



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:
October 20, 2025

Submitted by:
Tyrone Collington, Police Chief
Vito Tinelli, Town Treasurer
Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator

Item Title: COUNCIL ACTION | Police Department Staffing Approvals and updates for COPS Grant Funding

COUNCIL ACTION | Police Department Staffing Approvals and updates for COPS Grant Funding

Work Session Item [X]
Council Meeting Item [X]

Documentation Attached:
Updated Police Organization Chart

Recommended Action:

Town Staff recommends approval of the frozen position and funded staffing changes consistent with the FY 2026 Budget in recognition of slowing economic conditions. These modifications to the Police Department staffing codify, by Council action, the following updates associated with the COPS Grant.

The Town Council is being asked to approve three distinct actions:

1. **Deletion and Freezing of the Deputy Chief (Major) Position** – Remove and freeze this position from the staffing pattern due to budget constraints for FY 2026–FY 2028.
2. **Freezing of Vacant Positions** – Maintain the freeze on one (1) Police Officer and one (1) Sergeant position that were vacated in Q1 FY 2026.
3. **Addition of Five (5) Police Officer Positions (COPS Grant-Funded)** – Add five new Police Officer positions supported by the COPS Grant, as approved by Council in FY 2025, to the staffing pattern for the Town of Bladensburg. These positions are federally funded at approximately 38% through the Department of Justice and will be filled incrementally over fiscal years 2026-2028. The Town Council will approve these changes through the annual budget process or budget adjustments as funds are available.

Summary: The Town of Bladensburg received a Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Grant from the U.S. Department of Justice in November 2024. The grant supports the hiring of five (5) additional police officers over multiple years to enhance public safety and community policing efforts. The total award amount is **\$1,625,000**, of which **\$625,000** is reimbursable. This item reflects the budgetary and staffing adjustments necessary to implement the grant and align the Police Department's structure with the FY 2026 Budget.

Background: The Town Council previously accepted the COPS Grant award in November 2024, amending the FY 2025 Budget to authorize the initial hiring of officers as determined by budget availability. The revised Police Department organizational chart now reflects subsequent adjustments for FY 2026–FY 2028, including the impact of grant-funded positions and the Town's budgetary considerations. **These changes are being implemented to highlight the fiscal and budget constraints of the Town due to worsening economic conditions and the anticipated effects of the October 2025 federal government shutdown on the local economy.**

Recommendation: Town Staff recommends approval of the revised organizational chart and the following staffing actions to codify changes related to the COPS Grant:

1. **Deletion and Freezing of the Deputy Chief (Major) Position** – The position will be removed from the staffing pattern and frozen through fiscal year 2026 - 2028 due to budget constraints.
2. **Freezing of Vacant Positions** – One (1) Police Officer and one (1) Sergeant position vacated in Q1 FY 2026 will remain frozen for FY 2026.

3. **Addition of Five (5) COPS Grant-Funded Police Officer Positions** *[this was approved in November 2024]* – These positions, approved by Council in FY 2025, are supported by the COPS Grant, with federal funds covering approximately 38% of total costs. The positions will be filled incrementally over fiscal years 2026–2028. The Town Council will approve these changes through the annual budget process or budget adjustments as funds are available.

Fiscal Impact: The proposed adjustments are consistent with the FY 2026 Budget and the terms of the COPS Grant award. The Town Council must take these actions to codify changes and information for the Department of Justice regarding the overall staffing of the organization.

Action Requested: Town Council approval of the revised Police Department organizational chart and the three staffing modifications listed above. These changes are being implemented to highlight the fiscal and budget constraints of the Town due to worsening economic conditions and the anticipated effects of the October 2025 federal government shutdown on the local economy. This will be a fiscal note and record for the COPS Grant file.

Chief Collington or the Police Department will be available to answer questions regarding this item regarding staffing needs and operations.

The Town Treasurer and Town Administrator are available to answer questions regarding the budget and fiscal impacts.

This item is required as a formal action to provide augmented staffing information to the DOJ on the COPS grant Award.

Budgeted Item: Yes ☒ No ☐
Budgeted Amount:
One-Time Cost:
Ongoing Cost:

Continued Date:

Council Priority: Yes ☐ No ☐

Approved Date: