

**Columbus Consolidated Government  
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

<b>TO:</b>	Mayor and Councilors
<b>AGENDA SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Fy24 Public Defender Contract</b>
<b>AGENDA SUMMARY:</b>	Approval is requested to enter into an agreement between the Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit and Muscogee County for Indigent Defense Services in the amount of \$2,426,743 and to authorize monthly payments to the Georgia Public Defender Standards Council (GPDSC) for said services in the amount of \$142,330.81 per month. The monthly amount is included in the total contract amount of \$2,426,743 and it covers the cost of personnel services as well as a 5% administrative fee.
<b>INITIATED BY:</b>	<b>Finance Department</b>

**Recommendation:** Approval is requested to enter into an agreement for Indigent Defense Services between Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit and Muscogee County in the amount of \$2,426,743 from July 2023 to June 2024 and authorize payment to Georgia Public Defender Standards Council (GPDSC) for \$1,626,638 and for \$81,332, 5% administrative fee (GPDSC payment is included in the total amount of \$2,426,743); authorize the Mayor and/or City Manager to have signature authority.

**Background:** The Circuit Public Defender will provide public defender personnel in Superior, Juvenile, and Recorder’s courts totaling \$2,426,743 of which \$1,626,638 and an administrative fee of \$81,332 is paid in monthly installments to the GPDSC for a total of \$1,707,970. These services include payroll, fringe benefits, training, travel, computer hardware, computer software and legal research software. Support staff and operational expenses are funded in the FY23 budget for a total of \$555,667. Included in this FY24 contract is a continuation of funding for two Assistant Public Defenders funded from the General Fund for the Rapid Resolution Initiative that began in FY16. This contract also includes funding for three (3) Assistant Public Defenders that were added in FY17 (2 APD’s) and FY19 (1 APD) as well as supplements for the Chief Public Defender and Assistant Chief Public Defender due to providing representation in Recorder’s Court. New to the FY24 budget is a \$4,000 pay increase for attorneys paid under this contract (excluding the Chief Public Defender and Assistant Chief Public Defender) as well as funding for payment to conflict attorney’s in Recorder’s Court at the discretion of the Public Defender’s Office not to exceed \$15,000. In the contract, the prorated share of all costs are outlined as follows: Muscogee - \$2,267,256; Chattahoochee - \$5,125; Harris - \$114,000; Marion - \$12,193; Talbot - \$12,220; Taylor - \$15,949 for a total of \$2,426,743. Muscogee County acts as the fiscal agent for the Circuit Public Defender.

**Analysis:** The Circuit Public Defender, City Attorney’s Office and the Finance Department have reviewed this contract.

**Financial Considerations:** The agreement is budgeted in the FY24 Adopted Budget.

**Legal Considerations:** The Columbus Consolidated Government is eligible to enter into this contract.

**Recommendations/Actions:** Approval is requested to enter into an agreement for Indigent Defense Services between Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit and Muscogee County in the amount of \$2,426,743 from July 2023 to June 2024 and authorize payment to Georgia Public Defender Standards Council (GPDSC) for \$1,626,638 and for \$81,332, 5% administrative fee (GPDSC payment is included in the total amount of \$2,426,743); authorize the Mayor and/or City Manager to have signature authority.

**A RESOLUTION**

**NO.**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT FOR INDIGENT DEFENSE SERVICES BETWEEN CIRCUIT PUBLIC DEFENDER OFFICE OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT AND MUSCOGEE COUNTY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,426,743 FROM JULY 2023 TO JUNE 2024 AND AUTHORIZE PAYMENT TO THE GEORGIA PUBLIC DEFENDER STANDARDS COUNCIL (GPDSC) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,707,970 PAID IN MONTHLY INSTALLMENTS OF \$142,330.81 OF WHICH IS INCLUDED IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT.**

**WHEREAS**, the Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit was created in January 2005 by the Georgia Indigent Defense Act of 2003 and provides that a consolidated government may contract with the circuit public defender for the provision of criminal defense for indigent persons in Superior and Juvenile courts; and,

**WHEREAS**, the contract specifies the amount of \$1,707,970 for state paid personnel and administrative fee for the period of July 2023 to June 2024 and Columbus Consolidated Government personnel and operating expenses of \$718,448 with Muscogee County’s prorated share of all expenses to be \$2,267,256.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA, HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

That the Mayor and the City Manager are hereby authorized to enter into an agreement for Indigent Defense Services between Circuit Public Defender Office of the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit and Muscogee County in the amount of \$2,267,256 from July 2023 to June 2024 and authorize payment to the GPDSC in the amount of \$1,626,638 plus the administrative fee of \$81,332 to be paid in monthly installments of \$142,330.81 which is included in the total amount; and authorize the Mayor and City Manager to have signature authority.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_, 2023 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of \_\_\_\_ members of said Council.

Councilor Allen voting	_____.
Councilor Barnes voting	_____.
Councilor Begly voting	_____.
Councilor Cogle voting	_____.
Councilor Crabb voting	_____.
Councilor Davis voting	_____.
Councilor Garrett voting	_____.
Councilor Huff voting	_____.
Councilor Thomas voting	_____.
Councilor Tucker voting	_____.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
B.H. “Skip” Henderson, Mayor