



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL DATE: JANUARY 7, 2025
FROM: POLICE DEPARTMENT WARDS: ALL
SUBJECT: DECLARE POLICE SERVICE DOG “RICC-VIGO” AS RETIRED AND SURPLUS PROPERTY AND DONATE “RICC-VIGO” TO HANDLER

ISSUES:

Declare Police Service Dog “Ricc-Vigo” as retired and surplus property to the needs of the Police Department and approve the donation of “Ricc-Vigo” to his current handler.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the City Council:

1. Declare Police Service Dog “Ricc-Vigo” as retired and surplus property to the needs of the Police Department; and
2. Approve the donation of Police Service Dog “Ricc-Vigo” to his current handler, Officer Joseph Cleary, at no cost to the City.

BACKGROUND:

The mission of the Riverside Police Department (RPD) K-9 Unit is to support all divisions within the department to search for felony suspects, suspects armed with a weapon, lost and missing persons, explosives, narcotics, and discarded evidence. Deploying a Police Service Dog (PSD) reduces manpower and time required to search scenes to locate concealed evidence or suspects. Police Service Dogs deployed as support canines are also used to support and improve the mental health of Department personnel by reducing stress, anxiety and depression thereby improving over-all staff morale. This invaluable tool increases the safety and wellness of police personnel.

It is customary for the handler responsible for the canine at the time of its retirement to be provided with the opportunity to take over the sole responsibility, ownership and care of the retired canine, if they so desire.

DISCUSSION:

PSD “Ricc-Vigo” has served the City of Riverside for approximately 5 years and has been used

on numerous critical incidents. “Ricc-Vigo” has located and apprehended numerous dangerous suspects that posed significant risks to officers and the community and has also been utilized to locate important evidence on significant crime scenes. “Ricc-Vigo” is 7 years old, has had several medical issues over the past year, and has lost the drive to perform his duties at the required level. Therefore, RPD is proposing that “Ricc-Vigo” be retired.

“Ricc-Vigo’s” partner for the past five years, Officer Joseph Cleary, wishes to assume ownership of “Ricc-Vigo”. Officer Cleary will assume all financial responsibility as to the care, maintenance, food and veterinary expenses for “Ricc-Vigo”, upon City Council approval.

The Police Department is requesting that Police Service Dog “Ricc-Vigo” be declared as retired and surplus property to the needs of the Police Department and that “Ricc-Vigo” be donated to his current handler, Officer Cleary, at no cost to the City.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item contributes to Strategic Priority No. 2 *Community Well-Being* and Goal No. 2.4 – Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, encourage neighborhood engagement, and build public trust.

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads as follows:

1. Community Trust – Police Service Dogs serve the public interest, benefit the City’s diverse populations, and result in greater public good. The Police Department deploys Police Service Dogs to reduce manpower and time required to search crime scenes. This invaluable tool increases the safety of police personnel and the community.
2. Equity – The RPD provides public safety services to all residents in the City of Riverside. Having the ability to deploy Police Service Dogs helps in the achievement of this goal by providing the RPD with a tool that improves efficiency and enhances officer and community safety.
3. Fiscal Responsibility – The RPD is utilizing approved Measure Z funds for the acquisition of a replacement Police Service Dog, required handlers training and equipment. Police Service Dogs reduce manpower and time required to search scenes to locate concealed evidence or suspects.
4. Innovation – In order to meet the community’s changing needs and prepare for the future, RPD assigns their canine handlers and canines with monthly training to train and develop methods to deploy and serve the community.
5. Sustainability & Resiliency – The purpose of regularly replacing Police Service Dogs is to ensure the Department has the ability to continue to provide public safety services in the present and future, while adapting, and growing with the needs of the community.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the actions stated in this report. The City of Riverside does not have any financial obligation or responsibility associated with this donation.

Prepared by: Kevin Townsend, Police Captain
Approved by: Larry Gonzalez, Chief of Police
Certified as to
availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved by: Mike Futrell, City Manager
Approved as to form: Jack Liu, Interim City Attorney