

**TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Town Hall Council Chambers
May 11, 2022, Monday**

Present: Michael Molisse, Chairman
Christopher Heffernan, Vice Chairman
Maureen Kiely, Councilor
Greg Shanahan, Councilor

Absent: Pascale Burga, Councilor

Also Present: Leilani Dalpe, Project Manager
Chief Fuller, WPD
Chief Stark, WFD

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

Chair Molisse called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Review/discussion of Public Safety Budgets-Police and Fire Departments

Deliberate the following measures:

22 066 L-Police



Police Department

	FY22	FY23
SALARIES	\$ 12,378,019	\$ 13,051,949
OVERTIME	\$ 1,015,000	\$ 1,085,000
CLOTHING EXPENSE	\$ 101,060	\$ 113,530
EXPENSES	\$ 533,225	\$ 534,475
Total	\$ 14,027,304	\$ 14,784,954

Notes:

- A 5.4% total increase - with Patrolmen CBA not settled
- Increasing Overtime by 6.4% to \$870,000 total
- New Mental Health/Jail Diversion Clinician - ARPA funded
- Offset with \$239,082 from South Shore Health (Dispatchers)



Police Department

Budgeted Personnel Breakdown

	FY16		FY23	
	# of Personnel		# of Personnel	
Administration	7	1 Clerical; 1 Maintenance	7	1 Clerical; 1 Maintenance; 1 Clinician
Patrol	62	2 Vacancies Unfunded	73	
Traffic	10		9	
Investigations	19	1 Clerical	18	1 Clerical
Dispatchers	11	2 Clerical plus 6 per diem	15	2 Clerical plus 2 per diem 4 matrons
Animal Control	1		1	
Harbor Patrol	1	plus 6 PT Positions	1	plus 7 PT Positions

3

Chief Fuller reported the budget reflects an increase of 5.4%, offset by \$239,000 from South Shore Health to fund dispatchers, and budgeted \$90,000 for a Mental Health Diversion Clinician; essentially a social worker. Without the offset, it's about a 3% increase. Three positions were also added this year. The department received grant funding over the last few years for a mental health co-responder. There is currently a grant for the position, but the department will likely be losing the funding. They will probably hire a woman who has experience through DCF. She will accompany officers on psychiatric emergencies, perform crisis evaluations for arrestees, pre-arraignment psychiatric hospitalization events, Section 12's (mental health commitment), deal with emotionally disturbed people, collaborate with juvenile District Attorneys, and attend juvenile and mental health court for behavioral issues. In the future, she will also assist officers in death notifications, and at the scenes of suicides and traumatic calls with the officers. She will be instrumental in training the department and developing police policies further so responses to people with mental health emergencies are more effective.

He provided statistics: in 2020, the department had a mental health clinician for the whole year. She went to 653 mental health and substance abuse calls, evaluated 98 clients that resulted in 80 diversions from the emergency room, completed 657 follow ups from officer calls which included overdoses and referrals to other providers. She and the new provider will work collaboratively with DCF. There are several group homes in Weymouth, and she will also work with Spectrum Health and the Weymouth Schools. She is full time and located at the police department. Chair Molisse asked if the SSH offset will be ongoing? The Chief responded that SSH agreed to fund the three additional dispatchers.

Councilor Kiely commented that the police officer's job is hard enough; any support they can get to process situations is welcomed.

Vice Chair Heffernan added that he spoke recently with a mental health clinician in the private sector. They have a wait list of 650 people who can't be seen for an estimated

year, and who need to be seen now. He commended Chief Fuller for his proactive approach and including it in his budget. The Chief pointed out several well-qualified candidates responded and they narrowed to one who worked with DCF.

Chair Molisse asked for the explanation on the overtime amount. Chief Fuller responded that it's a challenge each year to balance salary and overtime. He has one member who's been on active military duty for two years. With the three new officer positions (one per shift), he should be able to reduce overtime. It's a little harder with the dispatchers; three are required per shift, so if one is out, they must hire a replacement.

