

ARLINGTON COUNTY FISCAL AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION
REPORT TO THE COUNTY BOARD

FY2017 PROPOSED BUDGET

BUDGET AREA:	Police Department
FAAC REVIEWERS:	Gillian Burgess, Jessica Olson, John Schoenecker
DATE OF FAAC ACTION:	March 15, 2016

Summary of Key Budget Issues

The proposed budget addresses the Police Department’s staffing needs by adding six patrol officers. According to ACPD, the Department is understaffed by at least 28 patrol officers. Overall, the number of sworn officers has not increased over the last several years, yet post 9/11 security concerns have necessitated transferring 28 officers from patrol duty to specialized security details. The Police Department generally makes up for the understaffing of patrol with significant overtime, much of it backfilled. Patrol officers work a base average of 2,080 hours per year, but the average patrol officer works an additional 400 hours of overtime. The biggest needs for overtime are special events (e.g. Marine Corps Marathon, Fourth of July, etc.), Rosslyn traffic detail, and Clarendon nightlife detail.

The Clarendon detail generally requires the presence of 14-20 officers during the peak nights. Generally, safety in Clarendon on weekend nights are ACPD’s biggest concern, as that number of officers is responsible for maintaining the safety and order of up to 10,000 individuals leaving the Clarendon bars upon closing. As it becomes the “new Georgetown,” the Clarendon bar scene increasingly attracts a greater number of patrons from outside of Arlington and from all over the metropolitan area, which may lead to increased volatility. Over the last ten years, the number of simple assaults reported in the Clarendon detail has increased by 126%, and arrest activity in the Clarendon detail has increased by 62% over the same period.

The Department’s top non-personnel fiscal needs in the coming years are public safety information technology (IT) upgrades, the costs of which are estimated at \$41 million by 2020. This includes necessary upgrades for all public safety IT equipment across the relevant departments (i.e., Police, OEM, Fire). About half of that projected need is the cost of a NextGen 911 system. Currently, the bulk of the costs for public safety IT are budgeted for in the Capital Improvement Planning process. The Police Department also is looking to replace funding (approximately \$30,000) that will no longer be provided by the U.S. Department of Justice through the seized assets program, which currently ACPD uses for training.

FAAC Opinion

FAAC Recommendation #1

The FAAC recommends that the County Board approve the County Manager's FY 2017 proposed budget for the Police Department.

Vote:	Yes: 10	No: 0	Abstain: 0
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FAAC Recommendation #2

The FAAC recommends that the County Board discuss with the County Manager the possibility of establishing a separate funding mechanism to address the Police Department's increased IT needs over the next several fiscal years.

Vote:	Yes: 10	No: 0	Abstain: 0
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FAAC Recommendation #3

The FAAC recommends that the County Board instruct the County Manager to work with an external body and the Police Department to assess the need for additional staffing in the Police Department.

Vote:	Yes: 10	No: 0	Abstain: 0
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Future Considerations

The FAAC encourages the Police Department to expand the number of Police Department officers with Crisis Intervention Training.

The FAAC remains interested in the Police Department's efforts to identify alternative funding sources for officer training.

The FAAC encourages the Police Department to conduct analysis of the overtime budget compared to the actual amount spent on overtime to determine whether some overtime funds could be more efficiently spent hiring additional staff.