
Sponsor: Finance

Meeting Date: 12/17/2024

Title: 2024 Budget Adjustments for Overspending in the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office

File Number: 2024-673

Background and Rationale:

In 2024, the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office (Sheriff's Office) is projected to exceed available appropriations by approximately \$2,500,000.

This action requests transfer of uncommitted general fund fund balance to cover the overspending in the Sheriff's Office. The requested transfer is for up to \$2,500,000 total to ensure adequate authority exists to cover all outstanding costs and close the books for the county for budget year 2024. The actual amount to be transferred is expected to be less and only the funds needed will be used. This is a one-time authorization for a transfer of funds in 2024 and does not increase the Sheriff's Office budget in future years.

During 2024, the Sheriff's Office, Office of Safety & Justice, and an independent third-party financial consultant met regularly to review spending and monitor the budget and develop year-end projections and met with Central Finance to ensure understanding to the driver's impacting the Sheriff's budget. The 2024 primary cost drivers can be attributed to:

- Overtime expenditures are projected to be \$4.7 million, or \$2.2 million over budget. This was mainly driven by jail staffing and recruitment challenges.
- An increased jail population has been trending higher than the budgeted estimate, which means additional costs for items such as food service, janitorial service, and supplies. Food service is projected to total \$300,000 to \$400,000 more than what was budgeted.

The current budgetary deficit from an elected office must be addressed by the Ramsey County Board to authorize the use fund balance. Seeing this recurring overspend, the County Manager, Central Finance, and the Office of Safety and Justice is recommending an operational staffing study to conduct analysis and create recommendations for a long-term solution.

An additional \$175,000 is being requested in a project to perform an operational staffing study to better understand ongoing staff needs. Since this 2024 additional cost drivers are driven primarily by personnel and operations, an operational staffing study is expected to take place in 2025. This study will be a comprehensive study to review the Sheriff's Office. operations, policies, procedures, staffing needs, organizational and leadership structures. This work will also include the staffing needs of the Adult Detention Center to ensure compliance with state mandated requirements and safety considerations. The results of the study will guide the Sheriff's Office pursuit to modernize operations and staffing which will result in creating efficiencies, set budgetary expectations, and will lead to enhancing the safety of all of Ramsey County community members.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Authorize the County Manager and the Chief Financial Officer to transfer up to \$2,500,000 to the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office budget from general fund fund balance in 2024.
2. Authorize the County Manager to establish an Operational Staffing Study project account .
3. Authorize the County Manager and the Chief Financial Officer to transfer \$175,000 to the Office of Safety and Justice from general fund fund balance to conduct an Operational Staffing Study in the Sheriff's Office and to account for this work in the Operational Staffing Study project budget.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Ortega, seconded by Commissioner Frethem.
Motion passed.

Aye: - 6: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By: 

Jason Yang, Interim Chief Clerk - County Board