



# City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

## Office of the City Manager

409 South Main Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802  
(540) 432-7701 / FAX (540) 432-7778

Kurt D. Hodgen  
City Manager

TO: Kurt Hodgen, City Manager  
CC: Ande Banks, Assistant City Manager  
FROM: Chief Stephen Monticelli  
DATE: 09/01/2017  
RE: Use of asset forfeiture money to purchase Child Identification and DNA kits

### **Summary:**

Consider a supplemental appropriation for the Police Department in the amount of \$9,135.00 from state asset funds (to be used for Law Enforcement purposes only). Funds will be used for purchasing a new system to provide child id fingerprinting and DNA kits to parents at special events. Our current technology being used for the identification of children during community events is out of date when compared to current technologies being used by law enforcement agencies across the country.

### **Background:**

Since the 1990's, HPD has provided a service to community members which involves Child Identification Kits for parents and caregivers. In the past it consisted of taking ink fingerprints of children at public events and educating families on the importance of preventing abductions and missing children. In the mid 2000's, HPD acquired a system that aided in the process by using a laptop computer along with digitally capturing fingerprints and photographs to give to the parents in case of an emergency. The child's information is not stored in any type of database by HPD or other organization, and the information is printed on an 8.5" by 11" piece of paper and given to the parents for safekeeping. Parents are advised to update the fingerprints every year and, most importantly, to keep updated photographs of their child available in case of an emergency. In the unfortunate event of abduction or missing child, the parents and/or caregivers will be in an extremely emotional state. The purpose of the program is to give the kit to law enforcement as it will provide a rapid response with efficient, accurate and current information. The picture is a crucial item for immediate action; whether it is a responding patrol officer, security guard, store clerk, or the media. Fingerprints and DNA are utilized for the recovery of a child after an unthinkable event, along with being important information for law enforcement use during an investigation.

The proposal for obtaining a new system includes the use of asset forfeiture funds to purchase an updated computer system and software, fingerprint and photograph capture equipment, and most notably a PVC Identification Printer that allows parents and caregivers to have immediate access to their child's picture and descriptive data in the form of a plastic wallet or purse card. HPD's previous procedure was to provide a paper printout of the data and photograph, which the parents or caregivers most likely kept at home. This procedure did not fully utilize available technologies, but this proposal would utilize a system from EZ Child ID Systems, which features an option of providing parents with Apple or Android phones the ability to download their child's fingerprint and photo data from the HPD event to their phone or other digital device through a mobile application. The system would provide a complete process in order to equip HPD to provide, free of charge to the parents, a professional and long lasting ID card which would be essential in the event of an emergency.



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Unfortunately, a child identification kit will not prevent abduction but this program would assist HPD officers to interact in a positive way with the public while reinforcing the importance of vigilance to parents and caregivers. One of the most important processes is to have discussions with the families and the children educating them on abduction and other safety issues. In order to be proactive and to assist members of the community to be properly prepared for an event such as a missing or an abducted child, it is essential to provide services such as those described in this proposal.

### **Key Issues:**

### **Environmental Impact:**

None

### **Fiscal Impact:**

HPD's yearly budget will supply ongoing materials such as ink, paper and cleaning supplies and PVC cards after the initial supply is depleted.

### **Prior Actions:**

On several occasions HPD personnel have attempted to update different components in order to continue to use the old system. During the last two events the system has failed to produce the required documents due to different errors. Also the system is running an outdated operating system that requires the downloading of patches to upgrade the technology so it can communicate with printers and other devices.

### **Alternatives:**

None Identified

### **Community Engagement:**

HPD conducts these events approximately three to four times each year based on public requests and events. Previous partners included Costco, Joe Bowman Chevrolet, Chic Fil-A, Valley Mall Police Week, Title Max Loans, and various church and day care groups. Each event is held for three to four hours and on a good turnout HPD personnel can identify 20 to 30 children. Educational resources are provided to parents along with other community resource materials.

### **Recommendation:**

The Harrisonburg Police Department (HPD) Community Services Unit feels that implementing this proposal will provide important opportunities to interact with the public during these events. We are aware that the Virginia DMV will produce identification cards for a fee. HPD, however, will provide the information to the families for free.



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### **Attachments:**

Attached are the estimates from EZ Child ID and Staples for an estimated cost of the DNA kits.

### **Review:**

*The initiating Department Director will place in Legistar, in sequence of transmittal, the names of each department that must initial their review in order for this item to be placed on the City Council agenda. The completion of review only addresses the readiness of the issue for Council consideration. This does not address the recommendation for approval or denial of the issue.*