



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Office of the City Manager

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Eric D. Campbell
City Manager

TO: Mayor and Members of City Council
FROM: Eric D. Campbell
DATE: January 8, 2019
RE: Virginia First Cities Membership

Summary: Virginia First Cities is an advocacy organization that focuses on the specific issues facing Virginia's independent cities. Current membership includes Charlottesville, Danville, Hopewell, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Newport News, Norfolk, Petersburg, Portsmouth, Richmond, Staunton, Williamsburg and Winchester. In addition to advocating on behalf of Virginia's cities the organization also provides resources and information for use in benchmarking, and policy consideration.

Background: Information on the Virginia First Cities Coalition was provided to City Council at a previous Council meeting. The Virginia First Cities Coalition has been in existence for approximately twenty years. Harrisonburg originally joined Virginia First Cities in 2010 and was last a member as recently as 2013.

Key Issues: The Virginia First Cities Coalition focuses on funding and policy issues unique to older independent cities in the Commonwealth of Virginia. As a member of Virginia First Cities, the City of Harrisonburg will be provided two seats on the coalition's board of directors, one for a City Council member and one for the City Manager.

Environmental Impact: N/A

Fiscal Impact: The Virginia First Cities' membership dues are calculated by a formula. The formula includes a base fee of \$10,500 plus \$.15 per the city population for each city. The current annual fee calculated for Harrisonburg would be \$18,703. The initial dues will be prorated half-year for an initial cost of \$9,352.

Alternatives:

- (a) Approve the City Manager's recommendation to join the Virginia First Cities Coalition; or,
- (b) Decline the City Manager's recommendation

Community Engagement: N/A

Recommendation: Based on the resources available to members and the additional advocacy on our behalf, it is my recommendation the City consider becoming a member of Virginia First Cities. Additionally, appoint a City Council liaison to serve on the Virginia First Cities Board of Directors.

- Attachments:**
- (1) FY 2018 Annual Report
 - (2) Draft VFC Legislative Program - 2019

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.