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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 28, 2023

DeKalb CEO Thurmond Includes Starting Salary Boost in FY2023 Budget for Police and Fire Recruits

*Ten percent increase will solidify DeKalb police and fire as among
highest paid in the Southeast*

DECATUR, Ga. – DeKalb CEO Michael Thurmond’s FY2023 budget, which includes \$4.3 million to raise the starting salaries for police and fire recruits and provide increases for veteran public safety personnel, was passed today by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners.

This salary boost in the \$1.7 billion budget maintains DeKalb’s status as one of the highest the highest paid police and fire recruits among large local governments in the southeast and the state, respectively.

“Our ability to recruit, hire and retain the best sworn personnel is essential to maintaining the quality of life in DeKalb County,” CEO Thurmond said.

Effective April 1, 2023, the starting salary for new police recruits will be \$55,000, an 8.9-percent increase over the current starting salary of \$50,500. This is also approximately 19 percent above the regional market average of \$46,352 for the cities of Charlotte, NC, Jacksonville, Fla., Louisville, Ky., Nashville, Tenn., and Norfolk, Va., according to an internal pay study.

Overall increases will affect sworn police officers up to and including the rank of captain.

Effective April 1, 2023, starting firefighter salary for new firefighter recruits will be \$51,000, a 9.7-percent increase over the current starting salary of \$46,500. This increased salary will be approximately 9.1 percent above the local market average of \$46,728 for the cities of Atlanta and South Fulton, and the counties of Cobb and Gwinnett. Previously, DeKalb was 1.2 percent above the June 2022 local market average of \$42,987.

Overall increases will affect sworn firefighters up to and including the rank of captain, as well as emergency medical technicians and paramedics.

The \$4.3 million prorated funding for these salary increases will come from existing FY2023 police and fire rescue budgets.

(more)

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Recent public safety incentives have included:

- Hazard/incentive pay for frontline employees during the pandemic.
- \$3,000 retention incentive payments for public safety employees in 2021 and 2022.
- A 6.25 percent base salary increase in April 2022.
- Three times overtime pay for police officers implemented July 2022.
- 6.5 percent starting salary increase for all sworn police officers and fire rescue personnel announced in August 2022.

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