

**CITY OF THORNE BAY  
RESOLUTION 22-04-19-02**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF THORNE BAY, ALASKA, ESTABLISHING A POLICY  
FOR COMPENSATING VILLAGE PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS

**WHEREAS**, the City Council is the governing body of the City of Thorne Bay, Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has participated in the Village Public Safety Officer (VPSO) Program for over 25 years through a cooperative Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Tlingit & Haida Central Council VPSO Program as created and supported by the State of Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the VPSO Program is important to the community of Thorne Bay because the City cannot afford to hire, equip and train a police force on its own budget and this Program provides for services appropriate to that role, including law enforcement, fire protection and prevention, water safety, search and rescue, community policing, public safety education, disaster coordination, and probation and parole monitoring and shall serve as the first level public safety responders in the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the VPSO's are hired and employed by the VPSO Program to provide services to the City in accordance with the terms and conditions of the MOA which requires the City to provide financial and other support to the VPSOs such as office space including furnishings and supplies, utilities, heating fuel, vehicle fuel, vehicle maintenance and repairs, cell phones and other compensation as may be negotiated between the VPSO Program and the City; and

**WHEREAS**, one particular item of compensation that has historically been provided for VPSOs who have lived in Thorne Bay is a housing stipend to help with the high cost of housing in the City and according to the VPSO MOA with T&H this particular form of compensation is to be negotiated between the VPSO Program and the City as needed; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has established a past practice of only paying this stipend to VPSOs who chose to live in the City of Thorne Bay and not paying it to those who have chosen to elsewhere such as the City of Craig although the basis for the establishment of this practice is unclear because the current Administration finds no City Code nor Policy of the City Council that has ever provided clarification of this issue for the sake of consistency and to set a precedent for clear expectations for VPSO candidates; and

**WHEREAS**, this ambiguity has caused issues in the past for City staff and confusion and frustration for past and current VPSO's and it is in the best interest of the City and VPSO Program to create a Policy for governing the compensation provided to the VPSO's in the form of a housing stipend; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Administration recommends that both current VPSOs receive the monthly housing stipend as per the budget approved annually by the City Council, the monthly amount being clearly established during the budget process, since they were both hired with the full and complete expectation that a City provided housing Stipend was part of the compensation for the position and no mention was made of any particular locale in order to be eligible for the stipend; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Administration recommends that all future VPSO's will be eligible to receive a City housing stipend only if they chose to reside within the City of Thorne Bay, either North or South, and such stipend will be initiated upon City Council approval of the VPSO Candidate as referred by T&H Central

Council VPSO Program after careful vetting and upon notice from the VPSO Program to the City that they have been hired and are duly employed as a VPSO specifically stationed in Thorne Bay and at service to the City; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Administration recommends that when a VPSO is eligible to receive a monthly housing stipend, the monthly amount be tied directly to the annual budget as approved by the City Council from year to year unless otherwise changed by the City Council through an Ordinance or a Resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the VPSO housing stipend could change from year to year depending upon the financial condition of the City and the amount so budgeted by the City Council taking into account all of the interests of the community and the continued need and priority of supporting the City's public safety officers; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Administration also recommends that when a VPSO is appointed to the position of City Fire Chief or City EMS Coordinator, although already participating in both of these programs, this specific designation presupposes additional effort and coordination above and beyond just being participants since now they are expected to take more of a lead role in these programs, they shall receive an additional housing stipend over and above the amount for their regular VPSO duties and this amount shall also be tied to the City Council approved budget for this specific line item; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Administration recommends the City Council adopt and approve all of these recommendations for the VPSO Program to provide clarity for both City staff and current and future VPSO's and believes it to be in the best interest of the public to do so immediately, even ahead of the next budget approval process; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Administration recommends the City Council increase the housing stipend for VPSO's who assume the role of either Fire Chief or EMS Coordinator or both by an additional \$300.00 per month for the rest of this fiscal year until the new budget cycle can dictate the amount and this together with the current budgeted amount of \$700.00 per month is equal to \$1,000.00 per month for eligible VPSOs.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Thorne Bay accepts all of the above specified recommendations from the City Administration and establishes these recommendations as a policy to be followed until so changed or modified or superseded by a future Ordinance or Resolution dealing with these same matters.

**PASSED AND APPROVED** by the Thorne Bay City Council with a vote of 6 YEAH and 1 NAY, on this 19<sup>th</sup> day of April 2022

  
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Lee Burger, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Teri Feibel, CMC