

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-445

A RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA, RECOGNIZING AND APPROPRIATING A \$47,408.00 GRANT FROM THE PLAYERS ANNUAL GRANT PROGRAM AWARDED TO ST. JOHNS COUNTY FIRE RESCUE FOR THE PURCHASE OF A PUBLIC SAFETY DRONE.

WHEREAS, St. Johns County Fire Rescue Department (“Fire Rescue”) applied for and received a \$47,408.00 grant from THE PLAYERS Annual Grant Program for the purchase of a public safety drone; and

WHEREAS, the County when preparing its budget for Fiscal Year 2024, did not anticipate receiving this funding; and

WHEREAS, recognizing and appropriating the \$47,408.00 grant award to the Fire Rescue Department will allow for the purchase of a drone to assist Fire Rescue in their duties; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, as follows:

Section 1. The above Recitals are incorporated by reference into the body of this Resolution, and such Recitals are adopted as findings of fact.


Section 2. The Board of County Commissioners hereby recognizes and appropriates the \$47,408.00 grant from THE PLAYERS Annual Grant Program as unanticipated revenue into the Fire Rescue Department budget and authorizes its expenditure for the purchase of a public safety drone.

Section 3. To the extent there are typographical or administrative errors or omissions that do not change the tone, tenor, or context of this Resolution, then this Resolution may be revised without subsequent approval by the Board of County Commissioners.

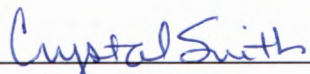
PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida this 7th day of November 2023.

**BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS OF ST.
JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA**

Rendition Date: NOV 08 2023

By: 
Christian Whitehurst, Chair

ATTEST: Brandon J. Patty,
Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

By: 
Deputy Clerk



Submission Details

THE PLAYERS Grant Application

Name

St. Johns County Fire Rescue

Email

bmitzel@sjcfl.us

Address

3657 Gaines Rd
St. Augustine, FL 32084

Phone

904-209-1700

EIN

59-6000825

Contact Name

Brian Mitzel

Requested Grant Amount

\$75,102.00

Submission Date

1/14/2023

Website

<http://www.sjcfl.us/FireRescue/index.aspx>

Title

Battalion Chief

Mission Statement

Dedicated to the highest standards of professionalism in public safety and life-saving services with the commitment to serve, ability to perform, and the courage to act.

Project Name

Drone Program Replacement

Total Annual Budget

\$76,588,508.00

Request Grant Type

Capital

Primary Focus Area

Other

Project Summary

o We are in need of funding to replace 4 of our drones that are having to be phased out due to new legislation passed by the State of Florida. Our drones will no longer be able to be used as of January 1, 2023 and the state of Florida is requiring any public safety agency wanting to use drones to purchase from a list that is only approved by them. None of the agencies that have been utilizing drones for response, as long as we have, were aware that this legislation would come about. The passing of this legislation occurred after multiple agencies across the state had already established programs.

Geographic Area(s) Served

All of St. Johns County and potentially at the region and state level should a mutual aid request occur from another public safety agency

Expected Numbers to be Served

300,000 citizens plus all additional daily visitors

Population

No

Minority Reach

No

Demographic Composition

White

Other Underserved / Underrepresented Groups**Groups / Areas of Focus****Organization Name**

St. Johns County Fire Rescue

Address

3657 Gaines Rd

City

St. Augustine

State

FL

Zip Code

32084

Website

<http://www.sjcfi.us/FireRescue/index.aspx>

Executive Name

Scott Bullard

Title

Interim Fire Chief

Email

sbullard@sjcfi.us

Phone Number

904-209-1700

501c(3)

No

Year Established

1998

Total Operating Budget

\$6,756,201.00

of Staff Members

398

undefined

undefined

of Volunteers

20 (Tactical Support Group, they also volunteer hours with Fire Rescue at The PLAYERS)

Volunteer Hours per Year

3,500

Description of Organization

St. Johns County Fire Rescue provides Fire, EMS, Hazardous Materials, and Urban Search and Rescue coverage and response to any and all emergencies that could occur in all of St. Johns County. The target population is all of the citizens and visitors in the 608 square miles that is St. Johns County. For an item of note, all pilots at St. Johns County Fire Rescue are FAA Part 107 licensed drone pilots which allows us to fly at night and in airspace that the general public is not allowed to fly drones in.

