



CITY OF KIRKLAND

City Manager's Office

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MEMORANDUM

To: David Ramsay, City Manager

From: Aimee Vance, Court Administrator
Michael J Lambo, Judge

Date: April 23, 2008

Subject: PROBATION OFFICER STAFFING REQUEST

RECOMMENDATION

City Council approve an increase of .5 FTE Probation Officer which will be supported by additional probation revenue.

BACKGROUND

The caseload of the probation department is dictated by the court's criminal caseload. Since 2005 the Kirkland Municipal Court's criminal caseload has increased from 1,515 filings to 2,002 filings in 2007. This is a 32% increase in criminal filings. The months of January through March of 2008 have shown a significant increase of criminal filings from the same period in 2007. A defendant that is found guilty in a criminal case may be placed on supervised probation anywhere from twelve months to two years depending on the length of jurisdiction for the case. A defendant may be released early from probation supervision and moved to court monitoring if they have shown compliance with the conditions of their sentence and the Judge authorizes the release.

Defendants are charged a fee of \$65 per month for the length of time they are on supervised probation. Court-monitored defendants are charged a one time fee of \$265. If a person is released early from supervised probation they are charged the minimum \$265 or the \$65 per month for the length of time they were on supervised probation. Defendants are not charged for the months they are not on supervised probation. Given the increase in caseload, the 2008 budget versus the projected revenue indicate that we will have an excess of \$80,000 in probation revenue over the budgeted amount. According to statute, all probation revenue must be used for probation services

The Court currently has 1.5 probation officers handling approximately 500 supervised probation cases. Probation officers are supported by 1.5 FTE administrative staff. A full time JSA II directly assists the probation officers with verifying defendants complete their monthly write-in paperwork, mailing correspondence, new referral and calendar preparation, phone calls, and handling front counter traffic. The additional .5 FTE monitors about 500 unsupervised probation cases for compliance with sentences (e.g. verification of attendance at anger management training). The full time probation officer meets monthly with 225 defendants and the part-time probation officer meets monthly with 125 defendants. An on-call probation officer was monitoring approximately 30 cases. However, this position will no longer be managing a caseload and the 30 defendants will be absorbed between the two existing probation officers. The remaining 140 cases are monitored on a monthly write-in status which is distributed amongst the probation officers. The average probation officer caseload for municipal courts in King County is between 130-150 active cases compared to Kirkland's caseload of 225. If we were to increase the .5 FTE to a full time position then the caseload would be approximately 190 active cases for each officer in addition to the monthly write-in cases.

A probation officer is also present for two probation review calendars per month. This means the probation officer spends one day of preparation and clean-up along with a half day in court for each of these calendars. Probation officers are also often called in to the courtroom when defendants appear on the jail calendar. With the increase of the criminal caseload, it is expected that an additional probation review calendars will be added within a year.

Staff is recommending that the .50 FTE Probation Officer be increased to 1.0 FTE. The .50 FTE is currently vacant and the Court needs to fill the vacant .5 FTE probation officer position immediately. However, the need of the department is a full time probation officer and we believe that a full-time job posting will attract a larger and more qualified pool of applicants. The estimated annual cost of the increase is \$40,109 which would be covered by probation revenue (see attached fiscal note).

As part of the 09-10 budget preparation the Court will be reviewing in detail the costs of operating the probation department and the offset of revenue received from probation cases to ensure that probation revenue is only being used to support probation services. Depending on the cost versus revenue analysis, additional probation recommendations may be provided in the 2009-2010 budget.

The Public Safety Committee reviewed the Courts' request for an increase in probation staffing at their April 17th meeting and recommended that the request go to Council as soon as possible. A formal budget adjustment will be presented to Council with the mid-year budget adjustments in June. Approval of this request now will allow the position to be posted immediately at 1.0 FTE.

FISCAL NOTE

CITY OF KIRKLAND

Source of Request							
Aimee Vance, Municipal Court Administrator							
Description of Request							
Request for funding of an additional 0.5 FTE Probation Officer from anticipated additional probation revenue in 2008. The budgeted 0.5 FTE Probation Officer position is currently vacant. In order to address workload issues, the Court needs a full time probation officer. Also, staff believe that a full-time job posting would attract a larger and more qualified pool of applicants. The estimated annual cost of the additional 0.5 FTE is \$40,109. The estimated cost of this additional probation officer in 2008 (June through December) is \$24,149.							
Funding for the additional 0.5 FTE Probation Officer in 2008, in the amount of \$24,149 is recommended from the anticipated additional probation revenue in 2008.							
Legality/City Policy Basis							
State statute requires that probation revenue be used for probation services.							
Fiscal Impact							
Use of \$24,149 from anticipated additional probation revenue in 2008. The estimated probation revenues will be able to fully fund this request.							
Recommended Funding Source(s)							
<i>Reserve</i>	Description	2008 Est End Balance	Prior Auth. 2007-08 Uses	Prior Auth. 2007-08 Additions	Amount This Request	Revised 2008 End Balance	2008 Target
<i>Revenue/ Exp Savings</i>	The anticipated additional probation revenue in 2008 will fully support the additional 0.5 FTE Probation Officer.						
<i>Other Source</i>							
Other Information							
The Public Safety Committee reviewed the Courts' request for an increase in probation staffing at their April 17th meeting and recommended that the request go to Council as soon as possible. A formal budget adjustment will be presented to Council with the mid-year budget adjustments in June. Approval of this request now will allow the position to be posted immediately at 1.0 FTE.							

Prepared By	Sri Krishnan, Sr. Financial Analyst	Date	April 24, 2008
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