



MEMORANDUM

RESPECT PROFESSIONALISM HONESTY INTEGRITY FAIRNESS

TO: Finance Committee Members

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

SUBJECT: Consideration of Application for Governor's Highway Safety Program Grant

DATE: January 21, 2014

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 Highway Safety Program is now accepting applications for FY 2014 funding and offering grant funding for equipment and personnel/training for law enforcement agencies. This grant opportunity would help the Elizabeth City Police Department to enhance its highway safety program by decreasing crashes involving fatalities and injuries and increase traffic enforcement involving speeding, DWI, seatbelt and child restraint violations. In addition, funding for personnel/training would allow the Elizabeth City Police Department to employ additional sworn law enforcement officers for the primary job function of traffic enforcement. These officers would be responsible for enforcement motor vehicle traffic laws as well as investigating traffic crashes.

Police Department
City of Elizabeth City, P. O. Box 347, Elizabeth City, NC 27907-0347
Phone: (252) 335-4321 – Fax (252) 338-0128

Analysis:

The Governor's Highway Safety Program grant for FY 2014 allows for purchase of traffic equipment and additional personnel/training.

First, if the Elizabeth City Police Department is approved for grant funded equipment under the Governor's Highway Safety Program, the Elizabeth City Police Department would be responsible for a 25% match of the cost and the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program would cover the remaining 75%. Funded equipment, including the following: (5) mobile data terminals; (200) traffic cones; (1) light tower/generator; (3) radar units; (5) flashlights with chargers; (3) checkpoint signs; (2) completely outfitted patrol vehicles (contingent upon approval of 2 additional traffic officers); and (1) sport utility vehicle, equals to a total of \$126,536.95. Out of this total amount, the City's portion (i.e. 25% match) is \$31,634.24 and NCGHSP would cover a total of \$94,902.71. *Therefore, the total budget impact for FY 14-15 for the equipment component of our 2014 GHSP grant applications is \$31,634.24.*

Second, if the Elizabeth City Police Department is approved for grant funded personnel/training under the Governor's Highway Safety Program, the Elizabeth City Police Department would be able to hire up to two (2) additional sworn police officers. The sworn police officers, if approved, would also be provided training/travel at no cost to the City. In-state travel totals \$8,000 in grant funding and out-of-state travel totals \$5,000 in grant funding, all of which is completely funded by the Governor's Highway Safety Program.

The cost of the two additional police officers with benefits as a Police Officer III is \$116,738.00 per year. Under the grant conditions, during the first year of hire the Elizabeth City Police Department would cover 15% of total personnel costs and NCGHSP would cover the remaining 85%. During the second year, the Elizabeth City Police Department would cover 30% while NCGHSP covered 70%; the third year, the Elizabeth City Police Department would cover 50% while NCGHSP covered 50%; and the fourth and final year of the grant, the Elizabeth City Police Department would fully take over the total cost of salary, benefits, and training. If approved, the City's matching funding (i.e. 15% for first year of hire) would be expended in FY 14-15 budget. *Therefore, the total budget impact for FY 14-15 for the personnel/training component of our 2014 GHSP grant application (with the addition of two sworn police personnel) would be \$17,510.70.*

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The Elizabeth City Police Department currently has a force consisting of fifty-nine (59) sworn law enforcement officers. City staff views the addition of two sworn officers (who would be specifically assigned to a newly created "Traffic Enforcement Unit") as justifiable in that increased manpower will enhance public safety and assist in meeting existing and changing priorities in the law enforcement community. Elizabeth City has experienced changes over the last several years which have prompted the Department to focus its efforts in areas including gang intervention and crime prevention. In addition, many community outreach initiatives including National Light Out and the Police Athletic League require extensive planning and staffing to be effective. While the community has come to demand and expect these important community outreach services, the regular calls for police service continue to increase every year. The addition of two more officers assigned to a Traffic Enforcement Unit, funded in part with grant funds from the NCGHSP, would be an asset to the Department and ultimately allow us to better serve the citizens who live, work, and relax in this area.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Finance Committee make a recommendation to submit a grant application to the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program for equipment and additional sworn personnel/training and incorporate funding into the FY 14-15 budget.

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