



## Item No. 17 Town of Atherton

### **CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – REGULAR AGENDA**

**TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER**

**FROM: STEVEN D. McCULLEY, CHIEF OF POLICE**

**DATE: MAY 16, 2018**

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL FOR FUNDS – SAN MATEO COUNTY BUYBACK  
REQUEST - UP TO \$5,000**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Approve funds and contribute to a San Mateo County Gun Buyback program up to the amount of \$5,000.

#### **BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS**

Numerous agencies in San Mateo County are responding to a request for contribution for an upcoming County gun buyback program. Sheriff Carlos Bolanos is estimating that a successful program in the County would require funds to total \$75,000. All monies are being collected by the “Citizens for San Mateo County Gun Buy Back” through a non-profit group. The Sheriff’s Office is providing logistical support to facilitate firearms collection, identification and destruction.

Any gun donor will receive \$100 for any pistol or long gun and \$200 for any assault type weapon. Each will receive cash for any gun that is donated and there is no limit to the number of guns that can be turned in. If there are any donated funds left over, those monies will be utilized for additional gun by back programs or youth education as it pertains to firearms.

The San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office is interested in conducting a County-wide gun buyback program in 2018, similar to an event held in 2013.

#### **POLICY FOCUS**

The purpose of this contribution is to be a part of the County’s plan to conduct a buyback program of weapons by San Mateo county residents. Law Enforcement personnel will check to make sure the weapon is not loaded and also keep a record of the serial number to verify the gun is not stolen. Weapons will be destroyed by the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Approval of this request would permit the Town to contribute up to \$5,000 toward a San Mateo County Sheriff's Office supported countywide gun buyback program. Funds are available in the Police Department budget, Safety Supplies and Materials.

As of mid-March, Redwood City, Belmont and San Mateo have pledged \$5,000 to the effort. Woodside will contribute \$10,000 and an additional \$5,000 if local students can raise a match. San Carlos voted to match donations up to \$50,000. Portola Valley has agreed to contribute \$15,000, and Menlo Park has agreed to \$5,000.

### **PUBLIC NOTICE**

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with this agenda item being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting in print and electronically. Information about the project is also disseminated via the Town's electronic News Flash and Atherton Online. There are approximately 1,200 subscribers to the Town's electronic News Flash publications. Subscribers include residents as well as stakeholders – to include, but be not limited to, media outlets, school districts, Menlo Park Fire District, service providers (water, power, and sewer), and regional elected officials.

### **COMMISSION/COMMITTEE FEEDBACK/REFERRAL**

This item \_\_\_ has or X has not been before a Town Committee or Commission.

- Audit/Finance Committee (meets every other month)
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee (meets as needed)
- Civic Center Advisory Committee (meets as needed)
- Environmental Programs Committee (meets every other month)
- Park and Recreation Committee (meets each month)
- Planning Commission (meets each month)
- Rail Committee (meets every other month)
- Transportation Committee (meets every other month)
- Tree Committee (meets each month)

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- ATTACHMENT 1 - Letter – Sheriff Bolanos
- ATTACHMENT 2 - Email – Becky Dodson – Citizens for a San Mateo County Gun Buy Back
- ATTACHMENT 3 - News article – Daily March 15, 2018



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO  
**OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF**

CARLOS G. BOLANOS  
SHERIFF

TRISHA L. SANCHEZ  
UNDERSHERIFF

400 COUNTY CENTER • REDWOOD CITY • CALIFORNIA 94063-1662 • TELEPHONE (650) 599-1664 • [www.smcsheriff.com](http://www.smcsheriff.com)

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO THE SHERIFF

February 26, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that the "Citizens for a San Mateo County Gun Buyback" approached me to ask for my participation in a gun buyback program to occur this year.

The Sheriff's Office is excited to participate in such a program again. As it did in 2013, the Sheriff's Office is prepared to collect and properly dispose of voluntarily relinquished firearms. Based on our experience from 2013, we estimate that the cost of conducting the buyback program will be approximately \$75,000.

We are hopeful that a successful program will result in the removal of many guns from circulation and make the streets of San Mateo County safer for those who live and work here.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Captain Mark Duri at (650) 363-4844.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carlos G. Bolanos".

Carlos G. Bolanos  
Sheriff

## Jennifer Frew

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**From:** becky dodson <beckydodson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 01, 2018 7:09 PM  
**To:** Theresa DellaSanta  
**Cc:** Neeloofar H. Jenks; Danielle L  
**Subject:** Citizens for a San Mateo County Gun Buyback  
**Attachments:** Sheriff Bolano Letter .pdf

Dear City Clerk,

I am writing on behalf of Citizens for a San Mateo County Gun Buyback. Last week, we approached Sheriff Bolanos to ask that he put on another gun buyback program similar to the one the Sheriff's Office executed in 2013. At that meeting, he agreed to collaborate with our group to implement another gun buyback program. He offered to manage the program, supply the staff and security, and provide the Sheriff's Office's experience from the previous program.

