RULES COMMITTEE: 10-26-11
ITEM: H.3

CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Memorandum

To: **Rules Committee** **FROM: Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio**

SUBJECT: Information Request To Fund SJPD Chaplain Program **DATE: October 21, 2011**

Approved Date 10-21-11

Recommendation

Direct the Administration to bring back the following information requested below to the City Council before January 2012 so that the Council has this information prior to discussing our 2012-2013 fiscal budget.

1). What is the cost for the San Jose Police Chaplaincy Program. This figure should include the amount of money that is currently raised through donations that the program needs to run successfully. Please provide this in line item fashion.

2). Provide different options of how the City of San Jose can fund the Chaplain Program including use of funds, surplus vehicles, providing supplies, etc.

Background

The San Jose Police Chaplain Program began 34 years ago (1977). The Chaplain provides confidential faith based counseling for police officers and is available 24/7--just like our officers are available 24/7. The Chaplain(s) represent a variety of faiths so that all denominations are served. Due to the unique nature of a police officers career, officers, on average have higher rates of alcoholism, divorce and suicide. As a result, the Chaplaincy Program is vital to the health and benefit of our officers.

The Chaplaincy Program exists in many police department throughout the United States. Cities fund and/or assist the program through their general fund, providing vehicles, supplies and other tangible items the program needs. In addition Chaplains are publicly funded by other levels of government like Congress and the US Military.

The City of San Jose does not currently fund its Chaplaincy Program and I think that should change with partial funding. At a time when our officers are being required to do more with less, it is important that we make sure that the Chaplaincy Program remains intact. I have shared two examples below regarding how two big cities (like San Jose) outright fund the program and/or assist the program.
In Austin Texas, they allocate approximately $20,000 of their department budget (per fiscal year).

In New York City, New York Chief Chaplain Rabbi Alvin Kass shared that their program is funded by New York Police Department which includes eight Chaplains. Every year the City of San Jose gives millions of dollars away to non-profit organizations. I strongly believe that we need to share some of those dollars to help fund the Chaplaincy Program. I also feel that the City needs to investigate how we can assist the program by providing supplies.

Overall this is a budget discussion for next year and it is important to get this information now.