



Legislation Text

File #: 18-0384, **Version:** 1

Resolution Approving the City of Hampton, Virginia's Acceptance and Appropriation of the FY2018 Local Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BAJ)

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

The Office of Justice Programs has awarded the City of Hampton Police Division grant funding for 2018 in the amount of \$49,340.00 in federal funds. The grant is awarded annually by the federal government based upon a locality's population and crime statistics. These funds allow each designated locality to support law enforcement operational needs by allowing the purchase of additional equipment, supplies, training, and more. The intended use of these funds by the Hampton Police Division is to: 1.) Procure forensic evidence tables and crime scene canopy tents for the preservation and integrity of evidence. 2.) Procure a Utility Task Vehicle for the Police Division Range to replace an aging golf cart utilized for maneuvering heavy training equipment and transporting training aids from storage to training sites. When needed, the UTV will also be employed to help with community outreach efforts during City events and in support of mutual aid requests for situations like search and rescue (SAR). 3.) Procure optics scopes, helmet lights, and rapid application tourniquets.

Discussion:

The City of Hampton (Virginia) Police Division is seeking to utilize the funding awarded through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program FFY2018 Local Solicitation to purchase equipment for our organization that will replace aging, non-serviceable division-issued equipment. Additionally, this funding will add much needed equipment to aid our organization in continuing efforts to reduce gun violence and improve the quality of life for citizens, visitors, and businesses alike. Due to fiscal constraints, the City of Hampton Police Division's current operating budget has not allowed for funding of these items.

Forensic Canopy Tents and Evidence Processing Tables:

The protection and preservation of crime scenes and associated evidence is critical to the successful identification of the person(s) responsible for criminal acts and the subsequent prosecution of those individual(s) in order to combat violent crime. With grant funds, the Forensic Unit is requesting to purchase evidence-processing tables to obtain a proper workspace. These laboratory worktables are specifically designed for high volume forensic evidence processing by multiple users, thereby increasing efficiencies and reducing turnaround time. They offer a professional lab environment; lending themselves to easy cleaning and maintenance. These worktables feature an inclusive set-up with built in paper dispenser, lockable storage compartments to secure tools, an open storage shelf, and locking heavy-duty wheels to allow for easy maneuverability wherever processing needs exist. The top of the forensic evidence table features an epoxy resin worktop that is chemical resistant and has an expected lifecycle of over 10 years. The second upgrade request is to replace repurposed canopy tents that are not remotely supportive of the mission of Forensics. The current tents require a

minimum of 3 - 5 people to set up due to the weight and awkward dimensions, thus making it impossible to effectively erect the tent without dragging the canvas through the crime scene, a hindrance to scene preservation. New canopy tents will remove this barrier as smaller, more task-specific forensic tents can be erected by 1 - 2 people while offering significantly important protection to exterior crime scenes, particularly during weather that could compromise the evidence. These tents also include side panels that can further protect the crime scene from the elements and also, in cases of graphic crime scenes, protect the scene from social media exploitation and reduce further trauma to the community. The anticipated lifespan of these forensic tents is over 5 years.

Utility Task Vehicle (UTV), Police Package:

The Hampton Police Division currently has an aging golf cart (over 15 years old) that is utilized at the police training range but must routinely be taken out of service due to its age and repetitive malfunctions. The acquisition of a Utility Task Vehicle will allow the Hampton Police Division to replace this outdated equipment with a more modern, multi-faceted UTV that will be able to service a multitude of platforms not just limited to the training facility. While the day-to-day role of the UTV will be supporting the police training range, by outfitting the vehicle with the appropriate police package, it will allow the Hampton Police Division to make practical and effective dual use of the UTV for diverse law enforcement responses. The City of Hampton is home to numerous venues attracting visitors and local attendance alike including Historic Fort Monroe, the Hampton Roads Convention Center, the Hampton Coliseum which hosts widely recognized musical talent, NASA, and the Air and Space Museum. The City also hosts various events throughout the year such as block parties, festivals, marathons, and more. These activities often boast thousands of attendees that necessitate specialty equipment in order to allow the Hampton Police Division to adapt to the variable conditions posed by each venue while tailoring police and first responder services to ensure the safety of our citizens and visitors. Overall, the UTV is a powerful enforcement tool with the ability to traverse a variety of environmental conditions and geographical areas. It allows officers to respond to radio calls during special events when gridlock (whether vehicular or pedestrian) limits traditional methods and makes law enforcement highly mobile and able to rapidly respond to a problem all while encouraging engagement within the community due to the open air design. Due to the vehicle's ability to fill a variety of gaps for the Hampton Police Division, it will maximize its benefit as a fiscally responsible acquisition. The Commonwealth of Virginia does not require licensing/registering this equipment item.