Area of Need

We have been using drones for over 3 years with considerable success. The use of drones has resulted in saving of lives and property. Drones are dispatched to emergency incidents daily. They provide the following support during responses: Aerial thermal imaging of structure and brush fires. This imaging results in rapid identification of the location of the fire. The ability to more rapidly identify this has resulted in quicker access and extinguishment of the fire. This quicker extinguishment results in decreased property damage and increased safety for citizen and our personnel. Aerial search and rescue capabilities during missing and or lost persons. The drones are in the air almost immediately

and supplement the use of helicopters for search and rescue. They are able to be deployed within minutes and can access areas that traditional helicopters are not able to access. It can sometimes take over an hour for helicopters with search capabilities to arrive on scene. □ Hazardous Materials Incidents require huge amounts of personnel and resources just to provide reconnaissance. We have been able to successfully place a drone downrange to identify chemicals and other hazards, sometimes up to 30 minutes before we are able to place personnel in the "hot zone". These drones are also able to carry monitoring equipment downrange to get preliminary readings prior to personnel exposure. Utilizing drones for rapid reconnaissance has decreased mitigation time that ultimately results in decreased danger and exposure to citizens and our personnel. □ Rapid Damage Assessment post manmade or natural disaster poses one of the most daunting tasks after a disaster. Difficult to access areas to assess their true need can tie up much needed resources that may be better served elsewhere. Utilizing drones, we are able to rapidly assess areas within minutes before rescue personnel are committed to them. This rapid assessment can take what usually take hours on foot and condense it into 10 minutes or less. This exponential time savings allows us to clear areas and reposition resources much faster than in the past. □ Drone use by during The PLAYERS was first introduced by Fire Rescue during the 2022 event. We utilized a drone daily to assess traffic issues and parking efficiency. Daily meetings were held with operations staff and parking vendors to view the aerial footage so that they could adjust the parking lots and traffic flow. These adjustments allowed for more efficient parking, which in turn increased the potential number of visitors to the event. In the evenings this footage allowed for adjustments to help improve traffic flow out of the lot and decrease the wait time of those exiting the event. Additionally, in the event of an emergency on site during the tournament we would utilize drones to ascertain status updates and could have them on site almost immediately. We would even be able to stream them to TOUR staff on site and/or remotely. o Due to the new laws imposed by the State of Florida we will no longer be able to use the assets we have. Having to shelve these assets will set back our response to incidents and increase potential loss of life and property. We are estimating that we will have to place over \$80,000 of equipment out of service because of this legislation.

Proposed Solution

The proposed solution is to identify alternate sources of funding to get this important program back in service. Currently, St. Johns County's budget does not have room for replacement drones for Fire Rescue. The budget is meeting up against funding challenges and inflation that is requiring redistribution of funds to meet the increase in daily operating costs and the increase in cost of other needed pieces of equipment.

Project Plan & Measures

As we have all of the needed policies and procedures in place for this program, we are simply in need of funding for replacement equipment. Essentially our goal is to replace the equipment that we are being legally required to place out of service by the State. If we were to receive funding for compliant replacement drones, we are one-hundred percent confident that the objectives and other metrics would be met.

Have you previously received funding from THE PLAYERS?

no

Prior Funding Explanation

No prior funding has been received to my knowledge.

Total Prior Amount(s)

Date(s) Funding Received

Sustainment Plan

To sustain funding, we would be able to work through the budgeting process and utilize funds from daily operating expenses as opposed to have to budget for the capital items, i.e., the drones themselves. Through this there is funding available to support the program and its continued operation. There is not funding available, at the capital item purchase level, to replace our current drones with compliant drones.

Partnerships & Collaborations

Currently, we work in conjunction with the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office and their drone program in response to missing persons and search and rescue events. We also work with St. Johns County Emergency Management in doing rapid damage assessments of large areas post natural or manmade

disaster. Finally, and most recently, we have been working with the St. Johns County schools to provide overviews and demonstrations for their science related education programs.

Submitter Signature

Brian Mitzel, Battalion Chief, St. Johns County Fire Rescue

Date

2023-01-14

Attachments

Fire_budget_-_FY_'23.pdf

EMS_budget_-_FY'23.pdf

Letter 2.pdf

St_Johns_County_Fire_Rescue_X2E_Updated_08.31.22.pdf

Letter 1.pdf

Florida Drone Supply, Inc
 16335 Tamiami Trl
 Fort Myers, FL 33908
 (855) 8-DRONES
 info@floridadronesupply.com
 www.floridadronesupply.com



Estimate

ADDRESS

M. Cuzzort
 St. Johns County Fire Rescue
 3657 Gaines Rd
 St. Augustine, FL 32084

SHIP TO

M. Cuzzort
 St. Johns County Fire
 Rescue
 3657 Gaines Rd
 St. Augustine, FL 32084

ESTIMATE # CY-SJFR06192023

DATE 06/19/2023

EXPIRATION DATE 06/30/2023

SHIP VIA

UPS

ACTIVITY	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
Teledyne FLIR SIRAS UAS System In The Box: 1x SIRAS drone 1x Thermal / RGB Camera Payload 1x Controller with built-in screen 2x Intelligent Batteries 1x Battery charger 1x soft case	4	9,695.00	38,780.00
Teledyne FLIR SIRAS 2-Pack Batteries (Top & Bottom)	12	599.00	7,188.00
Teledyne FLIR SIRAS CCW Propeller Set (2 Props)	8	90.00	720.00
Teledyne FLIR SIRAS CCW Propeller Set (2 Props)	8	90.00	720.00
Shipping	1	0.00	0.00

 SUBTOTAL 47,408.00
 TAX 0.00
TOTAL \$47,408.00

Accepted By

Accepted Date