

MEMORANDUM

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

DATE: September 28, 2022

TO: Max Frantz, Comptroller
Curt Reppuhn, Deputy City Comptroller

FROM: Crystal Carter, Internal Auditor

SUBJECT: September 2022 Gun Buy Back Events Audit Summary

Audit Objectives: This review addresses the internal controls and procedures followed for the gun buyback program event which occurred September 17, 2022.

Scope & Methodology: Internal audit ensured the established procedures and controls are followed to protect the ordering and inventorying of gift cards intended for distribution during the September 2022 Gun Buy Back Event.

Prior to the event The Comptroller's office (Deputy Comptroller) ordered the requested amount of gift cards. On receipt of the gift cards, the internal auditor created an inventory list by gift card number and confirmed full order was received. The gift cards and tracking supplies (including, a copy of the gift card inventory list and colored Post-It Notes used at the event to track the weapons surrendered) are provided to the Deputy Chief of Police.

Day of event The event and all event controls are fully managed by the Police Department following processes previously established during Gun Buy Back Events that occurred in 2021, refer to the *Gun Buy Back Event* detailed in the Background section below.

After the event The inventory list is used to track the tier level of the weapons collected for the gift card(s) distributed. The highlighted inventory list is returned to the internal auditor, along with the Post-It Notes used to identify the number of gift cards distributed to the resident for the weapon(s) surrendered. IA performs analysis of both the Post-It Notes and inventory listing, used for documentation at the event, to confirm the gift cards distributed is reasonable to surrendered weapon documented (on the sticky notes).

Background: The Safe Alliances for Everyone (SAFE) Task Force recommendation to fund a gun buyback event for the Summer of 2022 was communicated by the Assistant to the City Manager and the resolution to fund the event with an amount not to exceed \$40,000 was approved by the Fiscal Committee on June 21, 2022.

Per the approved resolution, the proposed event would award gift cards for surrendered firearms the Police Department see most used in crimes (i.e., assault rifles, semi-automatic handguns, revolvers, shotguns, and rifles), which are categorized as Tier 1 or Tier 2 weapons. All firearm types are accepted for disposal during the event; however, gift cards are distributed for only firearms categorized as Tier 1 or Tier 2.

At the direction of the Assistant to the City Manager on July 18, 2022, and in coordination with Fiscal Services, the Police department and Treasury; the Comptroller's office placed a \$37,000.00 order for gift cards in the pre-determined \$100 increments (i.e., 370 gift cards).

On receipt of the 370 gift cards, the internal auditor created an inventory listing by gift card number and confirmed the amount received matched the amount ordered without error. The supply of gift cards, the created inventory list and Post-It Notes (blue for Tier 1 and green for Tier 2) were provided to the Deputy Chief of Police, Scott Rifenberg in a sealed package.

On September 17, 2022, the Police department (managed by Captain Joe Trigg) followed previously established processes to properly track and document the type of gun surrendered and the number of gift cards distributed at the event. This process is outlined below:

Gun Buy Back Event

Two 'stations' were set up on location that were staffed by different officers. These officers never switched duties and remained at the assigned station. The community member arrives with a weapon to be surrendered in the trunk or rear of the vehicle.

Station #1:

An officer would inspect and clear the weapon. The weapon would be remanded into police custody for disposal. A sticky note would be placed on the back window of the vehicle to indicate the tier level of the weapon surrendered.

Tier	Type of gun	Color of Post-It Note
1	Pistol, Revolver, Rifle or Shotgun	Blue (\$100 gift card)
2	Semi-Automatics (including Pistol or Rifle)	Green (\$200 in gift cards)
<i>Other firearms are accepted for disposal, but no gift cards are distributed.</i>		

Once the weapon is collected, the resident pulls the vehicle forward to the next station.

Station #2:

- An officer removes the sticky note and writes the type of weapon and the numbers of the gift card distributed to the resident on the Post-It Note. The sticky notes were kept for auditing purposes.
- Another officer documents the Tier level of the weapon by highlighting the distributed gift card on the inventory list in either blue or green to designate the Tier level of the weapon surrendered for the gift card.

On September 22, 2022, the internal auditor retrieved the highlighted inventory listing and completed Post-It Notes from Captain Joe Trigg and noted no gift cards were returned.

Observations: Internal audit performed analysis to confirm the recorded tier level and gun type documented was reasonable to the distribution of all gift cards, without error.

1. A total of 370 gift cards, valued at \$100 each, for a total of \$38,344.95 (includes fees and shipping) were purchased and received, which did not exceed the appropriated funds provided by the SAFE Task Force (\$40,000 total). The remaining balance was available for advertising and administrative expenses (not evaluated by Internal audit).

2. The Comptroller's Office received 370 gift cards (the internal auditor counted and inventoried card numbers) which were picked up by Deputy Chief Rifenberg on September 16, 2022. Zero (0) gift cards were returned, indicating all gift cards had been distributed at the event on September 17, 2022.
 - Internal audit analysis of the documentation from the event of type and count of weapons surrendered (based on the highlighted inventory list and colored sticky notes) properly equate to the distribution of all gift cards.
 - In comparison to the article, "SAFE Task Force's gun buyback garners 285 firearms" (see *Appendix A*), written about the event, internal audit notes the article reports 13 more guns were collected than was recorded during the event on the inventory list/Post-It Notes. This variance is acceptable as gift cards were distributed for Tier 1 and Tier 2 weapons only, while the Police department collected all gun types to offer a safe disposal of weapons to residence.

Conclusion: Based on the understanding of gun buyback event internal controls and analysis of the documentation utilized and retained from the event, internal audit concludes internal controls were followed and proper separation of duties occurred as there were no discrepancies between the gift card listing and the sticky notes.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to Crystal Carter, Internal Auditor. Ext. 4514.