Magnified Optics, Helmet Lights, and Rapid Application Tourniquets:

The Hampton Police Division's policy is whatever the situation, the level of danger can be minimized if responding officers approach the situation in a preplanned manner to seek a successful conclusion to high risk and critical incidents. To do so, public safety officers must be outfitted with adequate equipment to execute their responsibilities in the safest and most efficient manner. The Hampton Police Division has been operating with optics equipment on division-issued weapons that are nearly 30 years old. As such, this equipment is no longer serviceable or compatible with newer systems. The procurement of this equipment utilizing grant funds will improve the proficiencies of the current weapons, due to technology advancements, while increasing the safety of both law enforcement officers and the public. In addition to magnified optics, the Hampton Police Division is requesting to use federal funding to procure night vision optics. Existing night vision is over 12 years old and is so proprietary that it cannot be used in tandem with any other optics systems, to include the above requested magnified optics. Overall, the need for quality night vision cannot be overstated. A majority of high risk operations our officers respond to occur during the night time hours. Without the use of

this equipment, officers have to resort to using artificial illumination to observe or identify threats. Obtaining this new equipment will facilitate a safer, more controlled response to critical or high-risk incidents such as barricaded person(s) or hostage events which present an extreme danger to the public and first responders. It will also provide officers with the ability to successfully respond to acts of terrorism or active shooter scenarios, which have been on the rise nationally. The purchase will be for two (2) each of night vision and magnified optics to allow for the various environmental conditions that officers operate in. Furthermore, combatting violent crime often requires law enforcement officers to operate in high-risk settings, including for reasons such as environmental (low-to-no-light conditions, inhibited or blocked view), operational (search warrants, barricaded subjects), or subject-based (known felon, weapons or drug dealers). As much as possible, we attempt to overcome these risks with equipment to augment officers' ability to operate safely and efficiently. One of the most basic ways to do this is with the use of lighting sources to aid officers when responded to critical incidences, such as search and rescue, active shooter, terrorism, or in the execution of search warrants. Officers utilize helmet lights to illuminate their surroundings when other options (such as an independent flash light) are not practical. The procurement of these lights will greatly increase officer safety through situational awareness and while a small tool, they have a big impact. Finally, in many types of instances where traumatic impact to an officer occurs, the use of a tourniquet can mean the difference between saving a life and having to tell that officer's loved ones that they won't be coming home that night. While a difficult thing to imagine, it is the reality for too many. With this funding, the Hampton Police Division is requesting to purchase (30) Rapid Application Tourniquet Systems to be deployed with Hampton Police Division Special Weapons and Tactics Officers. These tourniquets are used to stop massive hemorrhaging due to trauma using a locking system, making it one of the fastest tourniquets (in terms of time and ease of use) to apply to one's self or others during stress. The simple design allows for one-handed use, which allows officers to use this system on themselves if the circumstances were so dire. Additionally, some tourniquets are limited in terms of limb sizes. This system, however, is versatile enough to work on all limb sizes; whether over-sized adults, children, or even working K-9's, a feature that can be critical during active shooter responses, severe/traumatic traffic accidents, or mass casualty/acts of terrorism.

The total funding for this grant project is \$49,340.00 with no local match.

Impact:

The importance of a proper police response cannot be overstated and ultimately can determine the incident resolution. The personal safety of the responding officers, the general public, and victims is the primary focus of the Hampton Police Division. Outfitting officers with the proper equipment to ensure success is vital. The goal is always to provide equipment capable of a response to best address the situation at hand. The acquisition of new forensic equipment make evidence processing more efficient and further the preservation tools of the Forensic Unit. In addition, it will greatly boost morale amongst Forensic Staff - a critical component of the Police Division but whose wellness and needs are often pushed behind others. Not only will these purchases improve the standard of forensic collection techniques but they will also go a long way towards improving the morale, which is frequently linked to increased productivity in the workplace, longevity, and retention of employees. All officers and personnel receiving new equipment will learn proper, effective techniques of utilizing the equipment in response to these types of incidents. With these projects being funded by grant funds and requiring no local match, there is minimal fiscal impact.

Recommendation:

It is the recommendation of the Hampton Police Division that the City Council of the City of Hampton accepts and appropriates the FY2018 Local Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant for the implementation of the grand award.

WHEREAS, the City of Hampton Police Division has been awarded FY2018 Local Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BAJ) in the amount of \$49,340.00 with no required local match; and

WHEREAS, the grant award covers the period of 10/01/2017 to 09/30/2021;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Hampton accepts, appropriates and amends the operating budget of the Hampton Police Division for the FY2018 Local Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant funds in the amount of \$49,340.00, with no local match, and any related supplemental funding by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BAJ) in accordance with the grant agreement;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council authorizes the City Manager or her designee to take the necessary steps to implement this grant award.