



Jim Sheppard - Coroner
(706) 482-2692

Frank Goss – Chief Deputy
(706) 482-2694

April 11, 2019

To: Allison Martin – Dir. Of Finance

Fr: James E Sheppard – Coroner

Ref: 2020 Budget

Attached you'll find the 2020 Coroner's Office Budget Request; Department 37000.

Please find the justification for suggested increases listed below:

00052-521103: \$1500.00 increase. This is the fee(s) used to pay the coroner(s) call fees. We expect the death investigations to increase as our population continues to grow, and of course as our citizens age.

00052-523852: \$1000.00 increase. This request is due to the expectation of call for service to increase. These funds are used pay the Transport Service. As we expect calls to increase, so will the need for transport of decedents.

New Line Item Request: I'd like to secure funding for payment to clergy/ministers who respond at the request of family members. Recently, we had such a request after the death of a resident. I reached out to the Sheriff's Office to utilize their volunteer staff however the individual was not able to respond. I contacted a local pastor and he was able to respond, meet with the family and stayed with them during our investigation. This pastor also followed up with the family giving the guidance and assistance during a very trying and emotional time. I'm of the belief that when a situation like this occurs, certainly the responding clergy should be compensated. Granted, I've only had this happen twice, but in both instances, they responded without fail and represented Lumpkin County in a manner we may never truly know. I'm requesting a new line item to pay those that responded at the request of the Coroner's Office \$125.00 per call. My total request for 2020 would be \$250.00.

Currently the Coroner's Office is staffed with one elected official, and one Chief Deputy Coroner. Both individuals are assigned county owned vehicles which provide 24 hour, 7-day a week response in the event of a death in the county. Many times, we work in concert with various public and state agencies investigating deaths. Our response is required regardless of weather conditions, time of day, day of week, etc. When there is a death, the Coroner's Office must respond if it is an unattended death (No Medical staff available).

Currently, our vehicle fleet is a 2007 Ford Expedition 4WD with approximately 98,000 miles and a 1999 Ford Crown Victoria with approximately 233,000 miles. The Ford Crown Victoria has now passed it's expected service life.



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Our Office is requesting funding to be used to secure a new/used, certified 4WD vehicle, capable of transporting decedents if the need arises by which our transport service cannot make it to the scene, if due to weather, road conditions, etc. There are still many locations within the county that a 4WD vehicle will be the only vehicle that can access certain areas. The ideal vehicle would be that of a Suburban or similar type vehicle.

We do not see replacing the 2007 Ford anytime in the near future.

***Equipment Replacement:** Currently our morgue cooler is reaching a service life of over 10 years. Seals and magnetic gaskets have failed. I'm requesting the purchase of a new cooler (PDF Document attached) with 30" access doors, three storage boards, casters (in the event it need to be rolled) and one stainless steel tray (to contain biohazard fluids). Mortech is the manufacture of our current cooler, and it's given us a longer than expected unit life, and I feel as though replacement by the same manufacture would be wise. The unit as requested would be \$6564.00

Please feel free to contact me if needed.

Thank you,

Jim Sheppard