



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Finance Committee

FROM: Rich Olson, City Manager
Eddie M. Buffaloe, Jr. Chief of Police

RE: Consideration - Application for Governor's Crime Commission ~ Local Law Enforcement Block Grant

DATE: January 20, 2015

BACKGROUND:

The Elizabeth City Police Department continues to seek grant funding opportunities through outside sources including Federal, State, Local, and private entities. The North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission is now accepting applications for FY 2015-16 funding and offering grant funding for equipment for law enforcement agencies who do not qualify to receive funding directly from the US Department of Justice JAG allocation. Individual JAG allocations for 2015 have not yet been made public; therefore, the Elizabeth City Police Department wishes to receive approval to submit an application directly to the Governor's Crime Commission for this funding so that the opportunity to receive grant monies is not missed. Specifically, the Elizabeth City Police Department will seek to acquire body-mounted cameras to outfit uniformed patrol officers in the field with this needed technology that allows for greater transparency and accountability in the field of law enforcement. The purchase of the cameras will supplement the camera system already in place in patrol vehicles (I-Cop/dash cameras) and enhance the daily operations of the department and provide greater officer safety and accountability to citizens served.

ANALYSIS:

The North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission, through its Local Law Enforcement Block Grant Program, is offering law enforcement agencies up to \$15,000 in grant funding with a 25% match on the part of the local agency. The Elizabeth City Police Department is seeking to obtain body-mounted cameras at an estimated cost of \$485.00 each, for a total of \$14,550.00. Under the requirements of the Local Law Enforcement Block Grant, which receives grant monies from the US Department of Justice (JAG Office), there is a 25% match required of the agency. To purchase a total

of thirty (30) body-mounted cameras, the City of Elizabeth City would have to match a total of \$3,637.50 and North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission would cover a total of \$10,912.50.

Thirty (30) body-mounted cameras would outfit approximately seventy-five percent of the department's sworn uniformed officers in the field; additional body cameras will be sought through budgetary funding or possibly other grant ventures in order for all forty of the department's uniformed police officers to be equipped with these important devices. Further, cameras have been known to decrease citizen complaints and, given recent national events, have become a top priority for the law enforcement community. Using grant funding would be a cost effective way to start the important process of ensuring that Elizabeth City police officers has this latest technology. Application will be submitted in this fiscal year (FY2014-15); however, if the grant is approved, the City's matching funding would not be expended until FY 2015-16.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, recommend that the City Council authorize the submission of a preliminary grant application to the Governor's Crime Commission for the purchase of 30 body-mounted cameras to be used by sworn police officers in the field and to incorporate matching funding into the FY 2015-16 budget.