



Honorable Mayor and Members of the Hermosa Beach City Council

APPROVAL OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT USE BY THE HERMOSA BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT PURSUANT TO ASSEMBLY BILL 418

(Police Chief Landon Phillips)

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends City Council:

1. Review and renew Ordinance No. 22-1446, an ordinance of the City of Hermosa Beach adopting Military Use Equipment, in accordance with Assembly Bill 481; and
2. Receive and file the Annual Military Equipment Report.

Executive Summary:

Pursuant to Assembly Bill 481 (AB 481) City Council is required to review and renew the Military Equipment Policy, renew the ordinance at a regular meeting, and receive an annual report prepared by the Hermosa Beach Police Department to continue to use military equipment within the City.

Background:

Effective January 1, 2022, California State Assembly Bill 481 (AB 481) established requirements for the funding, acquisition, and use of items defined as “military equipment” by local and state law enforcement agencies. This bill intended enforceable safeguards, including transparency, accountability, and oversight, to protect the public’s welfare, safety, civil rights, and civil liberties. AB 481 requires law enforcement agencies to adopt policies for military equipment use, raising funds for, or acquiring military equipment.

At its April 26, 2022 meeting, City Council introduced and waived the first reading of an ordinance adopting a Military Use Equipment Policy pursuant to AB 481. At its May 10, 2022 meeting, City Council waived the full second reading and adopted by title Ordinance No. 22-1446 (**Attachment 1**), adopting a compliant policy. Pursuant to AB 481, the police department shall publish an Annual Military Equipment Report for each type of military equipment approved by the Hermosa Beach City Council, for as long as this military equipment is available for use.

City Council reviewed and renewed Ordinance 22-1446 and received and filed the Annual Military Equipment report in 2024 and 2025 in compliance with AB 418.

Past Council Actions

| Meeting Date | Description |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| April 26, 2022 | City Council introduced and waived first reading of an ordinance adopting a military use equipment policy pursuant to Assembly Bill 481. |
| May 10, 2022 | City Council waived the full second reading and adopted by title Ordinance No. 22-1446 of the City of Hermosa Beach adopting a military use equipment policy. |
| September 10, 2024 | City Council reviewed and renewed Ordinance No. 22-1446 of the City of Hermosa Beach adopting a Military Equipment Policy and received and filed the Hermosa Beach Police Department Annual Military Equipment Report. |
| February 25, 2025 | City Council reviewed and renewed Ordinance No. 22-1446 of the City of Hermosa Beach adopting a Military Equipment Policy and received and filed the Hermosa Beach Police Department Annual Military Equipment Report. |

Discussion:

Law enforcement situations are often unpredictable and complex, requiring strategic responses to ensure safety for everyone involved. In some cases, specialized equipment, tools, or resources are essential to de-escalate violent or tense scenarios, minimizing harm to community members, involved individuals, and officers while increasing the likelihood of a positive resolution. Military equipment, as defined by statute, includes items such as drones, unstaffed ground vehicles, armored vehicles, pepper balls, less-lethal 40mm projectile launchers, and distraction devices. These tools, proven effective in real-world conditions, are used to enhance community and officer safety and reduce the need for force escalation. Their use is considered best practice in law enforcement.

HBPD is committed to utilizing equipment that safeguards the community and minimizes the risk of escalating volatile situations to potentially lethal encounters. The Department has not identified any other alternatives that provide the same level of effectiveness in ensuring the safety of both community members and officers. Preparation and publication of the Annual Military Equipment Report (**Attachment 2**) further reinforce the City's dedication to transparency and compliance with California State law.

Since the adoption of Ordinance No. 22-1446, HBPD has not received community complaints, concerns, or initiated internal investigations regarding its use. On March 5, 2025, the Department purchased eight (8) 40mm Tactical Single Launchers and details about this purchase can be found in the equipment report. The Annual Military Equipment Report covers the period from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025.

Policy 706—Military Equipment was posted on the City's website on September 11, 2024 and remains available for public view. In addition, the Annual Military Equipment Report

became publicly available on the City's website on January 27, 2025. This staff report, along with the accompanying presentation at the Council meeting, fulfills AB 481's requirement to provide a public forum for questions and input on the Military Equipment Policy.

Staff recommends City Council review and renew Ordinance 22-1446 and receive and file the Annual Military Equipment Report to meet the requirements of AB 481.

Fiscal Impact:

There is no fiscal impact associated with the update of the equipment list and completion of this report. Any purchase of listed equipment to maintain acceptable inventory levels is included in the Police Department's operating budget for Fiscal Year 2025–26.

Attachments:

1. Ordinance No. 22-1446
2. Annual Military Equipment Report

Respectfully Submitted by: Joanne Loeza, Management Analyst

Concur: Landon Phillips, Police Chief

Noted for Fiscal Impact: Henry Chao, Finance Manager

Concur: Brandon Walker, Administrative Services Director

Legal Review: Jason Baltimore, Interim City Attorney

Approved: Steve Napolitano, City Manager