

The Board of Water Commissioners and Saint Paul Police Department agreed in 1978 to allow the police department to establish and maintain our canine facility on Board property located in Maplewood. The initial agreement for 20 years was extended in 1995 to take it through June 26, 2028. The agreement has been mutually beneficial and the request positively received by Steve Schneider, the General Manager of Saint Paul Regional Water Services and later approved by the board.

The St. Paul Police K-9 Foundation is a 501c(3) nonprofit founded in 1994 to give financial support to the St. Paul Police K-9 unit after the murder of Canine Officer Tim Jones and his partner Laser. The original goal was to provide funding for items deemed essential but not funded by the police budget. The St. Paul Police K-9 Foundation collaborates with the Canine Unit to identify and prioritize these special needs. The St. Paul Police K-9 Foundation is a tax-exempt nonprofit corporation organized exclusively for educational and charitable purposes. The Foundation's fundraising efforts provide individuals and corporations the opportunity to support law enforcement by making tax-deductible donations.

In 2019, the K9 Foundation in cooperation with the Canine Unit began looking at the facility and its adequacy for care and housing of the canines. The K9 Foundation and its first President Larry Kelly were instrumental in the building of the kennel facility so the K9 Foundation has a natural interest in the facility along with its upkeep and suitability. Several problems with the facility were brought up that were problematic and negatively impacted the care of the canines and also required more than routine maintenance. The K9 Foundation thought this would be a good project for the foundation to take on to invest in the long-term care and maintenance of the dogs. Some of the problems are leaking roofs, inadequate insulation, ice buildup on the kennel runs outside, freezing shut of the indoor/outdoor pass through doors for the dogs, frozen and clogged drains, a lack of secure outdoor runs for the canines housed here on a temporary basis, and lack of indoor storage and training space just to name a few.

The decision was made by the K9 Foundation to raise funds to make improvements to the kennel area based on officer input, need, and advice from several board members involved in dog shows, and canine training. As planning began, Commander Ford decided that if the K9 Foundation was going to raise funds for a project to improve the facility for the canines, a lease extension would be necessary. The lease extension request was for 25 years to get the maximum amount of time for use of the improvements. The significant investment the K9 Foundation is looking to make would not be worthwhile for a project that may take 1-2 years to raise money for and another 1-2 years to build with 8 years left on the property lease. There are already many volunteer hours invested in the project and we would like the lease extended before we get too far invested in volunteer time and before spending any money that has been committed by donors.