

Date: 03-31-2022

Agenda Items: Staffing Requests Uniform Patrol Division for Sheriff's Office

Item Description: Four additional Uniform Patrol Deputies

Facts and Historical Information: The Lumpkin County Sheriff's Office Uniform Patrol Division is currently authorized 28 positions. Of those 28, 18 are district units, 5 are full time School Resource Officers, 3 are Command & Support Staff and 2 are full time K9 officers.

Uniform Patrol Division Authorized Positions by Year (per HR)

2015 - 23

2016 – 28 (5 School Resource Officers transferred from Special Services)

2017 – 27 (loss of position to CID)

2018 – 27

2019 – 27

2020 – 28 (added Watch Commander position from previously frozen position)

2021 – 28

2022 - 28

Uniform Patrol Division Overtime Usage Per Year (per HR)

2015 - \$33,745 (Hours of overtime 1,581)

2016 - \$38,435 (Hours of overtime 1,776)

2017 - \$48,147 (Hours of overtime 2,040)

2018 - \$78,116 (Hours of overtime 3,122)

2019 - \$87,684 (Hours of overtime 3,245)

2020 - \$61,908 (Hours of overtime 2,184) **COVID Pandemic**

2021 - \$81,378 (hours of overtime 2,818)

Prior to 2009 the county was divided into 3 zones to ensure a patrol unit was maintained in a geographical area to help with faster response times to calls for service. In 2009 Sheriff Jarrard created 5 districts within Lumpkin County in hopes of facilitating even faster response times to our customer base "Serving Our Community" (citizens and visitors of Lumpkin County). We are requesting an additional 4 positions within UPD for a variety of reasons.

Authorized Positions:

Since the year 2015 the number of authorized deputies in Uniform Patrol has not had an increased, other than 5 School Resource Officers that were transferred from another division. These School Resource Officers do not answer calls for service but are to remain on their campus at all times unless attending a community function or training for their school.

Overtime \$\$:

The above chart of overtime paid out is a direct relation to the shortage of personnel. As the number of calls and services requested increase and the number of personnel does not, the more overtime the county pays. We have a policy in place that states a minimal of 3 deputies must be working every shift. Overtime is paid to ensure this minimum is met 365 days a year. When the workload is increased, officers often find themselves staying late to complete reports and all other assigned task leading to increased hours of overtime.

Officer Safety / Line of Duty Deaths:

In recent years the attack against law enforcement has become ever pressing. We have seen the number of law enforcement deaths double from 2019 to 2020. (150 in 2019 to 358 in 2020 and 597 in 2021) The nature of calls has become more violent which require more officers to handle the call in an efficient and safe manner for both the officer and citizen. The number of calls requiring two or more officers is increasing therefore putting added stress on the limited number of officers we currently have. The Dahlonega City Marshalls (8am-8pm if on duty) along with Georgia State Patrol (generally till 11pm) provide manpower on a limited basis. These agencies are not available after midnight. UNG Public Safety is available 24/7 but limited to only Board of Regents property. Although these resources are extremely valuable, they do not ease the burden placed on our officers on a consistent 24/7 schedule.

Response Times:

When the nature of the calls become more violent thus requiring two or more officers, there is an increased response time for the citizens we serve. Although this is not true for every call, calls of high priority where seconds count the amount of time it takes to respond can be crucial. Having 5 officers on every shift with two on mid-shift will allow officers to stay in their assigned district therefore cutting down on response times. The mid-shift officer can serve as a back-up officer on calls for service requiring two or more officers which allows all other district officers to remain in their assigned district.

Decreased Traffic Enforcement due to calls for service:

Most will agree that traffic enforcement is not very popular among most citizens, however Law Enforcement understands traffic enforcement saves lives every day. With a limited number of officers handling all calls for service, this creates limited time for officers to conduct traffic enforcement duties.

Supervisors answering calls for service:

In our current state of manpower, Uniform Patrol Sergeants are forced to work as a zone unit and answer calls for service taking reports, working accidents and following up on complaints. This leaves little to no time for them to function as a supervisor of the zone units and leads to extended work hours after shift approving reports and ensuring administrative tasks are completed to accomplish our mission.

Growth and expansion of businesses and community:

Latest estimates say that the Northeast Georgia Hospital- Dahlonega will began construction in the summer of this year and conclude in the fall of 2023. With this expected growth and the hotels, restaurants and businesses that will surely follow, it is time for the county services to plan growth to compensate for this increased activity that is to come and not struggle to catch up after the fact.

SUMMARY

For approximately 6 years, the Lumpkin County Sheriff's Office Patrol Unit has operated with twenty-three mandated deputies. In 2010, the population of Lumpkin County was 30,282 with a growth of 15.69%. Since that time, Lumpkin County has steadily seen an increase of population with the rate of 2.07%. The majority of that growth has occurred in the urban areas of the County. In recent years, the Sheriff's Office has experienced staffing challenges to maintain minimum staffing of a minimum of 3 deputies during each shift. Three deputies are scheduled per shift—There are two shifts per day: ▪ Days (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.), and ▪ Nights (7 p.m. to 7 a.m.)

In 2010, the FBI UCR recommendation for full-time law enforcement employees (civilian, jailors and sworn deputies) is 3.5 per 1,000 inhabitants. County agencies reported from the same year 2.7 officers (sworn) per 1,000 inhabitants. Using the FBI UCR recommendation for 2010, it is suggested the Lumpkin County Sheriff's Office would have 82 sworn deputies. In 2021, the Lumpkin County Sheriff's Office is approved for 96 positions which includes civilian personnel, jailors and sworn officers. If we used the same formula from 2010 with Lumpkin County's current population, then we can estimate that Lumpkin County needs 122 employees for the Sheriff's Office.

Using the OPA Shift Relief Factor Staffing Model, which is widely used in law enforcement and similar shift-based professions, the Uniform Patrol Division Command Staff believe that in order to protect and serve the citizens of the community while maintain officer safety, they are in need of 4 additional positions for sworn deputies. This Shift Relief Factor calculates flex time off, comp time used, leave/light duty and time spent training or otherwise occupied. The additional four deputies would increase the authorized number of deputies to 30 in order to provide full coverage for the Patrol workload. With the requested four additional deputies, we believe overtime will be significantly reduced therefore allowing the county to be more efficient and good stewards of tax payers monies while reducing fatigue, high turnover rates and low morale within the department.

Potential Courses of Action:

1. Take no Action and continue to over work loyal employees causing them to seek employment elsewhere with less stress and uninterrupted days off, therefore causing more stress on the remaining employees. This option also continues to place our deputies and the general public at risk due to being understaffed for the type of calls they are responding to.
2. Approve two new Deputy Sheriff and vehicle positions in order to help mitigate current staffing shortages. This action would be followed up with the same request next year for two or more additional spots, depending on growth of population and business growth from the new hospital.
3. Approve four new Deputy Sheriff and vehicle positions in order to relieve the current staffing shortage and prepare for future growth with the new hospital and all of the businesses along with growth that will come with it, generating more calls for service and traffic accidents / complaints.

Staff Recommendation: Recommend course of action 3.

Thank you for your consideration in the above matter.