

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION APPROVING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH BRANCH HOUSE – FAMILY JUSTICE CENTER AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE THE SAME

WHEREAS, Branch House – Family Justice Center coordinates free services and resources to meet the immediate and long-term needs of the survivors of abuse; and

WHEREAS, in order to provide services and resources to those in need Branch House coordinates with various city departments; and

WHEREAS, Branch House is now required to formalize its collaborative efforts with local governments in writing to remain eligible for grant funding from the Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs; and

WHEREAS, the memorandum of understanding set forth herein memorializes the existing collaborative efforts between Branch House and the city to those in need of the services offered by Branch House.

Now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I. That the Memorandum of Understanding with Branch House Family Justice Center is hereby approved.

SECTION II. That the mayor, or in his absence, incapacity, or failure to act, the vice-mayor, is authorized and directed to execute, in a form approved by the city attorney, and subject to the requirements of Article X, Section 10 of the Charter of the City of Kingsport, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Branch House to deliver the MOU and take any and all action as may be required on the part of the city to carry out, give effect to, and consummate the transactions contemplated by the MOU and this resolution, said MOU being as follows:

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

Branch House Family Justice Center and the City of Kingsport, Tennessee

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by and between the City of Kingsport, Tennessee (hereinafter referred to as "City") and Branch House Family Justice Center (hereinafter referred to as "Branch House"), a nonprofit organization serving victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other interpersonal crimes throughout Sullivan County and the City of Kingsport, Tennessee.

I. Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is to formalize the collaborative partnership between the City and Branch House to enhance coordinated community response efforts and ensure that victims residing in or impacted by crimes occurring within the City of Kingsport have access to comprehensive, trauma-informed services.

This agreement also fulfills updated collaboration requirements established by the Tennessee Office of Criminal Justice Programs (OCJP) related to grant funding administered to Branch House.

II. Scope of Services

Branch House shall provide, either directly or through coordinated partnerships, the following services to eligible victims:

- Crisis response and safety planning

- Victim advocacy and case management
- Coordination of forensic medical examinations
- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) coordination
- Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) coordination
- High-risk case review and coordinated response facilitation
- System navigation
- Referrals to shelter, counseling, court advocacy, legal, and community resources
- Prevention education and community awareness initiatives

Services are provided in a centralized, trauma-informed setting designed to reduce barriers, improve victim safety, and support successful prosecution outcomes when victims choose to engage in the criminal justice process.

III. Role of the City of Kingsport

The City agrees to:

- Recognize Branch House as a key collaborative partner in serving victims of interpersonal violence
- Support coordinated response efforts between municipal departments, law enforcement, and Branch House
- Encourage appropriate referrals of victims to Branch House services
- Participate in multidisciplinary collaboration efforts when feasible
- Maintain open communication to strengthen public safety outcomes and victim support systems

Nothing in this agreement obligates the City to provide financial support unless otherwise established through separate agreements, contracts, or appropriations.

IV. Role of Branch House Family Justice Center

Branch House agrees to:

- Provide comprehensive, trauma-informed services to victims connected to incidents occurring within the City of Kingsport
- Coordinate with city agencies and law enforcement to enhance victim safety and offender accountability
- Maintain confidentiality in accordance with applicable federal and state laws and professional standards
- Comply with all requirements associated with state and federal grant funding
- Participate in community collaboration and system improvement initiatives

V. Term and Termination

This MOU shall become effective upon the date of the last signature and shall remain in effect for a period of one (1) year, unless terminated earlier by either party upon thirty (30) days written notice.

This agreement may be renewed annually upon mutual written consent.

VI. Non-Binding Agreement

This MOU is intended to document the collaborative relationship between the parties and does not create any legally binding financial obligation.

VII. Signatures

[Acknowledgements Deleted for Inclusion in this Resolution]

SECTION III. That the board finds that the actions authorized by this resolution are for a public purpose and will promote the health, comfort, and prosperity of the citizens of the city.

SECTION IV. That this resolution shall take effect from and after its adoption, the public welfare requiring it.

ADOPTED this the 21st day of April, 2026.

PAUL W. MONTGOMERY, MAYOR

ATTEST:

ANGELA MARSHALL, DEPUTY CITY RECORDER

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

RODNEY B. ROWLETT, III, CITY ATTORNEY