



Public Safety & Transportation Committee Report

City of Newton **In City Council**

FIRE DEPARTMENT **BUDGET REPORT**

Thursday, May 4, 2017

Present: Councilors Ciccone (Chair), Yates, Cote, Blazar, Norton and Lipof

Absent: Councilors Fuller and Harney

Also Present: Councilors Albright, Lappin, Sangiolo, Crossley and Auchincloss

City Staff: Chief Bruce Proia and Assistant Chief Gino Lucchetti, Newton Fire Department; Chief David MacDonald, Executive Officer Lt. John Daly and Executive Administrator Lisa Pearson, Newton Police Department

Referred to Finance and Appropriate Committees

#359-16 Submittal of the FY 2018 to FY 2021 Capital Improvement Plan

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting the Fiscal Years 2018 to 2022 Capital Improvement Plan pursuant to section 5-3 of the Newton City Charter. [10/11/16 @ 11:28 AM]

Referred To Finance and Appropriate Committees

#359-16(2) Submittal of the FY 2018 Municipal/School Operating Budget

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting in accordance with Section 5-1 of the City of Newton Charter the FY18 Municipal/School Operating Budget totaling \$395,313,737 passage of which shall be concurrent with the FY18-FY22 Capital Improvement Program (#359-16). [04/10/17 @ 2:42 PM]

EFFECTIVE DATE OF SUBMISSION 04/18/17; LAST DATE TO PASS THE BUDGET 06/02/17

Referred To Finance and Appropriate Committees

#359-16(4) Submittal of the FY 2018 – FY 2022 Supplemental Capital Improvement Plan

HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting the FY 2018 – FY 2022 Supplemental Capital Improvement Plan. [04/10/17 @ 2:42 PM]

Action: **Public Safety & Transportation Approved 6-0, STRAW VOTE**

Note: Chief Proia and Assistant Chief Lucchetti joined the Committee for discussion on these items and discussed their FY18 Budget Summary and opening remarks.

FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL & STAFFING:

The Fire Department personnel is broken into the following six sub-divisions:

1. Emergency Management
2. Fire Suppression
3. Fire Prevention
4. Emergency Medical Services
5. Technical Rescue
6. Communications Division

Chief Proia and Assistant Chief Lucchetti stated that the Fire Department focused on the following projects in FY17:

1. Station #3 and Head Quarters Building - Chief Proia stated that this project is moving along. The new fire station and the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) will be complete in June 2017. At that time, the firefighters will be moving back. The city server will also be moved into the new station. Station #3 will have a maze and a Denver Window, made out of metal that teaches how to tie off in order to egress immediately out of a structure.

2. Communications - Chief Proia stated that a Communications Center at a cost of 1.2 million dollars was appropriated to change the Police and Fire Departments radios to a simulcast system. A new system will determine and allow the best and strongest signal. Unfortunately, Verizon is no longer reliable; it is difficult to obtain service calls in a timely manner. A benefit of the simulcast system will allow both the Police and Fire Departments the opportunity to leave Verizon and be brought onto a City fiber network. Both departments' transmitters and receivers will be replaced. The departments are currently working on one transmitter. The communications in the Newton North High School, Newton South High School and the Angier Elementary School is complete. The Zervas Elementary School will be forthcoming, if necessary. The middle schools may require a less expensive system, this will be determined. The computerized communications system for all fire stations is in the process of being replaced at Station #3. When Station #3 is complete, all digitizers will be replaced and the alerting systems will be upgraded with fire alarm digitizer equipment used for municipal fire alarm systems.

It is anticipated, that an additional 1 million dollars will be appropriated to the CIP to purchase portable radios for the Police and Fire Departments.

3. Tech Rescue – Assistant Chief Lucchetti stated that a Tech Rescue truck went into service on January 1, 2017. After four months, the Tech Rescue truck has allowed the department and firefighters continuous training and the firefighters are more competent in their jobs by

receiving this necessary technical training. The rescue truck is responding to calls at high hazard occupancy incidents including nursing homes, hospitals, hotels, schools, auto accidents, trench rescues, manhole incidents, structural damages, confined spaces and lumberyards, etc. The rescue truck will be relocated to Station #3 in June 2017.