Councilor Kiely asked if they are able to use retired officers from other departments for details. The Chief responded that 15 of their own retired officers are sworn in for details, and they are preferred; they have the time and experience on the job, and they know the town. There is a home rule petition that limits it to retired Weymouth police officers. A few of the surrounding towns will loan officers on occasion, but not often. When it is necessary, their mainstay assistance comes from the Sheriff's Department.

Chief Fuller provided a statistical comparison on the department complement. In 1995 when he was hired, the department consisted of 115 officers. The lowest it dropped was to 87. It currently stands at 102 and he is comfortable with that number. Much of the build up has been during Mayor Hedlund's terms.

Councilor Shanahan asked what is the optimum ratio of officers to the public? The Chief responded that Weymouth has 1.9 officers per 1,000 people. The New England average is 2.1 or 2.2/1,000. The national average is about 2.5. Weymouth is fairly consistent with surrounding towns.



Police Department

Free Cash Requests

22_097 Free Cash for WPD Police Cruisers - \$390,000

Continuation of annual replacement of seven (7) marked cruisers. Police vehicles are used 24/7 and average in excess of 40K miles per year, not including idle hours. This results in excessive maintenance costs, vehicle and operational safety issues.

22_098 Free Cash for WPD Replacement of Tasers - \$235,000

Current Tasers are over five (5) years old and out of warranty. Newest technology Taser is extremely more effective. This will fund 100 tasers and 2 docking stations

22 097-Free Cash for Police Cruisers

This \$390,000 request is to replace seven marked front-line cars, following the regular replacement schedule in place since Chief Grimes. These front-line sector cars are in use 24/7. They may average 40,000 miles per year, but miles on a police vehicle are

calculated differently using engine hours and odometer readings. Cars are shifted down through the department as they are replaced. It saves on repairs, and they get a decent trade in value on vehicles each year. He may not need seven vehicles today, but if he orders them now, he will have them for next year.

Chair Molisse asked if the department is happy with the Tahoe? The Chief responded they are; it's well built, has good trade in value, and some continue to be used in other departments.

22 098-Free Cash for WPD Taser Replacements

Chief Fuller noted that tasers are the department's biggest use of force. It's the best option between bare hands and guns. The current ones are five years old and need upgrading. It makes sense to replace them with the latest technology (including laser lights). Taser is the single best de-escalation tool available today. It may be deployed a lot, but it isn't used a lot. Although the prices escalate, he believes the department can replace all of them with the \$235,000 funding.

Chair Molisse added that de-escalation makes sense and having the taser makes sense. Officers only have seconds to act in some situations, and they don't ever want to face loss of life. He thanked Chief Fuller for the detailed analyses.

22 066 M-Fire



Fire Department

	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>
SALARIES	\$ 8,997,246	\$ 9,210,976
OVERTIME	\$ 625,000	\$ 700,000
CLOTHING EXPENSE	\$ 64,675	\$ 66,600
EXPENSES	\$ 335,600	\$ 333,100
Total	\$ 10,022,521	\$ 10,310,676

Notes:

- A total 2.9% increase.
- Fire Union CBA not settled for FY23
- Overtime budget increasing 12% to \$700,000



Fire Department

	FY16		FY23	
	# of Personnel		# of Personnel	
Administration	3	Chief, 2 Clerical	3	Chief, 2 Clerical
Fire Suppression/Rescue	89		94	
Prevention	1		2	
Training	1		2	
Fire Alarm	1		1	

Fire Chief Stark noted this budget reflects a \$310,000 increase. The department's CBA contract expires on June 30th, so negotiations with the union begin shortly. The department complement was 89 in FY16 when Mayor Hedlund took office and stands at 94 currently, in fire suppression. Two additional firefighters will bring the complement to 101 if they receive the SAFER grant. The current grant covers four firefighters and is on the third of three years. During the first two years, FEMA paid 65% of their salary, and 35% in the third year. Their salaries will be absorbed once the grant is complete.

