

Committee: None

Staff: Susan J. Farag, Legislative Analyst

Purpose: To receive testimony/final action - vote expected

Keywords: #ViolenceReduction; #Police; #PublicSafety

AGENDA ITEM #13

June 14, 2022

Public Hearing/Action

SUBJECT

Hearing/Action: Special Appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget
Department of Police, COVID-19 ARPA Relief Funds (\$731,125)
(Source of Funds: Federal Aid)

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None.

COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Council is scheduled to hold its public hearing and take action during this meeting.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- The Council reviewed the proposed funding options for the remaining \$27.5 million in unallocated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding on April 19, 2022.¹ The Council supported these proposals with some amendments. The subject resolution appropriates the tranche identified for violence reduction/public safety programs.
- This supplemental appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget of the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) will provide a targeted emergency response to address an increase in pandemic-associated gun violence, particularly in the Silver Spring area. The total appropriation is \$731,125.
 - \$471,875 will be used to create a Violent Crime Information Center, with four crime analysts that conduct link analysis, track weapons data, and generate violent crime statistical reports for Command Staff. It includes funding for supplies and training. These efforts will help identify individuals who can participate in group violence prevention initiatives.
 - \$156,250 for a Gun Violence Intervention Initiative. This violence prevention best practice requires partnerships with Street Outreach Network in HHS. A portion of this funding is to hire two hospital navigator positions at Suburban Hospital that will help mediate conflicts during gang and violent situations.
 - \$37,500 for Youth and Family Violence Prevention. This initiative will allow for much broader advertising and outreach regarding the County's domestic violence

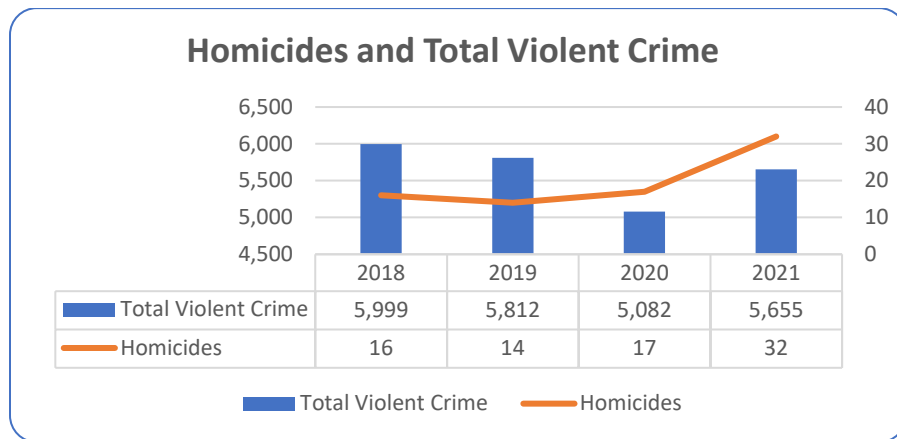
¹ [American Rescue Plan Update](#), April 22, 2022, staff report

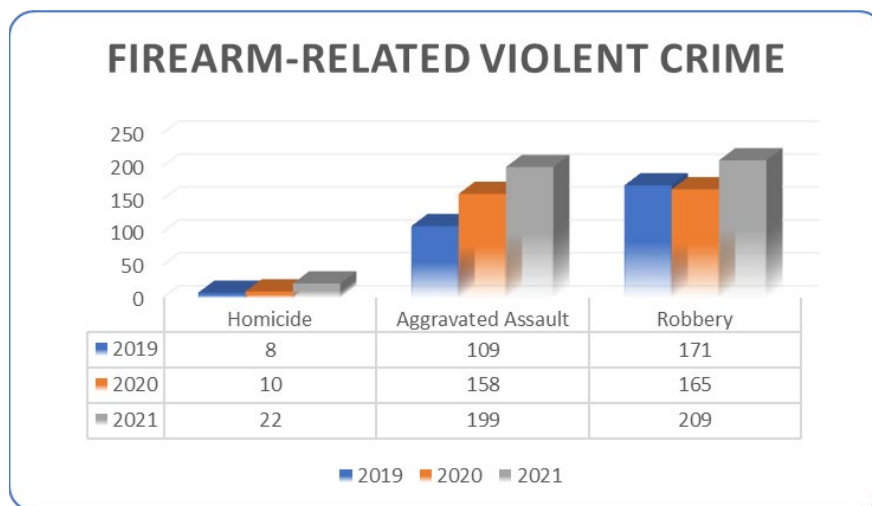
prevention programs. MCPD will coordinate with the Family Justice Center and the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council.

