



# City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

## Office of the City Manager

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

Eric D. Campbell  
City Manager

TO: Eric Campbell, City Manager  
FROM: Chris Brown  
DATE: 10/15/2109  
RE: Update of City Ordinance Sections Regulating Auxiliary Police Force

**Summary:** The Chief of Police has requested several changes to certain city ordinances which regulate HPD's Auxiliary Police Force. The requested changes make the ordinance sections consistent with applicable state law, increase the potential number of auxiliary officers, and make residency and age requirements consistent with regular police officers. The changes also provide more flexibility to the Chief to determine disqualifying conflicts of interests.

**Background:** For many years the City has had an auxiliary police force to assist regular HPD officers during emergencies and when the number of regular officers is insufficient, such as parades and special events. The Chief of Police has requested several changes to Title 5, Chapter 6 of the City Code, which regulates the City's auxiliary police force.

The changes proposed to Sections 5-6-4, 5-6-7, and 5-6-8 merely change some wording so that those sections are consistent with the authorizing state code sections.

The proposed amendment to section 5-6-5 increases the potential number of auxiliary officers from 25 to 35. This amendment is to provide for future growth of the auxiliary force. There currently are no plans to expand the auxiliary force to 35 members. Any future increase in the actual number of auxiliary officers would be approved as part of the budgeting process.

The proposed amendments to Section 5-6-12 make residency and age requirements for auxiliary officers the same as regular officers. Auxiliary officers would have to reside within a one hour commute of the Public Safety Building. Auxiliary officers must still be at least 21 years of age, but now must retire from their sworn position at age 70, with the ability to continue serving in an administrative capacity as determined by the Chief.

The proposed amendment to Section 5-6-13 eliminates certain categories of individuals who are deemed to have a conflict of interest and therefore are prohibited from serving as an auxiliary officer. The proposed change would allow the Chief more flexibility in determining conflicts of interest after consideration of the candidate's actual employment situation. For example, at least one firefighter has expressed interest in becoming an auxiliary police officer. With this proposed amendment, the Chief of Police could approve such an applicant after consultation with the Fire Chief.

**Key Issues:** See above.

**Environmental Impact:** None



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**Fiscal Impact:** No immediate fiscal impact. The current cost to equip an auxiliary officer is approximately \$11,000. An increase in the number of auxiliary officers would occur only after an appropriation following budget approval.

**Prior Actions:** None.

**Alternatives:**

- (a) Approve all the recommended amendments
- (b); or approve one or more of the recommended amendments.
- (c) reject all the recommended amendments.

**Community Engagement:** None.

**Recommendation:** Staff recommends approval of all the proposed amendments.

**Attachments:**

RE: Applicable code sections with proposed amendments highlighted.

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**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.*

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