

STAFF REPORT

Date: January 8, 2025

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Jackie Bryant, City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Acceptance of equipment donation from the Gary Sinise Foundation valued at \$13,980 for two AquaEye sonar devices to be used by the Reno Fire Department's Water Entry Team.

From: Samantha Steere, Management Assistant

Department: Fire Department

Summary:

The Gary Sinise Foundation has donated two AquaEye sonar devices, valued at \$13,980, to the Reno Fire Department to enhance water and ice rescue capabilities. These devices use sonar and AI technology to quickly and accurately locate submerged victims, addressing the challenges posed by traditional search methods in emergencies. Staff will integrate these devices into the department's operations and train personnel to use them effectively. The donation imposes no additional financial burden on the City, aligning with Council's strategic goals of Fiscal Sustainability and Public Safety. Staff recommends that the City Council formally accept the donation of two AquaEye sonar devices, valued at \$13,980, to enhance rescue operations and protect residents.

| Consent Review | Yes | No |
|--|---------------|----------|
| 1. Is this item an annual or standard item that comes before Council for regular approval? | x | |
| 2. Is this item an agreement required based on an item previously approved by Council? | | x |
| 3. Is this item included in the current budget approved and adopted by Council? | | x |
| Other Considerations | | |
| What percent of the total City budget does this item represent? | <1% | |

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Fiscal Sustainability

Public Safety

Previous Council Action:

There is no recent Council action relevant to this item.

Discussion:

The Reno Fire Department's Water Entry Team faces some of the most challenging rescue scenarios, including submerged victim and ice rescues. These situations are often complicated by water currents, which can cause victims to drift from their entry points, making swift recovery crucial for survival. Currently, the department relies on outdated, labor-intensive probe strike techniques, which delay victim recovery and decrease survival chances. A tragic example occurred in 2015 when three juveniles fell through the ice. While two were rescued immediately, it took over 30 minutes to locate the third juvenile who had been submerged. Despite the team's efforts, the juvenile did not survive, underscoring the urgent need for advanced equipment to improve response times and outcomes.

The AquaEye sonar device, a handheld tool utilizing advanced sonar and AI technology, can detect submerged bodies up to 50 meters away. It is easy to operate and can be quickly deployed by any team member, making it particularly valuable in ice rescues where every second counts. Recent training exercises have shown the AquaEye's ability to reliably detect submerged victims with speed and accuracy. With Reno's geography, which includes over 80 bodies of water spanning 110 square miles, the addition of this equipment will significantly enhance the department's ability to respond to water-related incidents, reducing response times and improving rescue outcomes.

Financial Implications:

None to the General Fund. The grant has no match requirement.

Legal Implications:

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law. The City, by accepting this Gary Sinise Foundation donation, agrees to comply with the terms of the grant application, provide project and training information for evaluation to the granting organization, and provide progress and financial reports on program activities, which will be completed by the RFD. Failure to adhere to the grant requirements could affect future funding.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council accept the equipment donation in the amount of \$13,980.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve staff recommendation.

Attachments:

Gary Sinise Award Notice