Legislation Text

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Meridian Behavioral Health and Co-Responder Team Agreement (B)

Currently, Meridian Behavioral Health provides one mental health counselor for the Gainesville Police Department's Mental Health Co-Responder Team. That position is paid with grant funding. GPD and Meridian have been in partnership with this team for over two (2) years and just recently completed a new Memorandum of Understanding.

In August 2020, the City Commission voted to approve two (2) additional Co-Responder Teams at GPD on agenda item 200136 page 15 of the presentation, with the City/GPD paying for the mental health counselor component and contracting with Meridian to provide those services. GPD eliminated two (2) sworn officer positions to pay for these two counselor positions.

Meridian has been a proven partner within our community for years. They have also been a proven partner in the creation of the original Co-Responder Team in 2017. Meridian has the expertise to hire, train, and supervise mental health professionals.

Goal 5: Best in Class Neighbor Services through community engagement program enhancements. This is a high-priority item.

The cost for each counselor is $80,263 per year and includes a one-time startup cost of $4,050 per counselor in the first year only. The total for three counselors is $235,511. This cost will come from General Funds from the Patrol Support Bureau Other contractual services code.

The City Commission authorize the City Manager to proceed with the purchase request of two additional Mental Health Counselors, subject to review and approval by the City Attorney as to form and legality.