

Response to Questions on the FY 2019 Budget

Request By: Supervisor Herrity

Question: What would be the budget impact to migrate all Animal Protection Police Officers over to the O-Scale? This should take into account any savings generated from no longer having to pay Social Security taxes on the O-Scale salary.

Response:

There are currently 32 positions in the Animal Protection Police Officer job series. Salaries for these positions are established according to Pay Plan P, and employees hired into these positions are members of the Uniformed Retirement System. The table below shows the position count by job class and the current pay grade for each job class in Pay Plan P. While no decisions have been made on how these positions would be mapped to Pay Plan O, the Police Department has proposed benchmarking Animal Protection Police Officer pay to be five percent below the pay of Police Officers of similar rank. This proposal is based on the difficulty in benchmarking the County’s Animal Protection Police Officers, who are sworn law-enforcement officers, to positions in other jurisdictions in the region. For illustrative purposes, the table below identifies a pay grade in Pay Plan O for each job class that is one grade below that of a similar rank Police Officer and does not result in a decrease in salary. The proposed grade in Pay Plan O would result in a 9.09 percent increase in salary for current Animal Protection Police Officers I, and a 3.90 percent increase in salary for current incumbents in all of the other listed job classes. It should be noted that the table below assumes the creation of grade O16 at a salary that is 5 percent below grade O17, which is currently the lowest grade in Pay Plan O. The fiscal impact of migrating Animal Protection Police Officers to Pay Plan O based on the changes outlined in the table below is \$175,623, including increases in both salary and associated fringe benefit expenses.

Position	Position Count	Current Grade in Pay Plan P	Potential Grade in Pay Plan O	Increase
Animal Protection Police Officer I	5	P18	O16	9.09%
Animal Protection Police Officer II	21	P20	O17	3.90%
Animal Protection Police Sergeant	5	P23	O20 ¹	3.90%
Director of Animal Control	1	P27	O24 ²	3.90%

¹ The Police Sergeant job class is grade O20. Benchmarking the Animal Protection Police Sergeant at 5 percent below this grade would result in grade O19. However, as this would result in a reduction in pay for incumbents, the job class is shown as being mapped to grade O20.

² As there is no Police Officer rank directly equivalent to the Director of Animal Control, the position has been mapped for illustrative purposes to the closest grade that will not result in a decrease in salary.

It should be noted that no savings related to Social Security taxes are anticipated. Social Security coverage for state and local-government employees in Virginia is governed by the Section 218 Agreement that Virginia entered into with the U.S. Social Security Administrator on February 16, 1952. The agreement extended Social Security coverage to state and local-government employees, with several exceptions. As a result of one of these exceptions, Fairfax County Police Officers were excluded from the agreement, and do not participate in Social Security or pay Social Security taxes based on their employment as Fairfax County Police Officers. Congress later amended the Social Security Act to prohibit the termination of Social Security coverage for any group covered under a Section 218 Agreement. Fairfax County Animal Protection Police Officers are currently covered under Virginia’s

Section 218 Agreement, and therefore must remain under Social Security. As Animal Protection Police Officers would remain in Social Security regardless of any change in pay plan or retirement system, no Social Security tax savings are anticipated.

Any change in the pay structure of these positions should take into account an analysis of the market competitiveness of the pay structure as compared to similar positions in other jurisdictions. In addition, any action should be weighed against other public safety funding priorities.