

Headlines

OPH Police Department uses video simulation program to train officers

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The game is on for the Oak Park Heights Police Department.

The Oak Park Heights City Council unanimously approved the purchase of an advanced police-training program Tuesday. The training device is a video simulation program that "will not cost taxpayers a dollar," said Police Chief Brian DeRosier.

DeRosier said the system helps build brain memory and swiftly trains officers in skills that would take a couple of years to master. It also will reduce potential risks to officers as they train.

It is a hands-on system that provides training in several areas, including reloading firearms, chemical handling and using Taser guns. It also allows officers to train in their own facilities in the city.

Over time, the training program is expected to save costs by reducing officers' overtime by training them in shorter, more effective and frequent sessions while on duty. The program will also reduce range and ammunition costs and reduce liability exposure to the department. The only uncertainty with the program is whether it will save hours of training, DeRosier said.

"It's like driving a car," DeRosier said. "Some pick it up faster than others."

The city will purchase the program from Advanced Interactive Systems in Seattle for about \$40,000.

In other business the council:

* Will invite Lake Elmo to a joint-work session either July 26 or Aug. 1 to discuss the Minnesota Highway 36 Corridor.

* Asked staff to research and prepare a final resolution for implementing a No Parking zone on one side of Peller Avenue east of Cover Park.

* Will host an Aug. 30 joint meeting at Oak Park Heights City Hall with the Coalition for the St. Croix River Crossing, Minnesota Department of Transportation, the city of Stillwater and Washington County to discuss where everyone is at and how each can help one another.

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