



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 17-826A, **Version:** 1

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### **Subject:**

Resolution authorizing sustainment of the countywide Water Rescue Grant Program.

### **Recommended Action:**

Sitting as the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Authority, approve a Resolution to sustain the countywide Water Rescue Grant Program.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to ensure a safe and secure community

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.1 Maximize partner relationships and public outreach

5.3 Ensure effective and efficient delivery of county services and support

### **Summary:**

On September 27, 2016, the EMS Authority approved the creation of an EMS Water Rescue Grant Program in an effort to support and improve capabilities across the County regarding Water Rescue to include needed vessels, equipment and training. The Pinellas County Fire Chiefs' Association as well as the Pinellas County EMS Advisory Council supported the establishment of this program.

The creation of the countywide Water Rescue Grant Program allowed for the implementation of a two year plan that would address operating and maintenance costs incurred by the Cities and Fire Districts.

Since its creation, the Water Rescue Grant Program has provided funding for the following program improvements:

- Thermal Imaging equipment for East Lake Fire Rescue Marine 57
- Side Sonar equipment for East Lake Fire Rescue Marine 57
- Rapid Diver Equipment for Water Extrication Teams
- Rapid Diver Training for Water Extrication Teams
- Side Sonar equipment for Dunedin Fire Boat 60
- Fast Rescue Craft Operations (3 day course) for Water Rescue Teams

The current Water Rescue Grant Program will expire on September 30, 2017 and it is the staff recommendation to sustain this program by Resolution to fund continuing water rescue improvements.

### **Background Information:**

The Cities and Fire Districts have provided various levels of water rescue through their Fire Rescue departments since their inception. Throughout that time, the Fire Service has worked closely with law enforcement, the US Coast Guard, and Florida Fish & Wildlife.

There is a continued need to provide funding support for operating and maintenance costs; to provide equipment such as thermal cameras to improve searching for victims in the water; to provide rapid diver equipment and training to improve the rescue of victims in sinking or submerged vehicles; and search and rescue and other marine operations type training.

**Fiscal Impact:**

Appropriation for operating, maintenance, equipment and training is budgeted within the proposed Fiscal Year 2018 Emergency Medical Services Fund, subject to adoption by the Board of County Commissioners.

Expenditures for this program shall not exceed \$300,000.00 in any fiscal year.

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Jim Fogarty, Director, Safety and Emergency Services

**Partners:**

Pinellas County Fire Chiefs' Association  
All Municipal Fire Rescue Agencies and Independent Fire Districts  
Pinellas County EMS Advisory Council

**Attachments:**

Proposed Resolution Pinellas County Water Rescue Grant Program  
Resolution 16-69 Pinellas County Water Rescue Grant Program  
PCFCA Statement  
PCFCA Letter of Support  
EMSAC Letter of Support  
Marine Incidents and Resources Reports