



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0320, **Version:** 1

Resolution to Amend the Fiscal Year 2021 Council Approved Budget to Accept and Appropriate the FY 2020 Local Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant ("Byrne Grant") through the Bureau of Justice Assistance ("BJA")

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

The Office of Justice Programs has awarded the City of Hampton Police Division ("HPD") grant funding for FY 2021 in the amount of \$43,584 in federal funds. The federal government, based upon a locality's population and crime statistics, awards this grant annually. 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 the funds by HPD is to purchase camera, streaming, and lighting systems to help support HPD's goal of community transparency and to replace aging laptops in the Investigations Unit.

Discussion:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the City of Hampton and many city partners, including the Hampton Police Division, have worked diligently to keep the citizens of our city informed and updated about the changes occurring in our city. To align with the 21st Century Policing Pillars, the City of Hampton Police Division seeks to outfit and update our camera, streaming, and lighting systems. By purchasing this system, the city and city partners will continue to push out weekly COVID-19 status updates, however we will reduce our reliance on local news outlets to share our messages with Hampton citizens. This purchase will allow the Hampton Police Division to be guaranteed an autonomous release of information, versus a version that is edited by an outside entity. These press conferences help the citizens of our city to be better prepared, increasing their safety and security. This move forward also helps build trust and legitimacy with the public and will increase the effectiveness of our efforts to combat COVID-19.

Additionally, contact at Hampton City courts has been reduced drastically due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With this new system, the City of Hampton enhances the ability to utilize video conferencing in order for officers to testify without placing themselves, the court personnel, or the citizens in any unnecessary danger from a potential COVID-19 exposure.

A significant portion of an investigators work is conducted in the field. In order for these officers to work effectively in this capacity, members of this unit utilize division-issued laptop computers. Having updated technology in the field will allow an officer to collect data, retrieve data, interview suspects, and write reports and search warrants. During times of city closure (COVID-19, hurricanes, as examples), the ability to maintain case load from a remote location cannot be overstated. Additionally, a laptop can be essential to an Investigations officer who is preparing for court. Currently the laptops in the Investigations unit are 6 years old. Due to their age, the current laptops being utilized in Investigations have reached the end of their functionality.

Impact:

Upgrading the cameras, lighting system and streaming services at the Police Academy will allow the Police Division to deliver information in an autonomous way. News is a vital resource and transparency in communication is essential to building trust between the Police Division and the citizens within our community. Upgrading the technology for investigators allows them to be more productive and will afford those officers the opportunity to be more efficient and effective in their pursuit of justice. This project will completely be funded through the grant award of \$43,584 with no local match required.

Recommendation:

Approve.

WHEREAS, the City of Hampton Police Division has been awarded the FY 2020 Local Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant ("Byrne Grant") through the Bureau of Justice Assistance ("BJA") in the amount of \$43,584 in federal funds;

WHEREAS, the FY 2020 Byrne Grant has no local match;

WHEREAS, the total FY 2020 Byrne Grant award is \$43,584 and will be used by the Hampton Police Division ("HPD") to procure cameras, streaming equipment, lighting equipment, and laptop computers; and

WHEREAS, the grant award covers the period of October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Hampton, Virginia hereby amends its Fiscal Year 2021 Council Approved Budget to accept and appropriate the FY 2020 Local Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant in the amount of \$43,584 in federal funds, and any supplemental funding, awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance to the Grant Fund for use 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.