

Donald J. Lee, Jr.
Chief of Police



Key West
POLICE DEPARTMENT

To: Mr. Jim Scholl, City Manager
From: Donald J. Lee Jr., Chief of Police
Date: May 8, 2009
Subject: Executive Summary – Alarm Ordinance

ACTION STATEMENT

Our proposed amendment to the False Alarm Reduction Ordinance is the result of the concerns expressed from the dais at the previous readings of the ordinance, as well as conversations with commissioners on a one on one basis. I believe the proposed amendment with annual renewal at no fee if there have not been any false alarms will address the commission's concerns for innocent permit holders. At the same time the increase of the fines issued to the offenders should offset the administrative costs of maintaining the program. I have had this proposal reviewed by national experts within this field and they concur. This proposed amendment will keep the program financially attractive enough to third party service providers for competitive bidding.

II. BACKGROUND

At the first reading of the ordinance, the annual renewal was removed and appears "struck through" in the attachment. The advantages of a mandatory annual renewal make it essential to the success of the program. Without up to date information, that is confirmed annually, the program will fail and become unenforceable within one to two years. In addition there is the greatest likelihood of reducing the number of false alarms in the city as proven by the "IACP Model States Report" where 78% of the law enforcement agencies that required registration experienced a decrease in false alarms, which is the goal of this program.



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III. **OPTIONS / ADVANTAGES / DISADVANTAGES**

- By not reinstating an annual renewal the program can not succeed, as has been proven by other jurisdictions that have not required it.
- The KWPD does not have the resources to administer this program in house and intends to outsource those duties to a third party service provider chosen through a competitive bidding process.
- If administered successfully the national average reduction in false alarms is between 72 to 75%. There is also the equivalent reduction in revenue from fines. Sustainability of the program requires some revenue from renewal and this amendment puts that burden on permit holders that have received a free response from the KWPD on at least one occasion within the permit year.
- Mandatory renewal without any fee for all permit holders, even those that have had one free false alarm response, will make the program less attractive to third party service providers and threaten sustainability of the program.

IV. **RECOMMENDATION**

This proposed amendment clearly provides the greatest likelihood of achieving the desired effect to significantly reduce the number of false alarm responses by our officers. The proposed amendment was reviewed by the Security Industry Alarm Coalition and the False Alarm reduction Association. They concurred that the adjustments were a workable solution to addressing the concerns expressed at the previous readings and still able to sustain the program. I recommend that the proposed amendment be approved and incorporated into the ordinance.



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