



Department Source: Police

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: November 18, 2024

Re: Federal Forfeiture Funds Appropriation- NIBIN Cartridge Cases Acquisition & Triage Package

## Executive Summary

Staff has prepared for Council consideration an ordinance authorizing the appropriation of \$208,934.00 from the Asset Forfeiture Fund to the Police Budget to purchase a NIBIN Cartridge Cases Acquisition & Triage Package.

## Discussion

The purchase of the NIBIN Cartridge Cases Acquisition & Triage Package would allow members of the Columbia Police Department to directly enter evidence from firearm related crimes into the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosive's (ATF's) National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN).

The NIBIN Cartridge Cases Acquisition & Triage Package includes the following equipment and services:

- One (1) BRASSTRAX Acquisition Station
- One (1) PAG800 Stereo Zoom Microscope
- One (1) Cartridge Case Training Kit
- One (1) color printer
- 4-years of the SafeGuard Warranty
- Shipping and handling charges DDP Customer Premises (Incoterms® 2020), unloaded
- Installation and commissioning and on-site training

The use of this equipment will require a cooperating agreement with the ATF to furnish the communication lines needed for the manufacturer to provide remote technical support and for networking with the NIBIN System.

NIBIN is a national database of digital images of spent bullets and cartridge cases that were found at crime scenes or test-fired from confiscated weapons. In order to better understand the system, it is important to know that every firearm has a unique set of markings that make the gun unique.

When a gun is made, the manufacturing equipment etches microscopic markings — somewhat like fingerprints — onto the gun's metal parts. These markings, called tool marks, are transferred to a bullet or cartridge case when the gun is fired.

Our crime scene investigators will use this equipment to convert the spent casings into two- or three-dimensional digital images that are uploaded into NIBIN. NIBIN can be searched for



possible matches — that is, other casings that have similar tool marks and thus may have been fired from the same gun. After a possible match, or "hit" is identified, the crime lab secures the actual spent round(s) and compares them under a microscope to confirm the hit. Then, the lab sends information on the hit (a hit report) to investigators.

A NIBIN hit report has many potential tactical and strategic uses for law enforcement. Law enforcement investigators can use it to link crimes, which can help to identify suspects. They can also use it to understand patterns of gun crime, such as gun sharing and trafficking.

It is important to understand; this technology is already being utilized by the Columbia Police Department in partnership with the ATF. However, the purchase of this equipment would dramatically improve the timeliness of the intelligence. For example, if a shooting happened today in Columbia the shell casing collected have to be sent out of state for entry into the NIBIN System. This process from collection through examination is currently taking 2-3 weeks on average. The purchase of this equipment would cut this time delay down to an average of 24 hours or less.

Attachment: Proposal for IBIS Systems for Columbia Police from Forensic Technology

Attachment: IBIS Brasstrax PDF

### Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: \$208,934.00 increase to Patrol Operating budget, \$208,934.00 decrease to Federal Forfeitures revenue. This equipment will be fully covered at \$208,934.00 for the first four years.

Long-Term Impact: After four years, the warranty cost will be approximately \$20,000.00 per year and will be handled in the regular budget process.

### Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Safe Neighborhoods, Secondary Impact: Organizational Excellence, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Secondary Impact: Inter-Governmental Cooperation, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

### Legislative History

Date	Action
N/A	N/A

### Suggested Council Action

Shall Council agree, staff recommends passage of the ordinance authorizing the appropriations of Federal Forfeiture Funds for the purchase of NIBIN Cartridge Cases Acquisition & Triage Package.