LIMS integration can take a minimum of twelve to eighteen months. Purchasing a system already known to the laboratory staff can cut this development and customization down to weeks. It additionally ensures full continuity across multiple sections of the Crime Lab maximizing personnel, programing, maintenance, and intellectual property resources. It will also allow for redundancy in training users and programmers in multiple sections. Hamilton's automated liquid handling platforms are trusted by government laboratories throughout the country for evidence sample processing.

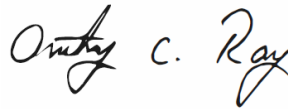
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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action supports the Equity and Justice Strategic Initiatives of the County of San Diego's Fiscal Years 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. The proposed action also aligns with the countywide objective of ensuring a fair and equitable justice system that supports and provides services for victims by aiding in the identification and subsequent apprehension of individuals engaging in criminal behavior, resulting in a safer community.

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of Anthony C. Ray in black ink.

ANTHONY C. RAY
Sheriff

ATTACHMENT(S)

N/A