

**FAIRFIELD TOWNSHIP
RESOLUTION NO. 23-102**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF AN ACADEMY PAYMENT OR
REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT WITH A MAXIMUM
PAYMENT OR REIMBURSEMENT NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000.00.**

WHEREAS: The Board has determined that an academy reimbursement payment or reimbursement program would attract and keep qualified employees at the Fairfield Township Police Department; and

WHEREAS: The academy payment or reimbursement program would be considered part of the Township's overall compensation strategy; and

WHEREAS: The recruit will receive current Step 1 hourly pay for attending the academy and a three-year employment commitment would be expected of the recruit or payment or reimbursement would no longer be paid; and

WHEREAS: Reimbursement of training expenses for candidates who voluntarily resign their employment with the Township prior to three years of employment will be set forth in an Agreement with the candidate;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of Fairfield Township, Butler County, Ohio, as follows;

SECTION 1: The Board of Trustees does hereby authorize the creation of an academy payment or reimbursement program within the Police Department.

SECTION 2: The Board hereby dispenses with the requirement that this resolution be read on two separate days, pursuant to RC 504.10, and authorizes the adoption of this resolution upon its first reading.

SECTION 3 This resolution is the subject of the general authority granted to the Board of Trustees through the Ohio Revised Code and not the specific authority granted to the Board of Trustees through the status as a Limited Home Rule Township.

SECTION 4: That it is hereby found and determined that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the passage of this Resolution were taken in meetings open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements including §121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

SECTION 5: This resolution shall take effect at the earliest period allowed by law.

Adopted: July 11, 2023

Board of Trustees

Michael Berding: _____

Shannon Hartkemeyer: _____

Joe McAbee: _____

Vote of Trustees

yes

yes

yes

AUTHENTICATION

This is to certify that this is a resolution which was duly passed and filed with the Fairfield Township Fiscal Officer this 11th day of July, 2023.

ATTEST:

Shelly Schultz
Shelly Schultz, Fairfield Township Fiscal Officer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

L.E. Barbieri
Lawrence E. Barbieri, Township Assistant Law Director

July 6, 2023

TO: Julie Vonderhaar
Township Administrator

FROM: Robert Chabali
Chief of Police

**SUBJECT: Request Approval for Updating Hiring Practices – Pay To Attend
Academy and Reimbursement**

Mrs. Vonderhaar,

As you are aware one of the biggest challenges in law enforcement in recent years has been and continues to be hiring good candidates. The total number of those who desire to be a police officer has significantly dwindled in recent years for various reasons, including recent negative national events. Several local academy commanders have advised me that current classes are averaging 8-10 participants, while the past averages just a few years ago was 24-25 participants.

Although we have posted job openings on social media, opened up lateral entries and use the National Testing Network (NTN) as a resource to obtain candidates, these have been only minimally productive. We have recently interviewed numerous candidates without any success. The national and local trend is to hire candidates prior to obtaining their law enforcement certification, pay for their academies or reimburse the cost of the academy for those already recently certified, and also pay an hourly wage during the time they attend the academy. Some agencies have provided signing and retention bonuses which has helped them. We are currently waiting to hear back from our grant application for this funding. However, the retention incentive grant submitted for last year only pertains to full-time sworn employees who were hired on or before June 17, 2022, and focuses on a retention effort to keep employees, not hire new.

The following local municipalities are paying Step I Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) wages while the recruit attends the paid academies:

- The City of Fairfield pays the candidate \$33.08/hour
- The West Chester Township is paying \$32.77/hour
- The City of Hamilton is paying \$27.30/hour

Additionally, the following municipalities are also addressing this:

- The Ross Township Police Department will be presenting this concept tonight, July 6, at their Trustee Meeting; however, they do not have a collective bargaining agreement (CBAS) and pay is yet to be determined
- The Hamilton Township Police Department will also be presenting this concept in the future and is researching pay amount

In researching the cost of local academies, I found the following:

- Butler Tech – costs \$9,505.00 including books and supplies
- Scarlet Oaks – costs \$8,182.00 including books and supplies
- Ohio State Patrol Academy – free of charge but very difficult to get a candidate into this academy due to the backlog

We have also received several calls from potential candidates asking if we pay for the academy as they are aware other municipalities are. We cannot currently compete with those paying for the training.

I have not requested approval until now to this approach as we have attempted to be good stewards of the Township's finances. However, we are now falling way behind the curb.

Based on the significant challenges facing FTPD and law enforcement in general I am requesting approval to pay for the academy, not to exceed \$10,000, with an hourly wage of \$27.83/hour (CBA Step 1) to be paid to the candidates during their academy time. Candidates who have recently completed academies will be reimbursed over three years – approximately \$3,000.00/year. If they leave earlier, they will not be reimbursed once they leave.

Butler Tech covers 770 hours which equals to \$21,429.10 salary cost.

Scarlet Oaks covers 800 hours which equals to \$22,264.00 salary cost.

Additionally, the recruit will be obligated to refund the entire cost of the academy if they voluntarily quit prior to 1 year on the force; reimburse 2/3 if they voluntarily quit between year 1 and 2; and reimburse 1/3 if they voluntarily quit between years 2 and 3.

Additionally, a signing bonus may be considered in the future, but not at this time.

In order to provide as much guarantee as possible, we will be conducting a deep and thorough background process on the candidates to ensure they will pass all the requirements of the academy.



Robert Chabali
Chief of Police