

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	October 4, 2010
Action Required:	Direction on the Policy
Presenter:	Timothy Longo, Police Chief
Staff Contacts:	Timothy Longo Maurice Jones, Acting City Manager
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Funeral Processions</b>

**Background and Discussion:**

In May of 2010, Police Chief Longo notified all area funeral homes of changes made to the Department's funeral escort policy.

The changes discontinued routine funeral escorts of less than twenty-five vehicles and instituted a re-imbusement fee of one hundred fifty dollars for large funeral processions (twenty-five vehicles or more) upon request and with a twenty-four hour notice from the funeral home.

The reasons for the change in policy include concerns about liability issues, resource deployment and the loss of parking fine revenue. Funeral escorts are labor intensive and require two to four Community Service Officers (CSOs) and or Motor Officers to assist with their movements. The average time an Officer or CSO spends on a funeral escort is one to two hours. This severely limits the Traffic Unit's ability to be responsive to citizens, business owners, and neighborhoods on traffic related issues such as speeding/stop signs and commercial cut through traffic as well as parking complaints and routine parking enforcement efforts which all must be suspended during this time.

A Traffic Unit Community Service Officer issues approximately fifteen parking tickets per hour. Funeral escort requests routinely occur during the day requiring the CSO to abandon an entire cycle of parking enforcement in areas that are high priority such as local business districts. This can occur several times a week substantially disrupting parking enforcement efforts.

Some escorts also require Motor Officer Assistance; this impacts the delivery of other law enforcement services in the areas of accident investigation, radar enforcement and other proactive selected enforcement operations designed to address neighborhood concerns and policing of primary roads.

Another area of concern is the liability issue that is assumed by the Department when the funeral

procession is operated under the cover of a law enforcement escort. In the event of an accident the liability is assumed by the Department and City Government. This risk should be weighed against the benefit of perhaps saving a few minutes of travel time for a small funeral procession.

**Alternatives:** We could re-institute the previous policy of providing funeral escorts for all requests at no charge.

**Budgetary Impact:** The department estimates its loses between \$100,000 to \$150,000 in parking fines each year due to the Community Service Officers involved in funerals.

**Recommendation:** We recommend that we continue with the new policy.

**Attachments:**