



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0262, **Version:** 1

Resolution to Accept the 2017-2018 Victim Witness Program Grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services and Appropriate Those Funds for Use by the Hampton Victim Witness Assistance Program

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

The Hampton Victim Witness Assistance Program (the "Program") prides itself on its ability to provide quality direct services to crime victims in the City of Hampton, Virginia (the "City"). The Program provides those services through of a group of dedicated service providers who have demonstrated a commitment ensuring that the rights of crime victims are not overlooked in the criminal justice process. Collectively, the Program staff has over 50 years of experience working in the field of victim services.

The Program continues to provide comprehensive information and direct services to crime victims and witnesses in accordance with the Virginia Crime Victims and Witnesses Rights Act and other applicable victims' rights laws. During July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 (FY 2018), it is estimated that 3,100 victims and 250 witnesses will receive direct services through the Program.

Discussion:

The Program is on the front line of victim/witness interactions when a violent act occurs in the City. Typically the Program facilitates the first to contact victims/witnesses of crimes to offer services after a Hampton Police Department investigation. The Program addresses the emotional and financial hardships that normally accompany violent crimes, and also helps guide and direct those individuals to available resources in the community, including, but not limited to, financial assistance for injuries sustained, counseling, and other services as needed.

The City has supported the Program since its inception in 1984 with a substantial cash contribution each year. The original agreement between the City and the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services ("VDCJS") was for the City to commit to financially support the Program by a percentage each year until it was a fully funded Program of the City. Since the VDCJS and federal dollars have been available to fund the Program for the past 30 years, the local contribution has not been a mandatory requirement. However, pursuant to Program Guidelines, grant funds must be used to supplement existing state and local funds, and must not supplant those funds appropriated for the same purpose. The City's willingness to support the Program financially shows the commitment it has for the needs the community.

The Program consistently adheres to policy initiatives of the City by participating in the City's Job Performance Evaluation process; being actively involved in the community and utilizing volunteers to maximize direct services while minimizing the costs associated with staffing. The goal is to ensure that staff are provided with the leadership, guidance and training necessary to achieve successful

performance measures while modeling the City's mission, values and principles when providing services to the victims and witness served.

The current award is a continuation grant, and is the second year of a two-year grant cycle. The Grant award includes \$296,275 in federal flow-through funds and \$98,758 in state funds. In addition the City is providing \$124,320, to be funded through a specific appropriation of the general "Grant Matching Funds" account approved as part of the FY 18 Council Approved Budget.

Impact:

Total \$519,353; Comprised of: VDCJS federal flow-through funds in the amount of \$296,275; VDCJS state funds in the amount of \$98,758; and local funds in the amount of \$124,320

Recommendation:

Approve the Resolution.

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services has awarded to the City of Hampton ("City") a Victim Witness Program Grant ("Grant") in the amount of \$395,033;

WHEREAS, the Grant award covers the fiscal period of July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.

WHEREAS, the Hampton Victim Witness Assistance Program ("Program") facilitates first contact to victims and witnesses of violent acts, and helps to address the emotional and financial hardships normally associated with such acts;

WHEREAS, the Grant award must be used in addition to, and not in replacement of other state and local funding; and

WHEREAS, the City has reserved in its FY 18 Council Approved Budget \$124,320 to support the Program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Hampton, Virginia:

1. accepts (a) grant funds in the amount of \$395,033 from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services; and (b) the obligation to contribute \$124,320 from City funds;
2. appropriates the combined total of \$519,353 for use by the Hampton Victim Witness Assistance Program;
3. accepts and appropriates any supplemental grant awards made from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services in accordance with the Grant agreement; and
4. appropriates any additional City funds designated for the purposes of that Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Hampton authorizes the City

Manager, or her designee, to take the necessary actions to implement this Grant award.