



Subject: Discussion and Direction regarding Veto Message (Line-Item Veto – Police Services – Chief Executive Offices)

Submitted By: Dr. Marc-Antonie Cooper

Date Submitted: June 13, 2022

Work Session Date: June 21, 2022

Council Meeting Date: June 21, 2022

Background/History:

Pursuant to Section 2.32(c) of the Charter the Mayor exercised her veto authority and apply said authority to specific portions of the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 budget approved at the June 6, 2022 meeting of the City Council of Forest Park. The specific portions are detailed below.

Police Services

The following line items are **reduced** by the corresponding amounts:

100-31-3210-51-1101	(Salaries)	(\$208,132.01)
100-31-3210-54-2502	(Capital Outlay)	(\$111,867.99)

The amounts above correspond to the additional appropriations requested for the Gang and Narcotics Task force. Let me be clear, in principle, I do not oppose the task force. I do, however, oppose funding five additional positions within the Police Department when as of June 6th, 2022, there are thirty-five vacant positions: ten civilian and twenty-five belonging to sworn officers. The Gang and Narcotics Task force is an assignment. The persons chosen to fill the Gang and Narcotics Task force will include one civilian Public Education Specialist and four sworn, (three officers and 1 Sergeant). Therefore, these five positions can be taken from the current ten vacant civilian and twenty-five vacant positions and assigned to work the Gang and Narcotics Task force.

If there is a special preference needed for this assignment, then Chief Clark has full autonomy to indicate such on the current job descriptions for the current vacant positions. As such, there is nothing that prevents the Police Department from first forming the task force out of existing approved positions. Going forward, once Chief Clark fills his vacant positions, I would be amenable to revisiting amending the budget to provide for additional positions, but only after the existing vacancies are filled **and** only after due and adequate consideration is paid to the funds that the Police Department already has that could be used for this purpose. More so, at the leisure of the Council, our organizational chart can be amended to clearly delineate the Gang and Narcotic Task force designation.

Attached as Exhibit A is a chart showing the balance, as of June 1, 2022, in the asset forfeiture accounts the Police Department maintains. These funds may be used for the task force, police equipment and training. It is imperative to note and understand, these funds have remained unused for years. While it is true the Police Chief may use these funds at his/her discretion, there is no plausible or legal reason why these funds are not being utilized.

Exhibit A -

ACCOUNTS	AMOUNT	Use of Funds/Example
FED DEA Treasury	\$606,986.00	Law Enforcement Related i.e. training and equipment
FED DEA Justice (Dormant account)	\$637,338.00	Law Enforcement Related i.e. training, and equipment – Per Governing Body payments for E-911 upgrades (\$142,688.43 annually)
REDSPEED	\$211,153.09	Public Safety Use Only i.e. equipment, and training – Funds are direct deposit to account

By removing these items from the budget, it would be my desire to have the Council consider redirecting the savings resulting from this veto to other critical public safety-related purposes such as: a critically needed upgrade to the City-wide camera and surveillance systems, Omnilert, a gun detection system and a gun buy-back program to aid in removing weapons of war from our City streets. As well as to care for City maintained Cemeteries, and an environmental study of a cleaners, which is a possible catalyst site within our Downtown Entertainment District.

The City Manager is seeking City Council direction on how they would like for the administration to proceed.

Cost: \$ 320,000

Budgeted for: **Yes** **No**

Financial Impact:

N/A

Action Requested from Council:

The City Manager is seeking Council direction.