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City council approves proposal of HPD's auction of surplus evidence



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A 10-day notice will be posted before the sale informing licensed buyers of the sale. Posted locations are at city hall, Forrest County Chancery Courthouse and HPD.

"I've got all kinds of things that officers have recovered going out on calls," Lt. Eric Proulx said. "You know, we'd like to be able to get rid of these things because to be honest, we have a big space issue down there."

Proulx and Police Chief Anthony Parker want [Jeff Martin Auctioneers](#) to help the department "get rid" of unneeded items and simultaneously put money into the city's general fund.

"Somewhere into \$100,000 range total for all the property that we've got available for auction," Proulx said.

According to [MS Code § 21-39-21 \(2013\)](#), governing bodies must "in three (3) public places in the municipality, notice that such property has been received or recovered," but can auction seized or stolen property "if no person claims the property within one hundred twenty (120) days from the date the notice."

Mayor Johnny DuPree cited the auction company's proposal, which included Yazoo City, Natchez, Adams County and Forrest County Sheriff's Department as examples of departments that had auctioned surplus that included guns.

Ward 2 Councilman Deborah Delgado raised some concerns about the safety of selling guns and the possibility of those guns later being used for criminal activity.

According to Proulx, only federally licensed firearms dealers would be allowed to bid on the guns during an online auction.

"It's a whole lot harder to get these than from a gun show or some individual out there that's just selling them," Chief Parker said. "My recommendation is to let the auctioneers sell them."

Mayor DuPree said, "Although I know that many of us in here do own guns, we still have a concern about getting guns into the hands of people who don't deserve to have guns in their hands. I share that. At the same time, we have almost 800 guns and other things. We're trying to build a complex and move them one time and then move them again. We have got to make a decision whether we're going to auction them off, cut them up, burn them, whatever. It's before us, we just have to make that decision."

Proulx and council president Kim Bradley said the money made from the auctioned items could be used to buy equipment for the police department.

"We've already implemented using tasers, as well as we're looking at body cameras," Proulx said. "There's a bunch of other equipment we can use to make us better at our jobs."

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