Councilor Kiely supported the SAFER grant application both times. She questioned the status of Station 2. The Chief responded that he will provide response information from Station 2. There were three fires in the district since it opened. He noted the overall result is positive; response time is reduced, wear and tear on the apparatus is less, and morale in the department is up. Councilor Kiely responded that District 2 has a high elderly population and she is grateful the station is reopened. She asked how Narcan numbers have been trending. The Chief responded that the police take the majority of calls. Fire Department responds to the calls, and Narcan use is tracked. Whichever public safety group arrives first administers Narcan. Councilor Kiely answered that she is concerned with the apparatus wasted on these calls when they are so important to fire safety, and there are other resources in place.

Chair Molisse asked Chief Stark to explain the 12% increase in overtime. Some of it comes from the opening of Station 2 to maintain the proper shift complements. There are currently 4 groups; two groups of 24 and two of 23 firefighters including one new hire at the academy. There are 8 employees out on long term illness/injuries. COVID is still a limiting factor. There is a balance between hiring and coverage on overtime. The group under the SAFER grant are on board, and the department will absorb those salaries once the grant runs out.

Chair Molisse asked how many staff Station 2. It has an engine running out of it with a crew of 4, two dispatchers and the Chief. It is always staffed.

Councilor Shanahan asked the terms of the new SAFER grant. It covers 2 firefighters for three years. The first two years the federal government paid for 75% of their salaries and flips for the third year. He would like to seek more, but it has to be sustainable; they don't want to hire if they have to layoff later.



Fire Department

Free Cash Requests

22_093 Free Cash for WFD Protective Bunker Gear - \$406,400

100 sets of protective bunker gear - coat, pants, boots, gloves, hood, and helmet.

22_094 Free Cash for Upgrading Fire Alarm Communications - \$100,000

Replace existing 25 year old technology which was donated from the Air Base when it closed. The technology has changed to digital and there is no support for the old technology. We have over 200 King Fisher radio boxes throughout the community.

22_095 Free Cash for WFD Station Generator - \$100,000

Remove and replace old gasoline generator with new diesel powered generator.

22_096 Free Cash for WFD Software - \$40,000

Purchase of new pre-fire planning application and fire records software system.

7

22 093-Free Cash for WFD Protective Bunker Gear

This \$406,400 will cover protective gear for all firefighters. Fire service involves a lot of potentially dangerous exposure to chemicals and carcinogens. The gear has to be cleaned after, so they maintain two sets of gear. This is a routine replacement cycle.

Councilor Kiely supported this purchase. The town's loss could potentially be so much more if it wasn't in place.

22 094-Free Cash for Upgrading Fire Alarm Communications

This \$100,000 will replace the current Kingfisher radio boxes that the town maintains. It was provided by NAS back in 1975. The boxes are located in most of the town buildings, and the existing technology is no longer supported by the newer digital system.

22 095-Free Cash for Fire Station Generator

Station 1 has a gasoline generator, and it is located inside the station. The other stations have updated generators located outside. In the event of a power outage, the station needs to be able to open the garage doors to respond to calls.

Councilor Kiely supported the measure, as someone who works in the industry and understands the importance of power generators.

22 096-Free Cash for Fire Dispatch Software

The department plans to modernize their processes with software that tracks time off, payroll, inspections and other systems within the department. Councilor Kiely asked about the annual operating costs. There is an initial outlay to purchase and install the software, and a \$22,000 annual operating cost. They will drop the cost they currently share with the Police Department for IMC.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:34 PM, there being no further business, a motion was made by Vice Chair Heffernan to adjourn and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

Attachment:

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

Approved by Michael Molisse as Budget/Management Committee Chairman
Voted unanimously on 6 June 2022