

**Open Work Session**  
**Legislative Bill 2016-09-Classification and Pay Plan Amendment**  
**July 19, 2016**

Captain Tod Richardson and Lieutenant Richard Wiersberg with the Sheriff's Office came before Council. Mr. Cannon said he requested an organization flow chart to show where the positions are currently and where they are going. Captain Richardson said this request began when the Sheriff's Office started looking at the new pay plan that was put in last year's budget, and how it was going to affect retirements. They also started looking at the people that were going to become eligible for retirement that are in the command staff. He said they are just trying to make sure that they are providing for the future of the Sheriff's Office, which has grown over the years. He said he has been with the Sheriff's Office for 22 years. They have come a long way, and they will go a lot further within the next 10 years. What they are trying to avoid is losing the institutional knowledge. He said he thinks the County learned that lesson a few years ago when there was a mass early retirement, and they lost a lot of people who had been around a long time. When those people left, they took a lot of knowledge with them, so their replacements had to figure things out on their own. Captain Richardson said he was placed into a position where the person who did the job before him left suddenly and he was thrown into the job with no training. It took him a while to catch-up, fill the void and get back to normal daily business operations, besides beginning to grow the business and to make sure they were heading in the right direction for the future. Captain Richardson said the reason for the request is for succession planning, to allow for the continuity of government as we move on. The request does not expand the internal command staff, which consists of the sheriff, his appointed chief deputy, two captains and two lieutenants. He said that is the group outside of the Fraternal Order of Police. They are requesting to reclassify one deputy first class position, and one corporal position to two first sergeant positions. This will allow for the restructure of bringing two people to, not what is consider the close quarter command staff, but the people that are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Sheriff's Office. They will split the divisions between the Special Operations Division and the Patrol Division. He said that gives people an opportunity to be in positions of authority and do more with their positions. It also allows the ability to take those four first sergeants and rotate them through the divisions, so they begin to learn the interworking of the Sheriff's Office from all divisions. Captain Richardson said they have a lot of guys that spend most of their career in road patrol, then they get promoted and all of a sudden they are in charge of the Civil Division because they wanted to get promoted, but there is only one promotion available. They move up and all of a sudden, they are doing something starting from scratch. He said they would like to avoid that situation. He said depending on how the retirement system goes, at least three of the top six could be gone in a short period of time. They are looking to have their knowledge passed on to the first sergeants, so they are ready to move into the position of lieutenant or position of captain in the future. Captain Richardson said the Sheriff asked him to look into this as far as a practicality situation, and one of the break downs is what the Sheriff's Office make-up is. He said right now they have 88 sworn deputies, 10 police communication officers, 11 full-time civilians, 8 part-time civilians, 4 part-time civilian sworn deputies, and they manage 12 crossing guards, for a total of 133 people who report to the Sheriff. The next step was to check to see if they could afford the change. Captain Richardson

said he has been in front of Council many times, in the old structure and now in the new structure and if he comes with a problem, he is also coming with a solution along with the problem. He tries to never come before Council for contingency funding to make something happened. When they looked at what the retirements are doing, they are actually saving money because they are going out at a high pay rate, at the maximum end and they are being replaced by a recruited deputy on the low end. He said if they are able to promote the first sergeants, it would have a savings of \$57,000. When he looked at what it is going to cost to restructure, because they do not know exactly who would go into the positions, the costs are going to be somewhere between \$40,000 and \$29,000 depending on who moves up to those positions. There is also some savings with the backfill positions depending on who moves up into the positions. He said when he looks to see who is eligible to be promoted, there is also going to be savings in those backfill positions as well. Right now the costs are built into the budget for next year and they also have a line item of \$20,000 for promotional adjustments, so they are looking at a savings of \$57,000 already in the budget. For this request it will cost somewhere between \$40,000 and \$29,000, depending on who goes where and how the backfill positions work out. Mr. Kilmer said in the out years, this is going to raise the personnel costs. He asked if this will bump up what the personnel costs will be for future years, to which Captain Richardson said, yes, because they are taking those positions to the higher rate. At the same time, the backfill positions are not getting a senior deputy first class (DFC) that is maxed out being promoted to corporal. It is the five and six year DFCs that are testing well and moving up, so the costs are actually lower. Captain Richardson said when he walks away, that creates six promotions, and he has looked at the possibilities and those people would go into lower salaries than what the current person is making. They are an older agency as far as police go, especially in the top range. They could see as many as four of the top six gone in a short period of time, which is going to create a lot of opportunities. He said they have some highly educated deputies that are strong and are going to move quickly through the ranks. Hopefully, in a few years, they will be sitting in front of Council, making similar types of requests. Mr. Hall said in the proposed flow chart, it shows 35 road patrols and the current chart shows 42. He asked if they are going to downsize the road patrol. Captain Richardson explained that some of the people showing on road patrol right now are recruits who have just graduated from the academy and by Maryland Police Training Commission rules, they have to remain on road patrol and finish 12 weeks of field training. He said this is the first time the Sheriff's Office has been fully staffed as they do not have any openings. In his memory, and he has been in his position for five years, there has always been at least one open position. He said right now they have three in training and three in the academy, so that puts them fully staffed for the first time. He said also the two that are showing on road patrol as flex, they are being moved to the court system. He said what they mean by a "flex officer" is, if there is a transport that day, they try not to pull someone from road patrol, they try to let the flex officer do it. If there is someone who called out sick in the court system, the flex officer moves to cover the courts and the same way with the schools. In addition, the Court Security Division is growing, not at their request, but at the judges' request because the County has added an additional judge, which is something they have been working toward for a while, but their overall staff has not changed. He said, unfortunately, the pool of deputies that they pull from is always going to be road patrol. That is the biggest pool and when someone needs someone, the road patrol gets the first shot of filling it. Mr. Hall said the deputies rotate

from road patrol to the court system. He then asked if the deputies rotate back out. Captain Richardson said for the summer they rotated back whether they wanted to or not. When the school deputies are available, they move some school deputies into the court system and allow the court deputies to come out. This allows them to stay current with road patrol and gives them the opportunity to learn how to work the MDTs and new accident reporting system. They have several of the court deputies and school deputies on rotation. He said as far as forcing someone into a division, it happens rarely, simply because the courts give you one opportunity, the schools give you another opportunity, and the CID gives you a different work atmosphere. He said if you have a couple of young children at home, it is nice to be able to work Monday through Friday for a while, so they may want to go to the court system. He said by the time the children are 4 or 5 years old, maybe the deputy wants to be back on shift work. Mr. Hall asked if they have increased the number of part-time civilians, sworn deputies and crossing guards. Captain Richardson said they do not have a set number of part-time sworn deputies that they are allowed to hire; they just have a set bank of money. They would like to expand their part-time sworn staff, so it would take some pressure off the courts. The courts are busy in the morning and then sometimes calm down in the afternoon, so it would be good to have more part-timers; they are just hard to find. Mr. Hall then asked if that number has increased, to which Captain Richardson responded, yes. He said given the world climate, he can only imagine it is going to be an issue filling those part-time positions. Captain Richardson said Worcester County has fairly good success, which he thinks is because of their proximity to Ocean Pines with retirees, and he believes the money is better. Also, they are allowed to be part of LEOPS, so that is hard to compete with. Mr. Hall asked when you have the increases, will you look at the number of people they supervise and will that number decrease when you move people into various positions. He then asked if they will be much more efficient. Captain Richardson said efficiency is one of the goals and then training is the second goal. He said with the ability to move people from division to division, these four people will be able to operate, basically, the whole Sheriff's Office, which will prepare them to become a lieutenant. He said once you get out of the FOP and become part of the command staff, it is a very narrow path to the top; there is not a lot of movement. They have two captains, two lieutenants, the chief and sheriff. This gives them the opportunity to command a lot of different parts of the agency and gain the experience they are going to need when they do go up that path. Mr. Dodd thanked the officers for putting on the police uniform every day in light of what has been happening in our country. He said it is a job that many people do not want to do. Mr. Dodd then asked if the rank structure for first sergeant is higher than the rank of sergeant, to which Captain Richardson responded, yes, the first sergeant is the highest rank that can still be a member of the bargaining unit. They are considered part of the command staff as far as morning meetings and getting information out to the sergeants and below, but when it comes time for the higher level decisions, the first sergeants are dismissed. Mr. Dodd asked if the morning meetings are done by roll call, to which Captain Richardson responded, no, they have roll call for the shifts going out, and they have a staff meeting everyday to go over the last 24 hours and, on Mondays, they go over basically every call received during the last 72 hours. Mr. Dodd clarified that they are requesting to add two additional first sergeants, to which Captain Richardson responded, yes, but they are not adding deputies. They are reclassifying two positions; the totals will stay the same. Mr. Dodd said he imagines next year the Sheriff's Office will

be asking for more money and more staffing. Captain Richardson said there is a good chance he will not be asking for anything next year as he turns 55 years old in March. Captain Richardson said prior to today, four people knew about the request and then it was brought to Human Resources to make sure he was doing the math correctly as far as savings and what money was available, and then the request was given to the Executive. He said now that the "genie is out of the bottle" as far as what the command staff is planning on doing, if this request is approved, there will be two first sergeant promotions out there. He is not going say this is going to create turmoil, but there will be a lot of questions asked on who is going where and who is doing what. Captain Richardson said they would like to move the legislation along as quickly as possible. One of their goals is not to cause turmoil and to have this up and running prior to the schools going back into session. He said the school corporal and sergeant are very important to the way that division runs because of their close working relationship with the Board of Education, and they would like to have them in place as soon as possible. They do not want to change the officers during the school year. He said depending on who goes where there could be one or two changes. Mr. Cannon said the Sheriff expressed his concerns as well along those same lines. Mr. Baker said Council has a legislative bill that can be introduced at the next meeting. Mr. Cannon asked if this request is processed as a resolution or by legislation, to which Mr. Baker said a reclassification change requires legislation. There would be two weeks of advertising, a public hearing, and then it can go into effect. Mr. Cannon said the legislative bill will be introduced at the next Council meeting and, at that time, they will schedule a public hearing, which will be two weeks after that, at which point in time a vote can be taken. Captain Richardson clarified that they are two meetings out at a minimum, to which Mr. Cannon said it is about a month out.

*Signatures are on the following page.*

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John T. Cannon, President

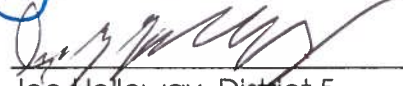
Absent  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Matt Holloway, Vice-President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ernest F. Davis, District 1

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Marc Kilmer, District 2

  
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Larry W. Dodd, District 3

  
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John B. Hall, District 4

  
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Joe Holloway, District 5

  
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Matthew E. Creamer, Council Administrator