

Resolution No.: 20-317  
Introduced: October 3, 2023  
Adopted: November 7, 2023

**COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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Lead Sponsor: Council President at the Request of the County Executive

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**SUBJECT:** Supplemental Appropriation #24-21 to the FY24 Operating Budget  
Montgomery County Government  
Department of Police  
Drone as First Responder Pilot Program, \$350,000

**Background**

1. Section 307 of the Montgomery County Charter provides that any supplemental appropriation shall be recommended by the County Executive who shall specify the source of funds to finance it. The Council shall hold a public hearing on each proposed supplemental appropriation after at least one week's notice. A supplemental appropriation that would comply with, avail the County of, or put into effect a grant or a Federal, State or County law or regulation, or one that is approved after January 1 of any fiscal year, requires an affirmative vote of six Councilmembers. A supplemental appropriation for any other purpose that is approved before January 1 of any fiscal year requires an affirmative vote of seven Councilmembers. The Council may, in a single action, approve more than one supplemental appropriation. The Executive may disapprove or reduce a supplemental appropriation, and the Council may reapprove the appropriation, as if it were an item in the annual budget.
2. The County Executive has requested the following FY24 Operating Budget appropriation increases for the Department of Police:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$0	\$350,000	\$350,000	General Fund Undesignated Reserves

3. This program is proposed to enhance community safety in Silver Spring (3D) and Wheaton (4D) based on call volume, police staffing, and crime trends analysis. This appropriation will allow the Montgomery County Department of Police (MCPD) to evaluate the impact of using an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) to respond to police calls for service with the goal of arriving at the scene prior to, or in conjunction with, dispatched police officers. The UAS can evaluate the scene; provide information to responding officers; allow for de-escalation and improved decision-making; and increase the efficiency of services. The UAS will not be used as a substitute for dispatching patrol officers but may allow for officers to be placed back in service or diverted to other pending calls. The appropriation will support program infrastructure, equipment, and contract staff.
4. The County Council is committed to safety, transparency, and protecting community members' civil rights. The pilot program will adhere to MCPD Policy FC460, and it will:
  - a. Not engage in general surveillance;
  - b. Not use facial recognition technology for recordings or images;
  - c. Not operate during events related to first amendment rights unless responding to an appropriate service call;
  - d. Ensure data collection and record keeping capabilities are fully functional before the program begins, and if collecting and publishing specified flight data on a daily basis is not possible, the DFR will not be deployed. "Fully functional" includes: (i) collecting and publishing the following data on a daily basis: date, time, case/incident number, location, type of call, and mapped flight path for each flight; and (ii) collecting the camera angle and recording status for the duration of each flight;
  - e. When enroute to and from a call for service, ensure the cameras are pointed upward to the sky and not recording anything below;
  - f. Provide regular pilot program updates to the County and notify the Council of any planned changes that materially impact program operations or data collection, before changes are put in place;
  - g. Not respond to calls for incidents that occurred earlier and there are no immediate safety concerns on scene;
  - h. Not be used to respond to the following types of service calls:
    1. Noise complaints;
    2. Parking complaints;
    3. Animal-related calls;
    4. Found or lost property;
  - i. Ensure any civilian complaints are referred to the Police Accountability Board;
  - j. Ensure DME recordings are securely stored and retained according to the Department's retention schedule and consistent with state law and existing evidence protocols, unless a specific request is made to store them for a longer period of time by a person authorized by the Department. Non-evidentiary DME recordings must be destroyed after 366 days unless the Department deems it necessary to retain the recording for a longer period of time.
5. The County Executive recommends a supplemental appropriation to the FY24 Operating Budget in the amount of \$350,000 for the First Responder Pilot Program General Fund and specifies that the source of funds will be General Fund Undesignated Reserves.

6. Notice of public hearing was given and a public hearing was held.

**Action**

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following action:

A supplemental appropriation to the FY24 Operating Budget of the Department of Police is approved as follows:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$0	\$350,000	\$350,000	General Fund Undesignated Reserves

This is a correct copy of Council action.



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Sara R. Tenenbaum  
Clerk of the Council