

**A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE CHAPEL HILL CRIMINAL JUSTICE DEBT PROGRAM (2021-02-24/R-9)**

WHEREAS, court fees and costs have a disparate impact on the poor; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Chapel Hill receives approximately \$25,000 on average in revenues from court costs and fees each year; and

WHEREAS, these costs and fees create barriers to community members seeking to reintegrate into the community; and

WHEREAS, African-Americans are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system due to historic and structural racism, making this a racial equity issue; and

WHEREAS, the Chapel Hill Criminal Justice Debt Program offers a small funding resource to eligible low-income individuals who have not been able to get court or other available debt relief from fees and costs imposed due to criminal justice or traffic court involvement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Town of Chapel Hill that the Program expand to Carrboro residents based on the provided MOU from Carrboro Town Council which incorporates the addition of \$7,500 for disbursement to residents of Carrboro.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Council that the restriction be removed that an applicant can only apply once every three years in order to prevent situations in which the Program might provide some help, but not enough for full restoration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Council that restriction be removed for applicants with a violent felony conviction and grant the Board the discretion to review these circumstances and determine whether funds should be granted.

This the 24<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2021.