



Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission  
Report to the County Board

FY 2023 Proposed Budget

Budget Area:	Arlington County Police Department (ACPD)
FAAC Reviewers:	Claire Noakes, Lauren Harris
Date of FAAC Action:	30 March 2022
Presented By:	Peter Robertson, FAAC Chairman

**FAAC Opinion**

FAAC Recommendation #1			
<p>The FAAC recommends that the budget for the Arlington County Police Department on the personnel side more accurately reflect the number of FTEs that the Department expects not to fill for the entire fiscal year, due to recruitment challenges and training periods, and the projected overtime costs of meeting departmental needs.</p>			
Vote	Yes: 8	No: 0	Abstain: 1
Comments			
FAAC Recommendation #2			
<p>The FAAC recommends that the County Board request clearer performance measures in multiple areas to better understand trends. Without baseline quantitative data, it is difficult to understand the root cause of several significant changes to output measures, and whether those changes are due to the impact of covid or due to ACPD's performance. For example, the number of dispatched service calls, and the number of juvenile arrests have both dropped significantly from 2019 numbers. It is difficult to evaluate whether these decreases are due to fewer demands from the community related to covid, or fewer officers available to perform these duties due to staffing challenges. The current set of outputs often do not function as a true performance measure (with a nominator and a denominator), which make it challenging to evaluate funding levels for these activities.</p>			
Vote	Yes: 10	No: 0	Abstain: 0
Comments			

Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission

FAAC Recommendation #3			
The FAAC recommends that the County Board focus efforts on being more intentional about supporting staffing and recruitment at ACPD due to the high number of functional vacancies (80+), whether that means re-directing funds towards one-time retention bonuses, or addressing pay compression challenges, or looking at non-financial improvements (better control over schedules, more flexibility, etc.).			
Vote	Yes: 8	No: 1	Abstain: 1
Comments			

FAAC Recommendation #4			
FAAC recommends the County Board adopt the County Manager’s overall proposed budget for the Police Department included in the FY 2023 Proposed Budget, with the additional concerns on line items noted above.			
Vote	Yes: 9	No: 1	Abstain:
Comments	The no vote considered that the Department might be underfunded.		

**Future Considerations**

ACPD is working on its data dashboard to convert raw data into a format that is more accessible to the public, partially based on experience with past data requests from the public. This is responsive to recommendation 6.3 of the Hillard Heintze 2021 report. If this dashboard helps reduce the frequency of repeat information requests that have to be processed, it will help reduce staffing demands in the long run. However, when a department is in control of creating its own data dashboard, it is able to tell the story in a certain way (or omit details) that can actually distort the big picture. More evaluation of this dashboard once it is complete is recommended to determine if the result is in fact responsive to the recommendation of supporting open data and transparency.