

Policy Briefing Summary

City Council



Regarding:	Resolution Appropriating Charlottesville/Albemarle Adult Recovery Court Grant Award in the amount of \$240,000 (1 of 2 readings)
Staff Contact(s):	Taylor Harvey-Ryan, Grants Program Manager
Presenter:	Christie Cash
Date of Proposed Action:	September 15, 2025

Issue

The City of Charlottesville on behalf of the Charlottesville/ Albemarle Adult Recovery Court, has received a grant from the Supreme Court of Virginia in the amount of \$240,000 to support the operations of the recovery court program operated by OAR.

Background / Rule

The City of Charlottesville, on behalf of the Charlottesville/Albemarle Adult Recovery Court, has received a Supreme Court of Virginia Recovery Court Grant in the amount of \$240,000 for operations of the recovery court program, which is operated by Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR). The City of Charlottesville serves as fiscal agent for the Supreme Court of Virginia Recovery Court Docket Grant.

Analysis

In its twenty-eighth year of operation, the Charlottesville/Albemarle Adult Recovery Court is a supervised 12-month drug treatment program that serves as an alternative to incarceration for offenders. Recovery Court is a specialized docket within the existing structure of the court system given the responsibility to handle cases involving non-violent adult felony offenders with moderate to severe substance-use disorders. The program uses the power of the court to assist non-violent offenders to achieve recovery through a collaborative system of intensive supervision, drug testing, substance abuse treatment, and regular court appearances.

The total program budget is \$395,446 and includes three funding sources:

- Supreme Court of VA - \$240,000
- City of Charlottesville: \$94,473, which has already been appropriated
- Albemarle County: \$60,973, which has already been appropriated

This program provides support for persons interacting with the legal or criminal justice system and the City of Charlottesville's priority Safety/Criminal Justice. Recovery Court directly affects the community by reducing recidivism among Recovery Court participants and graduates. Additionally, Recovery Court mitigates risk by reducing drug and alcohol use among program participants and graduates. Reduction of drug and alcohol use fosters participant rehabilitation, public safety, and participant accountability; all of which are factors in helping the community achieve its stated goals. Reduced recidivism results in reduced public cost associated with re-arrest and incarceration, a

reduction in potential victims of crime, and overall enhanced quality of life for community residents. As the writers of the Adult Drug Court Best Practice Standards state, “Drug Courts improve communities by successfully getting justice-involved individuals clean and sober, stopping drug-related crime, reuniting broken families, ... and preventing impaired driving”. Not only is Recovery Court an effective agent of change, it is an extremely cost-effective approach. Numerous meta-analyses have concluded that Recovery Courts produce an average return on investment of \$2 to \$4 for every \$1 invested. Because of the above, ensuring that the 28-year-old Recovery Court program remains available to residents of the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County will help the community achieve its goals.

The Recovery Court is a direct service provider and is engaged daily with non-violent criminal offenders with drug-driven crimes who are at a high level of risk for re-offending due to active addictions and long-standing patterns of criminal behavior. By collaborating with the Court system, Region Ten Community Services Board, Addiction Allies, and the Sheriff’s department, the Recovery Court provides these offenders with a highly structured, rigorously supervised system of treatment and criminal case processing that results in a significant reduction in recidivism rates for program participants and graduates. Participants gain access to the Recovery Court through referrals from police, probation, magistrates, defense attorneys and other local stakeholders. Participants have active criminal cases pending in the Circuit Court. If they successfully complete the program, which takes a minimum of 12 months, participants may have their pending charges reduced or dismissed. If participants are unsuccessful and have to be terminated from the program, they return to court to face their original charges. Successful Recovery Court participants return the community’s investment in them by maintaining full-time, tax-paying employment, providing for and taking care of their children and families, including paying off back child support, behaving as good role models in the community, and supporting the recovery community in Charlottesville.

Financial Impact

No additional City funding is required as the City’s match for this grant, \$94,473, was appropriated as part of the FY 2026 Council Approved Budget as part of the City’s contribution to Offender Aid and Restoration.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the adoption of the attached resolution to appropriate the \$240,000 from the Supreme Court of Virginia.

Recommended Motion (if Applicable)

I move to appropriate \$240,000 from the Supreme Court of Virginia as indicated in the attached resolution.

Attachments

1. Resolution- Adult Recovery Court