COUNCIL MEMBER LETITIA PLUMMER DDS

Houston City Council At-Large Position 4

At-Large 4 Budget Amendments

Amendment Number 4.01

The FY 21 Comprehensive Policing Reform Amendment

This amendment utilizes $11,791,646 realized by eliminating 199 vacant positions within the Police Department over the last 6 months, and redistributes it in the following ways:

1. $2M is used to fund the Independent Police Oversight Board. Currently, the Board does not conduct its own investigations of alleged misconduct by the Police Department, but rather reviews investigations conducted internally by the Department. To achieve true independence, the funds will be used to enable the Board to conduct investigations separate from the Police Department of its officers and alleged misconduct.
2. $1M will be used to procure services to establish an online portal for Houstonians to report police misconduct directly to the Independent Police Oversight Board.
3. $3M is used for new and enhanced ongoing Police training in de-escalation, cultural sensitivity, and unconscious bias. Currently, similar trainings are not conducted with the same officers on an ongoing basis; often occur only once per cohort, and do not touch the breath and scope of the Department. The funds will be used to ensure follow up training take place and will be tailored to provide officers with context to specific cultures, ethnicities, and religions when they engage them.
4. $2M is used to establish a permanent revolving fund for the Office of Business Opportunity. The Director of OBO will be empowered to create a program to use the funds as no-interest loans for Minority Owned Businesses and set the guidelines for recipients.
5. $2M will be used to enhance the Health Department's Community Re-Entry Network Program.
6. $500K will be used to enhance the Health Department's My Brother's Keeper Program.
7. $1M for equipment and implementation of the CAHOOTS Program (this is subject to passage of amendment 4.02).

In addition to the above, within 30 days, an HPD Use of Force Ordinance will come before Council detailing the following updates to Use of Force Policy:

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1. A requirement that officers exhaust all other reasonable means before shooting. Research shows this policy produces a reduction in officer involved deadly use of force by **25%**.
2. A ban on chokeholds and strangle holds. Research shows this policy produces a reduction in officer involved deadly use of force by **22%**.
3. A requirement officers de-escalate situations when possible. Research shows this policy produces a reduction in officer involved deadly use of force by **15%**.
4. A requirement that officers give a verbal warning, when possible, before shooting. Research shows this policy produces a reduction in officer involved deadly use of force by **5%**.
5. Notification to the Independent Police Oversight Board whenever a use of deadly force occurs.
6. Subpoena Power for the Independent Police Oversight Board.

Amendment Number 4.02

Crisis Assistance: Helping Out On The Streets—CAHOOTS

This amendment proposes to defund one of the five FY21 Police Cadet Classes and repurpose the money for the creation of a mental health mobile response unit to aide the Police Department in non-threatening, lower priority calls. Members of the Response Team will be employees of the Houston Police Department. The purpose of the Response Team is to divert non-threatening calls away from traditional classified officers, so they can focus on higher priority, more threatening calls.

The pilot will be modeled on the CAHOOTS program in Eugene, OR—which has been in operation since 1989. The CAHOOTS model utilizes a team of mental health crisis workers and emergency medical technicians. The teams will be dispatched through the same system used for dispatch within the Police Department.

SERVICES:

CAHOOTS services will divert many residents away from the criminal justice system by responding to call types that would have otherwise resulted in interactions with law enforcement

such as (but not limited to): Public Intoxication, Disorderly Behavior, Dispute and Mediation, Trespassing, Secure Sobering, etc. Other services include: Crisis Counseling, Suicide Prevention, Welfare Checks, Harm Reduction, Substance Abuse, First Aid and Non-Emergency Medical Care, Resource Connection and Referral, Transportation to Services.

HOW IT WORKS (Dispatch):

Requests are received from residents via police non-emergency lines. Calls are then triaged by 911 call center operators who then dispatch CAHOOTS teams. CAHOOTS teams receive dispatch calls via radio on non-priority police channels.

BY THE NUMBERS:

In 2018, CAHOOTS responded to 24,000 calls (nearly 1 in 5 calls that otherwise would have been responded to by a classified officer), around 3,300 of these calls were initiated by or involved classified patrol officers. Of these 3,300 around 150 involved the CAHOOTS team requesting backup from a classified officer.

IMPLEMENTATION:

This amendment proposes giving the Chief of Police six months to work with CAHOOTS affiliates to establish a pilot program in Houston, and then begin recruiting, hiring, and training CAHOOTS staff.