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ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS OF THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN AUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICE TO ACCEPT A DONATION FROM PUPPIES BEHIND BARS OF A COMFORT/SERVICE DOG AND TRAINING; AND A DONATION FROM FOR CAMERON TO PAY FOR FOOD, SUPPLIES, VETERINARY BILLS, AND ALSO TO PROVIDE NEEDED ITEMS FOR THE LIFE OF THE DOG. THE COMFORT/SERVICE DOG WILL BE USED FOR OFFICER AND EMPLOYEE WELLNESS NEEDS, POLICE DEPARTMENT EVENTS, AND FOR COMMUNITY INCIDENTS AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES.

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WHEREAS, the City of New Haven through its Department of Police Service (NHPD) seeks to promote community policing strategies that maintain public safety; and

WHEREAS, first responders face physically and mentally challenging situations every day, often leading to anxiety, depression, and feeling overwhelmed and under-supported. These feelings have a negative impact on work performance and family life; and

WHEREAS, service animals have been successfully used in police and fire departments by providing emotional support, with the following outcomes: reduction of stress and anxiety, lowered blood pressure and slower breathing; improved mood; and increased productivity due to better mood and mental state. One first responder stated “We are tasked with things that push us to our limits and having a dog brings some type of normalcy back into our lives. Having that comfort is absolutely therapeutic,” and

WHEREAS, the NHPD believes a comfort/service dog will provide much needed support to officers and employees and the community; and

WHEREAS, Puppies Behind Bars is a non-profit organization in New York City that breeds and trains Labrador retrievers. Dogs are trained by prison inmates for first responders and wounded war veterans, as well as explosive-detection canines for law enforcement. Puppies enter prison at age 8 weeks and live with their inmate puppy-raisers for two years. As the puppies mature into well-loved, well-behaved dogs, their raisers learn what it means to contribute to society; and.

WHEREAS, Puppies Behind Bars has agreed to donate a trained comfort/service dog to the Department for our first responder/employee wellness program and other activities; and

WHEREAS, For Cameron (ForCameron.com) is a non-profit Connecticut organization, founded after the death of Cameron in 2018 of a fentanyl overdose, to inform the community about fentanyl sales and lessen the stigma surrounding addiction. Its mission is to help others through law reform, education and public health efforts; and

WHEREAS, For Cameron works with the Department and the New Haven Harm Reduction Task Force, and is very supportive of police officers, recognizing their vital role in counseling family members of overdose deaths, etc.; and

WHEREAS, For Cameron will assume the cost of food, supplies ,veterinary bills, and also to provide other needed items for the life of the service dog; and

WHEREAS, the NHPD is grateful to be offered these donations; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED THAT the Board of Alders of the City of New Haven supports resources that benefit the health and welfare of NHPD personnel and the community; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDERED THAT the Board of Alders of the City of New Haven authorizes the Mayor to accept these donations from Puppies Behind Bars and the For Cameron of a trained comfort/service dog and food, supplies and veterinary expenses for the life of the dog.