

TAB 6

Point Paper
“Amer I Can” Program
July 28, 2008

Problem: At the end of the 2007/08 school year, the state of Florida cut program funding in Manatee County for the “Amer I Can” program in Manatee County.

Background: During 2006 and 2007 Manatee County was confronting several issues of gang violence, drive by shootings, homicides and drug sales. After the shooting death of 9 year old Stacey Williams III by a known gang member, monies were allocated by the State of Florida to bring Jim Brown’s “Amer I Can” program to Manatee County Schools. This program was intended to educate our middle school students and possibly put an end to gang related issues at school. The program also hopes to build students self-esteem, improve grades, attendance, and build family ties between the student and family. At the end of this past 2007/08 school year, the State of Florida cut funding for the program.

The City of Palmetto and Bradenton PD joined forces with the manatee Sheriffs office and Manatee County School Board in an effort to save the valued program.

After reviewing the benefits of the program which included interviews with students, a plan was developed to fund the program. Manatee Sheriff’s office donated \$116,000 and Bradenton Police Department donated \$25,000 from their Law Enforcement Trust Fund. I recommend that the City of Palmetto PD join the Sherriff and Bradenton PD with a donation of \$10,000 from our forfeiture fund. This use is consistent with Florida Statute 932.7055.

Alternatives:

1. Authorize staff to donate \$10,000 from the City of Palmetto Forfeiture Fund to the “Amer I Can” project.
2. Authorize staff to donate a different amount from the City of Palmetto Forfeiture Fund to the “Amer I Can” project.
3. Do not donate to the project.

Recommendation:

- Staff recommends Alternative #1

Budget Impact:

- The Special Law Enforcement Reserve in combination with the forfeiture fund (account #001 351 2125) currently has approximately \$21,788 available.