

**Open Work Session
Personnel Matter – Wicomico County Sheriff's Office
September 7, 2021**

Captain Richard Wiersberg came before Council and said Sheriff Lewis and Chief Deputy Baker met with the Executive about a week ago, and they would like to move forward with a one-time \$1,500 signing bonus to lateral hires. He said they currently have three lateral hires they are looking at who would save them quite a bit of money and help their open positions.

Mr. Dodd asked how many openings they have, to which Captain Wiersberg responded, currently they have seven openings. He said they have six recruits in the academy, and when they hire a new recruit, not including the background part, the academy itself is six months long and then they require the deputies to do 400 hours of FTO training. He clarified, the State only requires 250, but they have found that they get a much better product if they do a total of 400. He said they have them do three rotations on each shift, so they have a rotating shift.

Captain Wiersberg said they are asking for this \$1,500 because they feel these are great candidates. He said they are in the background phase, which is not completed as of yet, but there will be a total savings. He explained, sending a new recruit to the academy is \$4,171, so the total for three recruits would be \$12,513, but to hire these three laterals would be a total cost of \$4,500, so there is the savings. He said, counting the FTO time of 400 hours, which is approximately \$8,828 in salary, a lateral only has to do 80 hours, which would be \$1,189.

Mr. McCain asked if this is additional money, to which Captain Wiersberg responded, they would take this out of their existing salaries. Mr. McCain clarified, they are just moving money that is already in their budget, to which Captain Wiersberg responded, it is in their salary account.

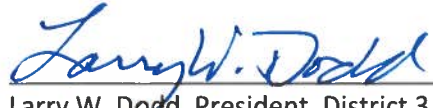
Captain Wiersberg said, as Council knows, several agencies in the area have LEOPS, and he talked to his counterpart at the Salisbury Police Department and they offer a \$10,000 signing bonus for a lateral. He said the County requires laterals to have a minimum of at least two years' experience to qualify for DFC, and if they do not have that, they start as a deputy, so they would bring their laterals in as a DFC.

Mrs. Pam Oland, Director of Finance, came to the podium and said this would be crafted with language stating there is no additional financial impact, it is just getting the authorization to be allowed to do it.

Mr. Dodd said the previous memorandum said the Acting County Executive did not object, but this one from the Sheriff does not say anything. Acting County Executive John Psota clarified, he does not object to this. Mr. Dodd said it was written on the previous memorandum, so he just wanted to make sure.

Mr. Davis asked if this is going to cost the County any money, to which Captain Wiersberg responded, no, it is coming out of their salary budget. Mr. Dodd said it will in the future though, to which Mr. Psota responded, this will save the taxpayers a lot. Mr. Dodd said he understands that, but they were talking earlier that they want to make sure they are fair to all the employees, and they have to start somewhere. Captain Wiersberg responded, they are looking at the coming year's budget to offer signing bonuses. He said Salisbury, for example, offers if they have a bachelor's degree, to which Mr. Dodd responded, he would recommend bringing all of that data the next time.

Mr. Dodd asked for a Council consensus to move forward with this, to which there was a consensus. There was no further discussion.



Larry W. Dodd, President, District 3



Joe Holloway, Vice President, District 5



John T. Cannon, At-Large



William R. McCain, At-Large



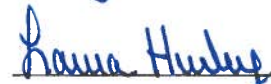
Ernest F. Davis, District 1



Nicole Ache, District 2



Josh Hastings, District 4



Laura Hurley, Council Administrator