- \$65,500 for the Midnight Madness Activities Program Pilot. The Police Department is attempting to launch a Midnight Madness basketball league with the Montgomery County Recreation Department and Police Foundation to provide a 3 on 3 basketball league at one recreation center. This program will provide a free basketball league to youths ages 14 through 17 on Friday evenings. The participants will have access to other activities available at the recreation center.

DISCUSSION/ISSUE

Over the past two years, Montgomery County has experienced a significant increase in violent crime. In 2020, homicides while homicides increased by 20% across the nation, in Montgomery County, they increased by 29%. In 2021, County homicides increased by 88% over the prior year. Of the 32 homicides last year, 22 were committed with firearms. Last October, there were two events where an inordinately large numbers of shots were fired. On October 3rd in a Central Business District drive-by/jump out incident on Georgia Avenue, more than 50 shots were fired from both handguns and a rifle. Two victims were hit, and multiple storefronts and parked cars were struck. On October 16th in the Central Business District on Fenton Street, 45 casings were recovered from a running shoot-out along the street. Several cars and apartments were also struck.





For 2022, the County has seen 15 homicides and Police have recovered 727 guns, of which, 105 are Privately Manufactured Firearms (PMFs, also known as ghost guns). These numbers show a significant increase over last year's data. In all of 2021, the Department recovered a total of 1,192 guns, of which 72 were PMFs.

Federal ARPA Funding Used to Prevent and Reduce Violence

The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) program, a part of the American Rescue Plan, delivers \$350 billion to state, local, and Tribal governments across the country to support their response to and recovery from the COVID-19 public health emergency. Federal ARPA funding guidelines permit local jurisdictions to use SLFRF funding for specified purposes, including violence prevention and reduction. The final Treasury rule states:

“Enumerated eligible uses that respond to an increase in gun violence may be pursued in communities experiencing an increase in gun violence associated with the pandemic, specifically:

- Hiring law enforcement officials—even above pre-pandemic levels—or paying overtime where the funds are directly focused on advancing community policing strategies for gun violence,
- additional enforcement efforts to reduce gun violence exacerbated by the pandemic, including prosecuting gun traffickers, dealers, and other parties contributing to the supply of crime guns, as well as collaborative federal, state, and local efforts to identify and address gun trafficking channels, and
- investing in technology and equipment to allow law enforcement to more efficiently and effectively respond to the rise in gun violence resulting from the pandemic, for example technology to assist in the identification of guns whose serial numbers have been damaged.”²

The final rule further provides guidance on specific types of eligible services:

² [Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, Department of the Treasury, Final rule, p. 4357.](#)

- “Evidence-based practices like focused deterrence, street outreach, violence interrupters, and hospital-based violence intervention models, complete with wraparound services such as behavioral therapy, trauma recovery, job training, education, housing and relocation services, and financial assistance; and
- Capacity-building efforts at community violence intervention programs like funding more intervention workers, increasing their pay, providing training and professional development for intervention workers, and hiring and training workers to administer the programs.”³

Council staff worked with the Department to provide four proposals that will help identify and prevent gun violence:

- **Violent Crime Information Center:** This Center’s primary purpose will be to support law enforcement operations using data, analysis, and investigative support, enabling real-time crime suppression. The Center will be staffed with crime analysts, investigators, communication specialists, and led by a manager to choreograph incident response and manage Departmental resources. The Center will use a variety of law enforcement techniques and technology such as license plate readers, investigative databases, security video, and regional intelligence to bring data and information for real-time response support and investigative support of ongoing incidents and cases. The Center will also support incidents such as an Emergency Response Team activation for issues such as barricades or ongoing crime sprees such as street robberies, carjackings, and shootings. The funding will provide four new crime analyst positions and associated supplies and training. It will also be used for technology needs that help enhance data synthesis from different sources. Rapid analysis of data will enable law enforcement to target, prevent, and suppress violence more precisely.⁴
- **Gun Violence Intervention Initiative:** This initiative will help enhance partnerships between MCPD and the Street Outreach Network. Funding will also provide two contractual hospital navigator positions at a local hospital that will help mediate conflicts that have resulted from or may cause violence.⁵ Since the overlap of victim and offender is well-documented, identifying victims of community violence and connecting them to resources and supports helps reduce both victimization and violent criminal activity.⁶
- **Youth and Family Violence Prevention:** This funds advertising and outreach regarding the County’s domestic violence prevention programs. Since 2020, the severity of domestic violence incidents has increased, particularly strangulations. MCPD will coordinate with the Family Justice Center and the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council in their outreach efforts.⁷
- **Midnight Madness Activities Program Pilot.** The Police Department is launching a Midnight Madness basketball league with the Montgomery County Recreation Department and Police

³ p. 4357.

