



Board of Commissioners Meeting Agenda Item Submittal

Item To Be Considered: **Application for COPS Hiring Program Grant**

Board Meeting Date: **February 27, 2024**

Prepared By: **Dwayne Taylor – Police Chief**

Overview: The US Department of Justice provides grant opportunities through the COPS Hiring Program (CHP) to hire officers and enhance the level of Police Services provided by the Town of Swansboro.

Through evaluation, risk analysis, and statistical study, the Town of Swansboro Police Department acknowledged the need for an increase in the staffing level of the Patrol Division to better serve and protect the livelihood of the citizens, business owners, and visitors of our town.

The CHP grant, if awarded, will fund the requested position(s). The position(s) would be funded for three years. CHP awards provide up to 75 percent of the approved entry-salary and fringe benefits of full-time officers for 36 months, with a minimum 25 percent local cash match requirement. Any additional costs for salaries and fringe benefits higher than entry-level are the responsibility of the recipient agency.

At the conclusion of 36 months of federal funding, the recipient agency must retain all sworn officer positions awarded under the CHP award for a minimum of 12 months.

In 2023, the Swansboro Police Department responded to 2,269 reportable calls for service, up from 2,152 in 2022, and 1,739 five years ago, in 2018. The number of reportable calls for service has steadily increased in that five-year period. In 2023, Swansboro Police Department officers performed a total of 45,525 events for the calendar year.

In 2023, the Swansboro Police Department made 202 physical arrests, up from 172 in 2022. A physical arrest takes the officer away from the town for as much as 2 hours, depending on the type of arrest. This leaves the town either unprotected or with only one officer to handle situations alone, leading to officer safety issues.

Additional officers would improve the department's ability to address the traffic issues along NC 24, as well as the side roads and in neighborhoods.

The annual funding amounts are listed below.

Year 1: Annual Salary: \$42,416. Benefits: \$13,000. Total: \$55,416. TOS Responsibility: \$13,854.

Recommended Action: Approve the Police Department to seek federal grant funding to fund one police officer position, with 25 percent responsibility on the town for salary.

Action: _____

