



Gaston County

Gaston County
Board of Commissioners
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Police Department

Board Action

File #: 26-146

Commissioner Brown - Police Department - To Authorize the Transfer of \$49,705.51 from the General Fund to the General Government Capital Fund, via the Community Investment Fund (CIF) for the Purchase of Crime-lite® AUTO System from Foster & Freeman; and to Accept Foster & Freeman USA, Inc. as a Sole Source Vendor for the Purchase

STAFF CONTACT

Chief S.M. Zill - County Police - 704-866-3321

BUDGET IMPACT

General Fund: Decrease operating expenditures and increase Transfers out to Community Investment Fund by \$49,705.51.

Community Investment Fund: Increase transfers in from General Fund and increase Transfers out to General Government Capital Fund by \$49,705.51.

General Government Capital Fund: Increase Transfers in from Community Investment Fund and increase expenditures by \$49,705.51.

BACKGROUND

The Gaston County Police Department Crime Scene Unit requires a modern Alternate Light Source (ALS) system to effectively detect, capture, and document latent evidence (including biological fluids, fingerprints, and trace materials) in both field and laboratory environments. The system must support evidential standards required for criminal investigations and court admissibility.

The current ALS unit, purchased in 2011, is obsolete and no longer supported, as the manufacturer is no longer in business. Replacement parts and updates are unavailable, and the unit lacks the capabilities required for current investigative needs. As a result, the department has recently relied on neighboring agencies to obtain necessary forensic images. In critical cases, including those involving physical abuse, newer technology would provide significantly clearer and more detailed documentation of evidence.

(Continued on Page 2)

DO NOT TYPE BELOW THIS LINE

I, Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the County Commission, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of action taken by the Board of Commissioners as follows:

NO.	DATE	M1	M2	JBailey	CBrown	CCloninger	AFraley	BHovis	TKeigher	SShehan	Vote
2026-140	04/28/2026	TK	BH	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	U

DISTRIBUTION:

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Page 2

The County conducted market research of available forensic lighting and imaging systems and determined that while other vendors offer alternate light sources, those systems require multiple separate components and do not provide a fully integrated solution. The Crime-lite® AUTO system uniquely combines multi-spectral illumination, camera, filtration, and image processing into a single portable unit, ensuring efficient, consistent, and defensible evidence detection and documentation. Crime-lite® AUTO system also includes built-in Product Verification Library (PVL) containing scientifically validated datasets to support consistent and defensible evidence detection methodologies as well as image hashing, metadata capture, and time-stamping to preserve chain-of-custody and evidentiary integrity.

Foster & Freeman USA, Inc. is the sole manufacturer and distributor of the Crime-lite® AUTO system, and no other product evaluated meets the operational and evidentiary requirements of the department. Accordingly, this purchase qualifies as a sole source procurement under N.C.G.S. §143-129(e)(6).

POLICY IMPACT

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

Budget Change Request (BCR); Sole Source Letter

GASTON COUNTY BUDGET CHANGE REQUEST (BCR)

TO: Matthew Rhoten, County Manager

FROM: 4310 County Police
 Dept. Code Department Name
Chief S.M. Zill 4/4/2026
 Department Director Date

REQUEST TYPE:

- Line-Item Transfer Within Department & Fund
- Project Transfer Within Department & Fund
- Line-Item Transfer Between Departments

- Line-Item Transfer Between Funds*
- Additional Appropriation of Funds*

* Requires resolution by the Board of Commissioners

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION	ACCOUNT NUMBER	AMOUNT**																														
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Ex. Employee Training	Ex. 1000-BGT-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-01-520011-																															
Repairs & Maintenance	1000-GPD-000-00000-000000-0000000-0000-02-530023-	(49,705.51)																														
Transfer to CIF Fund	1000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-0000000-0000-98-584000-	49,705.51																														
Transfer from General Fund	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-0000000-0000-98-481000-	(49,705.51)																														
Transfer to Gen Govt Capital	4000-NDP-000-00000-TrfxTo-0000000-0000-98-584005-	49,705.51																														
Transfer from CIF	4005-NDP-000-00000-TrfxFr-0000000-0000-98-484000-	(49,705.51)																														
Furn/Equip>\$5,000	4005-GPD-000-00000-Annual-PayAsGo-0000-02-540002-	47,755.51																														
Professional Svcs:Capital Proj	4005-GPD-000-00000-Annual-PayAsGo-0000-02-540016-	1,950																														

JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST:

The Gaston County Police Department Crime Scene Unit requires a modern Alternate Light Source (ALS) system to effectively detect, capture, and document latent evidence (including biological fluids, fingerprints, and trace materials) in both field and laboratory environments. The system must support evidential standards required for criminal investigations and court admissibility. The current ALS unit, purchased in 2011, is obsolete and no longer supported, as the manufacturer is no longer in business. Replacement parts and updates are unavailable, and the unit lacks the capabilities required for current investigative needs.

** Decreases in expenditures and increases in revenue accounts require brackets. Increases in expenditures and decreases in revenue do not require brackets. Please note that transfers between funds require inter-fund transfer accounts.

foster+freeman
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DATE:03/10/2026

Gaston County
420 W. Franklin Blvd
Gastonia, NC 28052

ATTN: Capt. Jennifer Hamrick

Re. Sole Source justification for Crime-lite® AUTO

I am pleased to confirm that the Crime-lite® AUTO is manufactured by and only available from Foster & Freeman.

The AUTO design is based upon Crime-lite® technology. Combining a full-spectrum UV-Vis-IR camera and 55 illumination wavebands, the Crime-lite® AUTO is a complete evidence search and capture tool for Crime Scene and Laboratory. We are not aware of any equivalent unit available.

Some of the key features include:

- Proven technology: hundreds of AUTOs in daily use by law enforcement agencies throughout North America.
- Custom evidence presets derived from empirical data collected from over 18,000 images including online user access to data library.
- Camera with APS-C sensor to ensure high enough resolution for fingerprint capture.
- Extending arms provide wide-angle UV, White, and Infrared illumination to avoid specular reflections.
- Motorized filter wheel with intelligent filter selection at 9 positions.
- Integrated 7" tiltable touchscreen.
- Images and videos stored in non-proprietary Micro SD card with metadata file to include wavelength and filter information, camera exposure settings, and history log for any enhancements added.
- Annotation and enhancement options include greyscale, invert, histogram adjustments, BSG, and can be performed directly within the Crime-lite AUTO®
- External, rechargeable Lithium-ion battery pack with up to 3-hour run time.
- To avoid destroying DNA evidence and for operator safety, the unit does not emit shortwave UV.
- Hands-free capture, light source and filter selection, and image transfer through Wi-Fi via the Crime-lite® App (compatible with Android and iOS devices).
- Wi-Fi and Bluetooth capabilities can be disabled if needed for secure applications.
- Compatibility with the DISCOVER fingerprint imaging system.
- Coaxial light box accessory allows for the photography of non-treated fingerprint evidence on reflective surfaces with patented on-screen "on-axis" and "off-axis" illumination mode control (0-9°) Patent number GB2100145.8
- Oblique light ring attachment with 12 UV and 12 White LEDs provides multi-angle surface illumination to aid in the photography of 3D "plastic" fingerprint impressions.
- Clip-on polarizing filters allow for better contrast for injury detection as well as latent fingerprint photography.
- Optional Crime-lite AUTO sample kit includes twenty individually validated samples of simulated body fluids, accelerants, drug residues, and commonly used fingerprint development methods to aid in the verification of the equipment before use and acts as a training aid for new users.

Please let me know if we can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Alexis Dodson
Technical Sales Specialist

® Crime-lite is a registered trademark of Foster & Freeman.