



Legislation Text

File #: CB 120320, Version: 2

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE _____

COUNCIL BILL _____

AN ORDINANCE relating to appropriations for the Seattle Police Department; amending a proviso imposed by Ordinance 126490, which adopted the 2022 Budget; and ratifying and confirming certain prior acts.

WHEREAS, an ongoing economic trend began in which employees have resigned from their jobs, referred to as the Great Resignation, with causes including job dissatisfaction, safety concerns of the COVID-19 pandemic, and wage stagnation amid rising cost of living; and

WHEREAS, since 2020, the Seattle Police Department (SPD) has incurred a net loss of 255 police hires and other City Departments reported vacancy issues occurring among front line workers, causing a service issue with the public and inhibiting departments from fulfilling a core function; and

WHEREAS, during 2021, to address the impacts of officers leaving SPD, the Council approved funding various programs identified by the Seattle Police Department including Crime Prevention Coordinators, Community Service Officers, and technology investments; and

WHEREAS, during the 2022 budget process, the Council fully funded the Seattle Police Department's 2022 hiring plan for 125 officers, considered various proposals for SPD hiring bonuses, and adopted Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) CBO-013-A-002 to request a report from the Executive on a citywide hiring incentive program; and

WHEREAS, the SLI response from the Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR) identified several positions "critical to City business needs and challenging to fill," including police officers; and

WHEREAS, similar to the preliminary evaluation findings in 2020 of SPD's bonus program authorized by

Ordinance 125784, that less than one in five cited the incentive as an “important factor” in their decision to apply, the SLI response noted the “issue of whether SPD has seen benefits from incentives is incredibly difficult to conclude because the incentives have been offered and removed several times,” and noted both potential benefits and drawbacks to hiring bonuses; and

WHEREAS, the SLI response from SDHR reported that “signing bonuses for newly hired external talent can negatively impact employee morale. Employees promoted internally or already working in the job can feel undervalued and unappreciated when their financial package does not match what external recruits receive. The potential for breaking trust is greater now, with many of the current City employees in identified hard-to-fill jobs working on the front line during the pandemic”; and

WHEREAS, though departments of The City of Seattle may seek to recruit nationally to hire positions critical to City business needs and challenging to fill, current Personnel Rules limit relocation assistance to employees hired under higher salary bands; and

WHEREAS, though SDHR did not recommend a bonus incentive in their response to CBO-013-A-002, and the Executive has stated an intent to propose comprehensive package before the budget, the Council and Executive recognize that SPD reports that the ability to offer to pay moving costs has assisted in attracting lateral hires from police departments in other jurisdictions and that more departments citywide may want to compensate their recruits to fill positions critical to City business needs and challenging to fill for their moving costs; and

WHEREAS, Council adopted proviso SPD-003-B-001 for the 2022 budget for any funds in the 2022 budget for officer salaries that will not be used for officer salaries; currently estimated at over \$4 million; NOW,

THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Council Budget Action SPD-003-B-001, approved in the 2022 Adopted Budget per Ordinance 126490, restricts the appropriations in the Seattle Police Department’s (SPD) budget for sworn

salary and benefits to only be used to pay SPD's recruits and sworn officers, unless authorized by future ordinance. This ordinance provides authorization to use up to \$1,150,000 of the funds restricted by SPD-003-B-001 as follows: (1) up to \$650,000 for moving expenses for new police officer hires in 2022, provided that the Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR) amends the City's Personnel Rules to allow greater flexibility for appointing authorities to offer moving assistance to a broader range of positions and circumstances and to pay for the salary and benefits for an additional recruiter in SPD; (2) up to \$350,000 for a national ad campaign to market police officer positions to potential candidates; and (3) up to \$150,000 to pay for a national search to hire a permanent Chief of Police.

Section 2. By establishing this Section 2, the Council requests that SDHR complete a process to update the City's personnel rules to provide appointing authorities greater flexibility to pay for moving expenses for new police hires and to extend those benefits to a broader range of positions if the appointing authority determines they are unable to recruit persons in the immediate employment area who possess the unique skills, expertise, and/or educational qualifications. This should include consideration to change the criterion in Personnel Rule 4.2.9.C that requires that an individual's new job with the City must be at least 50 miles farther from his or her place of residence than his or her former job to qualify for moving expenses. Reducing that distance could encourage more candidates who live in the Puget Sound region and to relocate within or closer to the city. It is the Council's intent that SDHR prioritize modifying Personnel Rule 4.2.9.C related to moving expenses to provide greater flexibility to the Chief of Police to accelerate the hiring of police officers. If amending the rule to include a range of positions beyond police officers would significantly increase the time it takes to work through the process for amending the rules, the Council requests that SDHR first complete a process to amend the rules to allow flexibility to the Chief of Police for police office hires and, following adoption of that rule change, initiate a process to amend the rule to address a broader range of positions in SPD and other City departments.

Section 3. Any act consistent with the authority of this ordinance taken after its passage and prior to its

effective date is ratified and confirmed.

Section 4. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force 30 days after its approval by the Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten days after presentation, it shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Section 1.04.020.

Passed by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2022, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this _____ day of _____, 2022.

President _____ of the City Council

Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this _____ day of _____, 2022.

Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2022.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)

Attachments: