

# MOU enhances police services at no cost to City

By Katherine R. Dougan

On June 2, Clinton's Board of Aldermen voted to approve a Memorandum of Understanding, or MOU, which has also been approved so far by Byram and the Hinds County Sheriff's Department, to allow the participating agencies to pool their resources into a task force comprised of all the participating entities.

"It's a good thing for us," Clinton Police Chief Ford Hayman explained at the Board's June 1 work session. "As opposed to having twelve or thirteen of our guys, we'll have between a forty-five- to fifty-member task force. We can share resources, and that makes us just that much stronger." The Clinton Police Department (CPD), Byram Police Department and the Hinds County Sheriff's Department have already approved the MOU. Jackson's City Council has the MOU on its agenda the week of June 22.

"I'm still 50/50 on whether or not the Jackson City Council will pass it," Hayman said.

"My understanding from their [City of Jackson] attorney is that it was supposed to be on their agenda for June 26-27, sometime the middle of that week," Clinton City Attorney

William Purdie said.

"We're hoping that they will [sign]. I don't think there will be any reason that they wouldn't. We're prepared either way...we want to reunite that partnership with Jackson," Hayman said. With the administrative changes at the Jackson police department in the recent past, the MOU was not in effect; however, it had been in the past.

"I've been talking to [Hinds County] Sheriff [Lee] Vance, and he's going to deputize everybody on the team," which allows officers to ask for help and to cross into other jurisdictions in the course of handling police matters, Hayman explained. "I asked that he deputize our investigators, and that will give us a bigger area or greater jurisdiction to keep on investigating and doing this that we do - search warrants on residences and all that stuff."

In addition to deputizing the CPD

force, Clinton's K-9 Officer Fox and the City's K-9 police dog, Annika, will also be deputized as part of the task force.

"Since you guys have approved this [addition of K-9 officer and police dog], we have made numerous arrests and received a

little over \$5,000 since then. That [funds] comes back to the police department here."

"What is the criteria for bringing the [K-9] dog out?" queried Ward 4 Alderman Bill Barnett.

"A lot of times if patrol officers make a stop, they'll call him [K-9 Officer Fox] to get a feel for it. A lot of times they [officers] can smell it; the marijuana smell is so strong, they can smell it," Hayman explained. "She [K-9 Annika] will play a big factor on those little things."

For example, if police make a traffic stop on I-20, and two to three people are in the vehicle, their sto-

ries are not consistent, and they have a sack full of cash, it's [the cash] going to have drug resident on it. Annika will smell it."

"What did we pay for the dog?" Mayor Phil Fisher asked. Hayman said the cost was \$9,500. "So, we're halfway to paying for that dog now," Fisher said.

"What prevents us from extending this MOU to other counties?" Ward 6 Alderman Mike Cashion asked Chief Hayman.

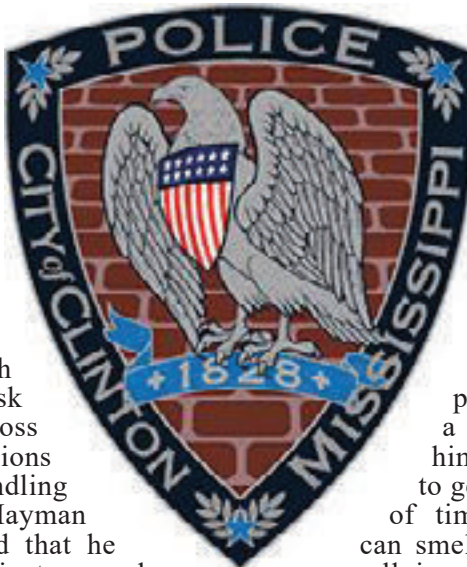
"We can proceed into Rankin County and split proceeds," Hayman said. "Right now, in Hinds County, if we make a cash seizure, it's an 80/20 split with the DA's office; they get twenty percent." Hayman estimated that if Rankin County signs an MOU to join the task force, "... maybe we could do a 60/20 [split] or something like that.

"There's always room for growth."

"I don't think there's anything we can't do," Purdie said. "Historically, it's been geographically ambiguous."

Since the addition of K-9 Officer Fox and K-9 Annika, Hayman said there has been an uptick in officers interested in getting into the drug-related cases.

"It will be a big win for us," Hayman said.



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