⁴ [Crime Prevention through Intelligence-Led Policing](#), Bureau of Justice Assistance

⁵ In one study, researchers saw “an 83% decrease in repeat hospitalization due to violent injury, and a 75% reduction in violent criminal activity for VIP participants. Employment rate at the time of follow-up was 82% for VIP participants as compared with 20% for those not receiving the intervention.” [Violence Intervention Program, Baltimore](#)

⁶ [The Victim-Offender Overlap: Examining the Relationship Between Victimization and Offending](#)

⁷ [Materials for Outreach and Education](#), Domestic Violence Coordinating Council

Foundation to provide a 3-on-3 basketball league at one recreation center. This program will be located at the White Oak Community Recreation Center, and provide a free basketball league to youths ages 14 through 17 on Friday evenings. The participants will have access to other activities available at the recreation center. Positive youth engagement, including non-enforcement engagement, is a best practice for reducing crime and building police legitimacy.⁸

This Staff Report Contains:

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Proposed Resolution

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⁸ [A field experiment on community policing and police legitimacy](#)

Resolution No: _____
Introduced: _____
Adopted: _____

COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: Council President

SUBJECT: Special Appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget
Montgomery County Government
Department of Police
(Source of Funds: Federal Aid)

Background

1. Section 308 of the Montgomery County Charter provides that a special appropriation: (a) may be made at any time after public notice by news release; (b) must state that the special appropriation is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency or to act without delay in the public interest; (c) must specify the revenues necessary to finance it; and (d) must be approved by no fewer than six members of the Council.
2. A new coronavirus disease, named COVID-19, appeared in China in December 2019, and spread extremely quickly. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the disease a pandemic.
3. President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) on March 11, 2021, to support the country's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The County Government is expected to receive 204.1 million in two equal tranches to support its efforts to recover from the pandemic.
4. The U.S. Treasury final rule for ARPA funding states that ARPA funds may be used to respond to an increase in gun violence associated with the pandemic. Specifically, funding may be used for "evidence-based practices like focused deterrence, street outreach, violence interrupters, and hospital-based violence intervention models, complete with wraparound services such as behavioral therapy, trauma recovery, job training, education, housing and relocation services, and financial assistance

5. The County seeks to reduce community violence, particularly gun violence, by establishing: (1) a Violent Crime Information Center Hiring that will provide enhanced crime analysis, tracking weapon data, and generating violent crime statistical reports to better target firearms-related crime. These violent crime analyses will also be used to identify individuals who would benefit from the gun violence intervention initiative; (2) a Gun Violence Prevention Initiative that partners with Street Outreach Network. The funding will be used to hire two contractual hospital navigator positions at hospitals that will help mediate conflicts during gang and violent situations; (3) a Midnight Madness basketball with the Montgomery County Recreation Department to provide a 3 on 3 basketball league at one recreation center to positively engage youth at risk for violence; and (4) broader advertising and outreach to inform community residents of available domestic violence resources.
6. The Council recommends the following appropriation increase to Montgomery County Police Department's FY22 Operating budget:

| <u>Operating Expenses</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>Source of Funds</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| 731,125 | \$731,125 | Federal Aid |

7. This special appropriation is needed to implement these COVID-19 recovery programs.
8. Notice of a public hearing was given, and a public hearing was held.

Action

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

1. A special appropriation to the FY22 Operating Budget for the Department of Police is approved as follows:

| <u>Operating Expenses</u> | <u>Total</u> | <u>Source of Funds</u> |
|---------------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| \$731,125 | \$731,125 | Federal Aid |

2. The funds appropriated in this special appropriation must be placed in a Police Department Fund account, in which any unspent funds will be re-appropriated in Fiscal Year 2023.
3. The County Council declares that this action is necessary to act in response to a public health or safety emergency and to act without delay in the public interest.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Judy Rupp
Clerk of the Council