Although the Sheriff's Office has offered their support and experience, Citizens for a San Mateo County Gun Buyback is working to raise the funds to buy the guns from the community. We are approaching the various City Councils in San Mateo County to ask that they contribute a minimum of \$5,000 to help support the buyback program. The previous buyback ran out of funds after \$63,500, so we are looking to raise \$75,000 for this event.

The San Carlos City Council has put our request on their next meeting agenda and we are pending confirmation from a few other cities we have contacted. We are respectfully asking that Atherton also agendaize our request, and we hope that the council will honor our request. By reducing the number of guns in our community, we make our county a safer place to work and live.

I have attached a copy of the Sheriff's letter supporting our efforts to this email. I hope you will help support our Sheriff's Office and Citizens for a San Mateo County Gun Buyback.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Becky Dodson with Citizens for a San Mateo County Gun Buyback  
(408) 355-3805

[https://www.smdailyjournal.com/news/local/countywide-gun-buyback-gathers-support/article\\_5eee9632-2800-11e8-be5f-3f93ec4537c8.html](https://www.smdailyjournal.com/news/local/countywide-gun-buyback-gathers-support/article_5eee9632-2800-11e8-be5f-3f93ec4537c8.html)

## Countywide gun buyback gathers support

San Carlos residents organizing buyback for first time since 2013

By Zachary Clark Daily Journal staff Mar 15, 2018

As calls for gun control gather momentum in the wake of the Parkland school shooting, three San Carlos residents are attempting to make the Peninsula safer by reducing the number of guns in the community.

Danielle Lacampagne, Nilu Jenks and Becky Dodson formed the Citizens for a San Mateo County Gun Buyback organization to lobby cities across the county to contribute \$5,000 to a gun buyback program, which was last held in San Mateo County in 2013.

“After Parkland, we felt we should do this,” Jenks said. “People are looking for something, and even one suicide or domestic homicide we can prevent is worth the effort or time.”



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The group is calling for a similar program to the 2013 one, when the county paid \$100 for pistols and rifles and \$200 for assault-style weapons with no questions asked, bringing in more than 600 guns, according to a press

release. A private donor contributed \$63,000 to the 2013 buyback, but Jenks said funds ran out during the event, so this year the group is trying to raise at least \$75,000.

So far, Redwood City and San Mateo have pledged \$5,000 to the buyback, Jenks said, while Belmont's City Council voted to contribute \$5,000 and Woodside's council voted to contribute \$10,000. Woodside also voted to match another \$5,000 donation if local students can raise the funds.

The most generous donor so far, the San Carlos City Council voted to match donations up to \$50,000.

As of Wednesday, the buyback effort had raised \$50,000. Daly City will fund its own buyback in May, Jenks said, and Portola Valley, Menlo Park and Foster City are set to vote on a donation within the next week.

Jenks also said private donors are starting to express interest as word gets out.

"We could not have forecasted this kind of support and we really appreciate it," she said.

During Belmont's Tuesday City Council meeting, Mayor Doug Kim said that city is also organizing a study session on school safety and mental health programs, and the council is drafting a resolution on public safety and gun violence in addition to contributing to the buyback effort.

"I think everyone in this room has felt a sense of frustration and helplessness over the past weeks, months and years," Kim said. "I felt that this issue could not be ignored in a city like ours, we need to find what we can control within our purview and tonight is the first of several things that we as a small city on Peninsula can do to stand up and say here's what we hold dear in terms of our values."

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Jenks said last month her organization approached San Mateo Sheriff Carlos Bolanos, who agreed to manage the buyback program and provide staff and security. The Sheriff's Office will destroy all surrendered firearms.

Jenks said the buyback will likely be held May 5.

"This has very much been on our minds lately with the firearms store last fall," San Carlos Councilman Mark Olbert said, referring to a moratorium on new stores that sell guns passed after a business received a permit to do so. "Many of the citizens pushing for this throughout the county are San Carlos residents so the council saw it as an important issue that a lot of people in our community are working towards. That's something we want to support as much as possible, and we want to incentivize other communities to step forward."

## smart cremation

Despite its growing support, not everyone is on board with the program. San Carlos Councilman Matt Grocott, who voted against his city's contribution to the buyback and the store moratorium, believes the money could be better spent on security efforts.

"I really question the claim that this (a buyback program) will make us any more safe in San Carlos, just look at the statistics," Grocott said, adding that the last gun suicide in his city occurred in the 1980s and the last homicide was a knife attack more than 10 years ago. "So what it means is we're putting up a \$50,000 subsidy to parts of the county where gun violence is more prevalent.

"A lot of the guns that do get turned in are old and inoperable, basically scrap metal," he added. "Someone could turn in two to three old, inoperable guns and turn around and buy something operable and you haven't accomplished anything."

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But the San Carlos citizens group is determined to address gun violence and not just through a buyback. Jenks said her organization is also discussing future education and awareness efforts.

“Once we hit \$75,000, we’ll really think about what’s next,” Jenks said.

[zachary@smdailyjournal.com](mailto:zachary@smdailyjournal.com)

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