

Office of the County Auditor
Auditor's Analysis

Council Bill No. 68-2022

Introduced: October 3, 2022

Auditor: Rebecca Gold & Michael A. Martin

Fiscal Impact:

Based on information provided by the Administration, the proposed legislation is estimated to increase personnel costs by \$187,693 in Fiscal Year 2023 and \$469,334 in Fiscal Year 2024. The Administration provided their calculations to our Office, which we agreed with, but the calculations provided did not match their testimony. Please see **Attachment A** for a breakdown of these costs by fund.

The Administration noted that a 3 percent increase was included in the Fiscal Year 2023 approved budget and will be sufficient to cover the personnel increases proposed in this agreement. The Fiscal Year 2024 approved budget will need to reflect a 6 percent increase in personnel costs as a result of the negotiated union agreement.

There may be a minor fiscal impact associated with the changes made to fatigue status, however, the Administration confirmed this cannot be estimated at this time.

Purpose:

The purpose of this legislation is to approve a two-year collective bargaining agreement between Howard County and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, Howard County Local 3888, Council 67, AFL-CIO (Local 3888) effective through the end of Fiscal Year 2024. Please see **Attachment B** for a listing of the proposed amendments to the existing agreement.

The legislation also approves provisions in the collective bargaining agreement between Howard County and Local 3888 that conflict with the provisions of Title 1 "Human Resources" of the Howard County Code and/or the Employee Manual.

Other Comments:

None.

Attachment A – Personnel Cost Increases by Fund & Premium Pay Increases by Program

Fund	FY 2023 Impact	FY 2024 Impact
General County	98,770	249,890
Water & Sewer Operating Fund	55,306	139,924
Fleet Operations (Internal Service Fund)	15,420	39,012
Environmental Services Fund	7,762	19,637
Total Personnel Cost Increase	177,258	448,463

Additional Premium Pay*	FY 2023 Impact**	FY 2024 Impact**
Mechanic License	4,982	9,964
Deer Management Program	4,037	8,074
Meal Reimbursement	1,416	2,833
Total Premium Pay	10,435	20,871

<i>Total Cost Increase</i>	<i>187,693</i>	<i>469,334</i>
-----------------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

*Our Office is unable to identify the Fund that will support the premium payments made to personnel over this period as we do not know who will earn such premiums. They are estimates based on historical data.

**The total premium pay increase shown above for Fiscal Year 2023 and Fiscal Year 2024 are slightly different from what is shown in the Administration’s Testimony because the Administration included a full-year estimate in Fiscal Year 2023 for the Meal Reimbursement and Mechanic License premiums and a half-year estimate in Fiscal Year 2024 for the Deer Management premium.

Attachment B – Breakdown of Proposed Changes to Local 3888 Agreement

- *Section 5.7 – Fatigue Status:* decreases the amount of work time for fatigue status from 16 hours to 14 hours and increased the length of fatigue status from 8 hours to 10 hours.
- *Section 7.1 - Salary Scale; Adjustments:*
 - An across-the-board salary increase of 6 percent, effective January 1, 2023
 - An across-the-board salary increase of 3 percent, effective January 1, 2024
- *Section 7.4 - Meal Allowances:* increases meal allowance (reimbursement) of \$14 per meal (including taxes and tips) to \$18 per meal
- *Section 8.3 – Call-in-Pay:* employees can now choose to receive compensatory time equal to the call-in-pay hours earned in lieu of paid call-in pay
- *Section 8.4 - Stand-by Pay:* instead of receiving stand-by pay, employees can request to receive the equivalent amount earned in compensatory time
- *Section 8.8 - Reserved:* clarifies that one’s eligibility for the water operator and sewer operator license premiums must be a requirement per their job description
- *Section 8.9 - Mechanics’ Certification Premium:*
 - additional pay for ASE-certified mechanics increases from \$0.05 per hour to \$0.10 per hour for each separate certification maintained
 - additional pay for EVT-certified mechanics increases from \$0.05 per hour to \$0.15 per hour for each separate certification maintained
- *Section 8.13 – Deer Management Program Premium:* new policy stipulating that Park Rangers who obtain the Maryland NRP Hunter Education Instructor Certification, the Maryland NRP Treestand Safety Certification, the NRA Basic Rifle Certification, and completed the HCRP Shooter Competency Checklist shall receive an annual stipend of \$2,500 in their base pay calculated as an hourly rate.
- *Section 10.1 - Holidays:* replaces Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples’ Day and specifies that Department of Recreation and Parks personnel are to receive time and a half pay for shifts worked on the County’s designated Fourth of July holiday