

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO CONTINUE PARTICIPATION IN THE IOWA INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN TASK FORCE

BACKGROUND:

The Federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has established the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program (ICAC). This Program was developed in response to the increasing number of children and teenagers using the Internet, the proliferation of child pornography, and the heightened online activity by predators searching for unsupervised contact with underage victims.

ICAC assists state and local law enforcement agencies in enhancing their investigative response to offenders who use the Internet, online communication systems, or other computer technology to sexually exploit children. The Iowa Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Investigation coordinated the establishment of ICAC Regional Task Forces in Iowa in 2006.

Following this meeting, all Story County law enforcement agency heads voiced interest in working together to deter, prevent, and investigate those who seek to exploit or engage minors in sexual activity through the use of computers and the Internet.

The Memorandum of Understanding approved in 2006 by the City Council allowed the Ames Police Department to join the Iowa Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force. Police officers received training and forensic equipment provided by the Task Force and began work in this area in addition to their other street assignments. Wages, benefits and overtime continue to be the responsibility of the Ames Police Department while working with the Task Force. It is not anticipated that this assignment will have any significant impact on the police budget or time away from the officers' primary responsibilities.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding allowing the Ames Police Department to become a member of the Iowa Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.
2. Discontinue Ames Police involvement in the Iowa Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, thereby approving the Memorandum of Understanding allowing the Ames Police Department to continue involvement in the Iowa Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.