


Office of the City Manager

RECESS ITEM
CONSENT CALENDAR
September 9, 2003

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From:  Weldon Rucker, City Manager

Subject: Reward in Hit-Run Investigation Involving Officer Ben Cardoza

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution affirming the City Manager's action to provide a \$5,000 cash reward to those who provide information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person responsible for the hit-run injury collision involving Officer Ben Cardoza on Wednesday, August 20, 2003.

NEGATIVE EFFECT IF ACTION IS DELAYED AFTER COUNCIL RECESS

The investigative priorities dictated by this case of a felony hit-run demand strategies that require expeditious and sensitive gathering of evidence and compiling information. Delays in the investigative process could lead to destruction of evidence, which can significantly reduce our ability to identify and prosecute the responsible driver in the hit-run injury collision.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Reward funds result in no expenditure until information is provided that leads to arrest and conviction of a person responsible for the hit-run collision. In this case, a \$5,000 cash payment will be made to the person who provides the information to close this case. Funding for this will come from the General Fund Reserve and included in the FY 2004 First Quarter Budget Update.

CURRENT SITUATION AND EFFECTS

The identity of the driver in this hit-run vehicle has not yet been established. Information from citizens may help to identify, arrest and successfully prosecute this person. A reward may prompt citizens to provide whatever information they have about the identity and whereabouts of the driver.

BACKGROUND

On Wednesday, August 20, 2003, Officer Ben Cardoza was involved in a hit-run injury collision while responding to another injury collision in Berkeley. Officer Cardoza was riding his police motorcycle westbound on Ashby Avenue with his emergency lights and siren activated. As he rode through the intersection of Ashby Avenue and Wheeler Street, which is uncontrolled on Ashby Avenue and controlled by stop signs on Wheeler Street, a white Chevrolet Caprice Classic, traveling southbound on Wheeler Street, struck the right side of Officer Cardoza's motorcycle. Following the collision, the vehicle fled the scene south on Wheeler Street. Officer Cardoza's motorcycle was knocked over and thrown into a parked car. Officer Cardoza suffered fractures of both bones of his lower right leg and three bones in his right foot. Additionally, he sustained a long laceration to his right forearm, as well as facial lacerations and abrasions. He was transported to Highland Hospital where he underwent corrective surgery for his injuries.

California Highway Patrol (CHP) officers responded to the scene to provide the initial investigation. On Friday, August 22, CHP and Berkeley officers served a search warrant in the City of Hercules and located a Chevrolet Caprice Classic that is believed to be the vehicle that struck Officer Cardoza. The identity of the driver in this hit-run vehicle has not yet been established.

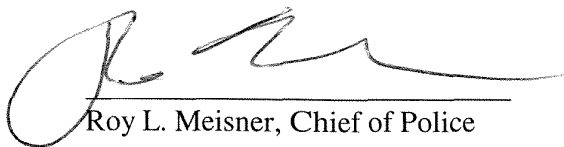
RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

As the providers of public safety and security for the City, police officers work in a dangerous environment. Proper care and concern by the City when an officer becomes injured in the line of duty affects the morale of police personnel, City employees and the community in a positive way. In this case a reward demonstrates proper care and concern by the City, and it will be instrumental in the resolution of this criminal case.

CONTACT PERSON

Roy L. Meisner, Chief of Police, 981-5700

Approved:



Roy L. Meisner, Chief of Police

RESOLUTION NO. -N.S.

AFFIRMING THE CITY MANAGER'S ACTION TO PROVIDE A \$5,000 CASH REWARD TO THOSE WHO PROVIDE INFORMATION LEADING TO THE ARREST AND CONVICTION OF THE PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HIT-RUN INJURY COLLISION INVOLVING OFFICER BEN CARDOZA ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2003

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley has a commitment to public safety; and

WHEREAS, Officer Ben Cardoza was seriously injured by a hit-run driver; and

WHEREAS, closure of this crime will bring relief to public safety employees.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Berkeley authorizes the City Manager to provide a \$5,000 cash reward to those who provide information leading to the arrest and conviction of those criminally responsible for injuring Officer Ben Cardoza. Funding for this expenditure is in the FY 2004 budget of the Office of the City Manager.