



MEETING OF MAY 2, 2023

TO: Mayor Jordan and City Council
THRU:
FROM: Mike Reynolds, Police Chief
DATE:
SUBJECT: Approval of FY23 COPS Hiring Program Grant Application

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of the 2023 Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program grant application to fund two (2) police officers to be assigned as School Resource Officers (SRO) to the Fayetteville Public Schools for a period of four (4) years with a total project amount of \$746,100. The COPS Hiring Grant will fund \$250,000 while local expenses will be \$496,100. Local match requirements will be split proportionately with the Fayetteville Public Schools contributing \$339,710 and the City of Fayetteville contributing \$156,390.

BACKGROUND:

The COPS Hiring Program is a competitive grant program that provides funding for three (3) years directly to law enforcement agencies to create and preserve jobs and to increase their community policing capacity and crime prevention efforts. Each grant recipient is afforded five (5) years to complete three (3) years of grant funded activity. Year 1 is structured for recruitment and certification for new officers awarded COPS funds, Years 2-4 are grant funded activities specified in the grant application, and Year 5 requires the recipient to 100% fund the position for 1-year. Funding will be based on our current entry-level salaries and benefits for sworn officer positions plus annual step increases per our current pay plan policy. Any additional costs for positions, hired under the COPS Hiring Program beyond salaries and benefits must be paid for with local matching funds.

Furthermore, Resolution #190-22 (see attached) approved by City Council on August 16, 2022 expresses the intent of the City Council to add two (2) new School Resource Officer positions each budget year, until every school in the district is able to have an officer on site each school day. This COPS Hiring Program grant application, if awarded, will provide federal funding to mitigate future general fund expenses necessary to meet City Council's goal of Resolution #190-22.

DISCUSSION:

The Fayetteville Police Department will utilize the COPS Hiring Program Grant funding to hire two (2) police officer positions. Fayetteville Public Schools has previously requested additional SROs for each school within their district, but our staffing and budget levels have not allowed for these positions. Fayetteville Public Schools will have 17 schools within their district beginning with the 2023-2024 academic year. Our SRO Program currently has nine (9) positions budgeted within the 2023 Approved Operating Budget. Seven (7) of these positions are active while two (2) recently added positions are vacant pending recruitment and

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certification of new officers. This grant application, if awarded, will be used to add two (2) officers to our SRO Program bringing our total approved SRO positions to eleven (11) at the start of the 2024-2025 academic year.

Fayetteville Public Schools has agreed to pay their proportionate share of the \$496,100 local match requirements, if awarded. The attached spreadsheet shows the total cost for two new officers throughout the four (4) year grant period to be \$746,100. Grant funds in the amount of \$250,000 will result in the City's local match requirements to be \$496,100 with the Fayetteville Public Schools reimbursing \$339,710. The City's net expense over the grant period is projected to be \$156,390.

In addition to Resolution #190-22, letters of support (see attached) from Fayetteville Public Schools, U.S. Senator John Boozman, U. S. Senator Tom Cotton, and U. S. Representative Steve Womack have been submitted pledging their support of the expansion of SROs within our public school system.

BUDGET/STAFF IMPACT:

There is no budget or staff impact for applying for the 2023 COPS Hiring Program Grant. If the grant were awarded to us, the City Council would be asked to accept the grant award, approve a budget adjustment to appropriate funding for the grant's local match requirement, and approve an agreement with the Fayetteville Public Schools to cost-share the SRO expenses.

ATTACHMENTS: SR&M - 2023 COPS Hiring Grant Application, Letters of Support, 190-22 RESOLUTION, 2023 COPS Hiring Grant Application

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