



Agenda Item: 9.B
Date of Meeting: April 13, 2026
Department: Police

STAFF REPORT

To: City Council
From: Nate Derr
Subject: **Authorization to Purchase TruNarc Raman Spectrometer for Preliminary Drug Identification**
Prepared On: March 23, 2026
Attachments: Silent 6 quote
Safe ware quote
Thermo Fisher Quote
ESPINOZA KELLY FINDINGS

Background/History:

The Bishop Police Department regularly encounters controlled substances during investigations, traffic stops, probation searches, and narcotics-related incidents. Historically, law enforcement agencies used field test kits which require officers to physically handle suspected narcotics and chemically mix substances to produce a color reaction indicating the possible presence of drugs.

However, the nature of illicit narcotics has significantly changed in recent years. Many substances now encountered in the field include:

- Fentanyl
- Carfentanil
- Synthetic opioids
- Synthetic stimulants
- Drug mixtures containing unknown cutting agents

These substances can pose serious health risks to officers if inhaled or absorbed through accidental exposure.

Because of these risks, many law enforcement agencies—including the Bishop Police Department—have moved away from traditional physical field testing methods due to the potential for accidental exposure to dangerous substances such as fentanyl.

As a result, officers often must rely solely on laboratory confirmation, which can delay investigations and court proceedings.

Analysis/Discussion:

The TruNarc Raman Spectrometer is a handheld device designed specifically for law enforcement use. It identifies suspected narcotics using Raman spectroscopy, a technology that analyzes the molecular structure of a substance using a laser.

Key safety advantages include:

- Non-contact testing
- Ability to scan substances through plastic bags, glass containers, or packaging
- Eliminates the need to open or handle unknown powders
- Reduces risk of fentanyl exposure
- Provides results in seconds

This significantly improves officer safety compared to traditional field testing kits.

Improved Investigations and Evidence Development

The TruNarc device contains a large on-board library of narcotics and controlled substances, allowing officers to rapidly identify substances such as:

- Methamphetamine
- Cocaine
- Heroin
- Fentanyl and fentanyl analogs
- MDMA and synthetic drugs
- Prescription narcotics

The device generates a digital report identifying the substance, which can be used as preliminary evidence during investigations and prosecution.

Laboratory testing would still be used when required for final confirmation, but the TruNarc allows officers to:

- Quickly establish probable cause
 - Support arrests and search warrants
 - Document evidence in reports
 - Provide preliminary identification for prosecutors
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Support for Enforcement Under Proposition 36

Recent changes in California law, including Proposition 36, have strengthened tools available to law enforcement and prosecutors to address drug-related offenses.

The ability to rapidly and safely identify narcotics in the field allows officers to:

- Apply new enforcement authorities provided under the law
- Develop stronger cases for prosecution

- Reduce delays in charging decisions
- Remove dangerous narcotics from circulation more efficiently

This technology will help the department keep drugs off the streets and improve community safety.

Use by Law Enforcement Agencies Nationwide

The TruNarc Raman Spectrometer is widely used by:

- Local police departments
- State law enforcement agencies
- Federal agencies
- Customs and border protection
- Drug task forces

The device has a proven track record in law enforcement investigations and is designed specifically to meet evidentiary and operational needs in the field.

Impacts to Council Goals and Strategic Planning Priorities:

The purchase of a TruNarc Handheld Raman Spectrometer directly supports the City Council's Strategic Plan, specifically Objective 4.6: Modernize workflows and implement modern policing techniques to improve operational efficiency and service delivery.

Modern policing requires agencies to adapt to evolving challenges, including the increasing prevalence of synthetic narcotics such as fentanyl and other dangerous substances. Traditional narcotics field testing methods require officers to physically handle suspected drugs, which presents safety risks and can slow investigative workflows.

The TruNarc device modernizes the department's narcotics identification process by utilizing advanced Raman spectroscopy technology to safely and rapidly identify suspected controlled substances without opening or directly handling the material. This technology allows officers to scan substances through packaging and receive results in seconds.

Budget Impacts:

The purchase of the TruNarc Handheld Raman Spectrometer was previously approved by the City Council as part of the Bishop Police Department Fiscal Year 2025–2026 adopted budget for equipment modernization and officer safety.

The total cost for the device from the lowest responsive bidder, Thermo Fisher Scientific, is \$36,366.00, which includes a three-year warranty and training package.

Funding for this purchase will be partially offset through \$30,000.00 in pre-approved AB109 funding.

The remaining \$6,366.00 will be funded through the Police Department's FY 2025–2026 COPS operating budget, which was also approved as part of the adopted fiscal year budget.

Because the purchase was anticipated and included in the adopted FY 2025–2026 budget, no additional appropriation or budget amendment is required.

Legal Review:

City Attorney Pucci has reviewed this item and finds it complies with the law.

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize the Bishop Police Department to purchase one TruNarc Handheld Raman Spectrometer for the safe, non-contact preliminary identification of suspected narcotics and controlled substances, and approve the purchase from the lowest responsive bidder, Thermo Fisher Scientific, at a cost not to exceed \$40,000.00.

In accordance with the City's purchasing policy, the department obtained three quotes for comparable narcotics identification devices:

Thermo Fisher Scientific – TruNarc Raman Spectrometer
3-year warranty and training included: \$36,366.00

Safeware – TruNarc Raman Spectrometer
3-year warranty and training included: \$46,586.29

Silent 6 – TacticID Raman Spectrometer
2-year warranty and training included: \$46,553.05

The Thermo Fisher Scientific quote represents the lowest responsive bid and includes a three-year warranty and training package.

Funding for this purchase will be partially offset by \$30,000 in previously approved AB109 reimbursable funding 001-020-54024, with the remaining balance funded through the Police Department's COPS budget allocation 033-033-52018.

Approved By: Ethan Aukee 3/26/2026

Approved By: Robin Picken 4/7/2026

Approved By: Pam Foster 4/8/2026

Approved By: