

## FY2025 Budget Questions, Comments & Recommendations

### FCPS Operational Budget

I suggest a cut from 16 to 12 new FTEs in regular education, per Sup. Liero (saving ~\$320k)

- To be discussed.

### Human Resources

What is the benefit of replacing Comp Time with Overtime (cost \$25,000)?

- Departments have not been able to provide comp time off in the same budget year as the comp time requested. This has created a significant liability for the County. In effect, the County is using “debt” to pay for operating costs.

Was the large increase in travel for training removed (cost \$100,830)?

- Item was removed.

### Independent Auditor

Do we need to budget more here, for an independent audit of Fire&Rescue?

- Item was not budgeted but should be budgeted in Fire professional services. Recommend moving \$25,000 from office supplies and adding an additional \$25,000 to the budget.

### Commissioner of the Revenue

What does “Range change for 5 Sr Acct Clerks” mean? How much is their pay increase?

- Information will be presented at next weeks meeting.

### Reassessment

What drives the large Postage and Telephone increase?

- Required notices for assessments & reassessments.

Aside from the above and LT Subscriptions, what factor drove the budget up another 10+%?

- Required notices for assessments & reassessments.

### Treasurer

Is the 5% increase beyond those items listed due to salaries and COLA?

- Yes.

### **Finance**

Is the 6% increase beyond those items listed due to salaries and COLA?

- Yes

### **Information Technology**

What is the Refresh Program Total (reduction of \$725k)?

- These were the laptops for the sheriff's department.

### **Electoral Board**

Are we currently granting the pay increases for secretary, chair and vice chair?

- These are determined by the state.

### **Registrar**

What is the almost 8% increase beyond those items listed in the Budget Workbook? Are they adding personnel or increasing pay?

- They added a part-time employee mid-year.

### **Circuit Court**

Jury expenses are driving the budget up by almost 10%. Do we have a justification for this?

- More jury trials.

### **General District Court**

Are we rejecting the full staff salary supplement requested?

- Yes.

### **J&D Court**

Did the court provide justification for the travel and lease increases?

- Funds are budgeted for judges in case they need to travel; however, travel expenses are usually significantly less than funds budgeted. The lease amount can be reduced a few thousand.

**Clerk of the Circuit Court**

Is there any cost to Frederick County for the Supreme Court grant?

- No.

**Sheriff**

Reduce 10% incentive in Sheriff’s Office to SRO positions to 5% (approx. savings \$62k).

- Reduced 5% - \$62,000

I request information on the distribution of overtime pay over the last 3 years?

- Overtime - 2021, \$938,773. 2022, \$1,195,306. 2023, \$1,391,461.

What is the “Grant Associated Equipment – Capital” of \$500k?

- Grant associated capital.
 

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| a. Traffic message board                | \$100,000 |
| b. Echodyne radar system                | 250,000   |
| c. Underwater remote-controlled vehicle | 100,000   |
| d. Air diving system                    | 50,000    |

Remove the following capital expenses:

- > 1 search and rescue vehicle (savings \$310k)
- > mobile command vehicle (\$1,200k)
- > dive team underwater search and recovery vehicle (\$450k)

If the Board supports the search and rescue vehicle, we should at least ascertain the following: What is wrong with the old one? Why not have a regional plan for procurement to offset cost? What are the capabilities for this vehicle? How will these capabilities fulfill the mission of Search and Rescue Team? Needs and Justification needed to better evaluate the request.

- Mobile command vehicle and underwater search and recovery vehicle have been removed.
- This unit is a 1988 Volvo truck that we bought off Rocky Keplinger, who sold used fire equipment. We purchased it September 10, 2018, for \$15,000. It is currently 36 years old and has cost us \$22,606.66 to maintain it. It has served a purpose over the years carrying over \$200,000 worth of search and rescue equipment for emergency

events. The vehicle is on the replacement Matrix. It is 45 points on the Matrix chart. It has been used it over 20 times last year and early as last week to rescue people. We just saved a missing child last week.

Question: Is an additional full-time FOIA officer needed? Can this role be combined with the new Crime Analyst position?

- We do FOIA requests, employment record check requests, and Subpoena Duces Tecum's from attorneys. This person would also review body cam video for FOIA requests. There were 432 FOIA requests in the Frederick County system. There were approximately 650 completed FOIAs, Record Checks, and Subpoena Duces Tecum's.

So far this year we have had 137 FOIA's in the Frederick County system and we have done 60 that were not in the system.

It should be noted that anytime someone inquires with a request for information, we supply it under FOIA. These are ones that don't make the County System.

The function of a Crime Analyst is important to any Law Enforcement agency. The Crime Analyst collects and reviews crime data from arrests, field interviews, incident reports, and other law enforcement agencies. The addition of a second analyst will give the ability to provide one position to the Patrol Division and one position to CID. All responsibilities between the two positions would be shared.

Below are examples of responsibilities the Crime Analyst may have:

- Review all written reports and CAD generated calls for service for intel on the events occurring within the county.
- Information is then gathered and distributed to groups or individuals to be reviewed for potential future events, or case suspects.
- Research data bases for the selling\pawning of stolen properties
- Provide department statistics to the Command Staff for budget preparation, scheduling, and awards.
- Answer questions and provide crime stat reports to the public for locations within the county.
- Provide statistics to Supervisors for assistance with scheduling, evaluations, and awards.

- Assist all Patrol Officers, and Investigators, with the following:
  - Information gathering on their cases to include backgrounds on individuals.
  - Locating individuals related to cases.
  - GIS research
  - Property searches
  - Event timelines
  - Relationship diagrams
  - Mapping

Attempt to locate\identify requests.

Answer information\intelligence requests from other agencies.

Assist in maintenance of the Frederick County Sheriff's office page on the County website. Assist with the posting, and maintenance, of the social media sites associated with the sheriff's office.

Maintain, and audit the use and access to various law enforcement related websites\data bases to include, but not limited to:

- Linx
- Carfax
- TLO\Accurint

Leads-online

Assist with crime prevention programs.

Assist with the accreditation process.

Perform any other duties assigned by the Criminal Investigation Captain

Gather photos and information to produce the Frederick County Sheriff's Office Annual Report

Currently there is one Analyst position providing these services to over 140 Officers and Investigators, as well as Command Staff. The addition of an Analyst will increase the information and intelligence that can be gathered. The addition will also relieve the amount of request on one individual.

Question: Are the last four items under the Sheriff's capital request 100% covered by grants? If not, how much is the county portion? If yes, can we confirm they will not be acquired if the

grants are not forthcoming? What is the projected cost of maintenance and training for each system?

- YES. The grant requires no local match.

Question: Why is the FY2024 overtime spending approaching \$400k over the amount allotted?

- Currently, we have \$162,074.66 in overtime. Our overtime has been used for much backfilling of positions to make shifts up to required manpower for the shifts. There has been a homicide, and numerous serious call that have been handled this year.

Was more requested for the FY2024 budget?

- \$1,500,000 was requested.

Are initiatives in place to reduce overtime spending? Is there a reasonable expectation that FY2025 overtime will not exceed the projected amount?

Request: A report on the distribution of overtime pay in FY23 (total year) and FY24 to date by personnel and amount.

Question: Why are Dodge Durangos specified as the replacement pursuit vehicles? Would Ford vehicles be cheaper to acquire and maintain?

- We must take what vehicles are available at the time. There are cut off dates for ordering. We had 20 units ordered from Dodge and those orders got cancelled last year. We have scrambled to locate available units. Then they have to be upfitted. Which is another issue.

The Explorer ECO Boost V6's are currently \$43,465.80. The Explorers without the Eco boost are slow vehicles, and we can't accelerate to a safe speed to catch speeders in a short amount of distance. A Ford Responder Truck is \$42,931.75 and the Durango's with V8 are \$45,438.72. The Durango is a much better equipped vehicle for Police use. Added options that Ford doesn't have.

Under the Virginia Sheriff's contract with Ilderton Dodge in NC. cost for the Dodge Durango's is \$43,555.00

Question on the Echodyne Radar System: Looks like a beneficial system and it is listed under the grant section. In the description, it mentions Apple Blossom. Has the Winchester Police

Department been consulted on this? Even if this is a 100% grant funded item, there will be long term costs with maintenance and training, thus this should be a regional project.

- We would be using it for Frederick County projects, but used Apple Blossom as an example of times it would be used. It is a system that tracks drones, detects humans in the woods, and on land. It is land borne radar that is portable. It is 100% grant covered. Only thing needed would be software updates if they are due. Anytime we have a search and rescue during the day and night we can find the person or suspect in a minimal amount of time.

### **Juvenile Court Probation**

What was the FY2024 budget?

- \$169,807

### **Fire and Rescue**

Hire 8 firefighters only (approx. first year savings \$400k)

- Discussion Item.

Have we received an explanation for the over 10% increase in overtime hours?

- The majority of the increase is because the 8 new firefighters hired in FY 2024 are required to have built in overtime because of Fair Labor Standards Act.

What is the remaining increase of over \$1 million due to?

### **Public Safety Communications**

Is overtime increasing from \$160k to \$250k (an increase of 56%)? Why?

- Will be reduced \$60,000.

### **Health Department**

What is the justification for the 14% contribution request?

- To be discussed at future meeting.
- Please describe specifically how you will use Frederick County funds.

The Frederick County Health Department will use the local county funding to match the State funding formula to provide all mandated public health services outlined in 32.1-31 of the Code of Virginia.  
Please describe how the amount of funds requested from Frederick County was determined.

