Office of Mayor Miro Weinberger

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Finance
From: Mayor Miro Weinberger
Date: 2013 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)
Re: June 13, 2013

Burlington is again eligible to apply for Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) funding this year through the Bureau of Justice Assistance, a division of the Department of Justice. JAG funding is intended to support a broad range of crime prevention efforts, depending on local needs. JAG guidelines require prior notice to the municipality's governing body. This year, Burlington is eligible to apply for $56,751.

Based on staff feedback and priorities, I am proposing to apply for the following crime prevention allocations as they pertain to the JAG Project Priority Identifiers (**in bold**):

- $31,250 – **Restorative Justice, Victimization, Neighborhood Watch & Community Courts**
    - These funds will allow the Community Justice Center to enhance public safety, crime prevention efforts, low level offender accountability, and support for victims of crime. The grant will fund in part three positions that focus a portion of their time on supervising or providing direct service to victims.
    - Within the Restorative Justice Panels program, JAG funds will be used to fund the victim liaison specialist in order to ensure that victims' needs are prioritized when meeting with low-level offenders and to overlay any new education programs with the victims' perspective.
    - JAG funds will be used to compensate the Community Justice Center Coordinator for her time directing the Parallel Justice for Victims of Crime Project, specifically readying it for state-wide replication and to fund a portion of one of the Parallel Justice Specialists to provide direct advocacy to victims of crime.
    - The Community Justice Center Coordinator is co-leading a citizen and staff group that is assisting the community of Burlington with a modern-era Neighborhood Watch program. JAG resources will support this effort.

- Finally, a portion of the JAG funds will go to the continued consultation to the Rapid Intervention and Community Court program.

- $14,250 **Evidence Based Policing** Initiative

  - Dr. James "Chip" Coldren describes evidence based policing in the following way: *"Rather than relying on conviction, conjecture, or conventional wisdom, decision-makers turn to the best available evidence about what does and does not work when evaluating options and making decisions. Evidence-based decision-making is simply the routine and systematic application of the best available knowledge in order to identify and choose the optimal approach in policy, management, and other applied settings."*

  - This portion of this year's JAG allocation will be used by the Burlington Police Department to further evidence based policing initiatives by funding studies, assessments, and work conducted by the Vermont Center for Justice Research, employing contracted employees or interns to do research and analysis on operational initiatives, and/or developing, enhancing or purchasing software or subscription services that help to provide timely data to inform evidence based practices.

- $10,000 – **Mental Health & Prevention**

  - This funding will satisfy the City of Burlington's commitment to the HowardCenter's Street Outreach Program.
  - This program serves to de-escalate crime and disturbance connected to issues of mental health, substance abuse, and homelessness on the Church Street Marketplace.

- $1,251 – Administrative Costs

Please let me know if you have comments or questions. Thank you.