

Prior Lake receives \$1.2 million in state funding for public safety

BY JACQUELINE DEVINE
jdevine@swpub.com

Prior Lake recently received approximately \$1.2 million from the state in December as part of a one-time payment approved by the state legislature, which was signed into law, to be used for a variety of public safety causes, according to the city.

Public safety departments in Prior Lake were one of many public safety departments across the state to receive funds totaling \$300 million.

According to the city, the amounts varied based on population, ranging from a few thousand dollars up to \$19 million for Minneapolis.

Prior Lake has allocated just over half of its \$1.2 million (\$687,000) as part of its 2024 budget process.

Uses include funding for:

- New police officer position
- Police department staffing and scheduling study
- Computer server for the police department

■ Police department training gear

■ Fire Station 1 computer network infrastructure upgrade

■ Portable chest compression device for the fire department

Prior Lake City Council recently approved the purchase of a Lucas CPR Device for the fire department at its Jan. 23 meeting in the amount of \$20,017.18.

According to city documents, the purchase of the Lucas Device will greatly increase the level of care the fire department can provide. The city's ambulance service currently carries the device but they are not always first on the scene. The purchase will allow for the fire department to provide more efficient lifesaving actions. The device will be purchased through the city's distributor, Stryker.

"The funding will help support the addition of a new officer along with helping us drive our training to even higher levels," Police Chief Liam Duggan

explained. "We're also taking a closer look at how we schedule our officers and spread the workload among our staff. The funding will pay for a study to determine how we might improve in these areas for the benefit of our staff wellness, effectiveness of our department, and the efficient use of our financial resources."

There is no time constraint for spending the remaining balance and staff will recommend the proposed usage of the funds. This may include using a portion of the money toward the purchase of a new ladder truck for the fire department in 2025.

"This influx from the state, while unexpected, is appreciated," Jason Wedel, Prior Lake city manager said. "The community entrusts us with financial prudence, and we will continue to uphold that standard by offsetting future costs and at the same time enhancing public safety for our residents with this funding."