Funding levels are determined by accounting for the cost of Personnel & Benefits assigned directly to Frederick County, as well as a percentage amount of district level staffing (supervisors, managers, and administrative support), all nondiscretion and direct services costs required to effectively run the department (Contractual, Supplies, Materials, and Continuous charges). The Federal grant level support and self-generated anticipated revenue was removed from the total budget needs. The “net” budget level is shared based on the General Assembly’s Joint Legislative Action Review Committee (JLARC) formula. This type of budget is referred to as the cooperative budget and has a current funding formula of 45% coming from the State fund, and 55% from Frederick County funds.

### **Northwestern Community Service**

What is the 7.5% increase going to support?

- To be discussed at future meeting.
- Use of Frederick County Funds – We utilize local funding in conjunction with State funding, Federal funding, and fees to support all of the existing programs we offer in our Performance Contract with the Commonwealth of Virginia. Any increases in Frederick County funding may allow for the creation of new and/or expansion of current services, including but not limited to substance use services for County residents.  
How Funding Request was Determined – Northwestern is seeking a 7.5% increase for FY2025. This requested increase has two primary factors: (a) an additional 5% funding is requested in order for us to keep up with inflationary pressures, especially as it relates to a tight labor market, as well as to ensure adequate locality match in conjunction with rising funding from the Commonwealth; and (b) an additional 2.5% of funding is requested due to the growth of Frederick County's population, which has risen dramatically since 2013 (16.8%) while the population of the rest of the Northwestern's catchment area has risen by only 4.1% during that same period. As a percentage our entire catchment area, Frederick County's population now represents over 38% compared with 35% in FY2013.
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### **Property Tax Relief**

Is the projected relief due in part of whole to tax relief for the elderly?

- The increase is primarily due to increase in population and changes in the financial condition of the population.

What other relief is envisioned?

### **Social Services Administration**



Is this synonymous with the Department of Social Services?

- Yes

### **Community College**

Is our contribution again \$0?

Where is our budgeted amount for county scholarships to attendees of LRCC?

- To be discuss at future meeting.

### **Parks Administration**

#### **Clearbrook Park**

Maintenance accounts for more than half of the large increase. What is this due to, and is this a temporary or permanent level of maintenance?

- The majority of the increase is for periodic (vs yearly) maintenance. For example, trail and lake repairs, volleyball court lighting and cameras for bath houses.

#### **Sherando Park**

Maintenance accounts for more than half of the large increase. What is this due to, and is this a temporary or permanent level of maintenance?

- The majority of the increase is for periodic (vs yearly) maintenance. For example, improvements to Rose Hill Park, soccer field improvements, lake trail repair and well installation.

### **Ideas to Improve Retention**

What would it cost the county to institute automatic pay increases for years of service?

> Deputies at the top of their bracket get nothing but COLA, unless they move up.

What would it cost to cover employee-only health insurance from retirement to Medicare age, for employees reaching 20 years of service with VRS with the last 5 years in Frederick County?

Please provide justification for the below listed requested increases:

Human Resources

Part-Time/Extra Help \$22,100

- Will reduce \$20,000.

Travel \$100,830

- Item was eliminated. The funding was for training.

Advertising (Amended budget 2024 \$50,000, Actual as of 1/9/2024 \$5,047, Requested 2025 \$50,000)

- Item will be reduced \$35,000.

Fire and Rescue

Office Supplies (Amended budget 2024 \$115,950, Actual 1/9/2024 \$3,644 Requested 2025 \$392,372)

- Item included \$276,422 for laptops that was moved to capital expenditures.

Public Safety Comm.

Postage and Telephone (Amended budget 2024 \$172,075, Actual 1/9/2024 \$75,539, Requested 2025 \$224,950)

- Increase attributed to AT&T NG911 costs.

Repair and Maintenance Supplies (Amended budget 2024 \$19,686, Actual 1/9/2024 \$279, Requested 2025 \$26,000)

- Supplies and equipment for new radio system.

Travel (Amended budget 2024 \$21,106, Actual 1/9/2024 \$14,292, Requested 2025 \$40,640)

- Will reduce to \$22,000.

Also, would like to know if the Commonwealth has reduced any of their contributions and in essence created unfunded mandates factored into any increases with 2025 budget requests. What is the 5.12% Victim Witness Program increase Salaries and Fringes \$12,871 (shown in GF Summary Expenditures) attributed to?

- We do not know of any reduced contributions.

- Cut from 16 to 12 new positions for fire and rescue.

- To be discussed.

- Cut from 16 to 12 new FTEs in regular education for School Board

- To be discussed

- Cut overtime in HR department from 25,000 to 15,000.

- Would recommend reducing part-time \$20,000 and keeping the \$25,000 overtime.
- Cut travel for HR department from 100,830 to 75,000.
  - Item was reduced \$100,000.
- Cut increase in pay for Electoral Board Secretary, Chair and Vice Chair from 25% to 15%.
  - Salaries determined by the Commonwealth.
- Reduce 10% incentive in Sheriff's Office to SRO positions to 5%.
  - Adjustment will be made (approximately \$62,000).
- Cut 450,000 dive team underwater search and rescue vehicle from Sheriff's Office
  - Item was removed from budget.