4. Safety & Training – A training facility is built behind Station #7. This year, a second floor will be added to this facility. The facility includes a smoke machine, cameras, partitions and dummies allowing firefighters the opportunity to train and conduct drills. Station # 3 will have an extractor and dryer to clean firefighters gear from carcinogens.

FIRE DEPARTMENT FY17 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Chief Proia and Assistant Chief Lucchetti explained in detail the Fire Department accomplishments.

1. Effective Communications Infrastructure – Updated antiquated infrastructure and equipment. Improved interoperability between all City departments. The department hired a full time employee responsible for upkeep and improvements to the department technological needs. The Fire Department uses the School Department frequency as an interoperable emergency management channel.

The Fire Department is in the process of and anticipates completion of the following three projects by July 1, 2017.

- a) transition remaining copper lines for radios to fiber and;
- b) radio repeater system capable of communicating with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Dispatch Center and;
- c) complete the work on Manet Road communications building repeater system for DPW and the School Department. School personnel will be properly trained on the communications equipment.

2. Became Class 1 Fire Department - Tech Rescue. The department placed in service a fully staffed heavy rescue truck. The Fire Department continues Tech-Rescue training one discipline at a time. The department anticipates that any necessary equipment will be fully purchased by July 1, 2017. The Fire Department continues to expand HAZMAT capabilities as part of heavy-duty rescue truck and is in the process of training personnel on scuba diving for a future dive team.

3. Fire Prevention - Increased use of technology in fire prevention. The department computerized oil tank storage records and computerization of all inspections. The Fire Department continues to purchase and lease a scanner to store fire alarm plans and continue to certify all fire prevention officers as fire inspector 1 and fire investigator 1.

4. Fire Suppression and Training. The department purchased thermal cameras for engine companies. The Fire Department continues to purchase bunker gear replacement to meet the National Fire Protection Act (NFPA) standards (the budget allows 24 sets each year). The department conducted emergency vehicle operator class training and designed a fire officer-training program to certify all new officers as fire officer 1 and 2.

5. Wires Division – Wire Division upgrades. The cable upgrade on Valentine Street to Bigelow Road is complete. A bi-directional amplifier system for Newton North High School and obtained quotes for remaining schools, it is anticipated this project will be completed by July 1, 2017. The Fire Department has received a new bucket truck and created a new rank structure within the Wires Division. The department has removed approximately 85% of the double poles in the City.

FIRE DEPARTMENT FY18 GOALS

Chief Proia and Assistant Chief Lucchetti explained in detail the Fire Department goals.

1. Effective Communications Infrastructure - Convert the Fire and Police Departments to a simulcast system. Replace all Police and Fire radio equipment and use fiber as the pathway. Battery backups at all Police and Fire radio sites. Upgrade and replace station alerting systems and upgrade fire alarm digitizer equipment used for municipal fire alarm systems.

2. Maintain a Class 1 Fire Department rating - Personnel and Apparatus –Training and Equipment -Tech Rescue. Add an additional eight firefighters to the force for Rescue 1. Place in service a second floor to the training facility. Purchase a new engine to replace 2004 pumper truck to keep apparatus in compliant with the NFPA. Train and place in service a new pumper truck (E-3). Implement training hours tracking software. Replace approximately 100 of the self-contained breathing apparatus bottles that have reached shelf life per NFPA standards. The NFPA allows for a twelve-year life expectancy. Replace bunker gear to meet NFPA standards. Certify more personnel as Tech Rescue technicians, train more personnel on Tech Rescue operations and continue with Tech Rescue training.

Chief Proia stated that the department anticipates that eight new firefighters will be added into the budget to build the Tech Rescue positions. Four personnel are in the academy with an anticipated graduation date of July 19, 2017. These four personnel will not be added into the budget until July 1, 2017. Four additional personnel are currently in the physical test stage anticipating a September 2017 academy class. These four personnel will not be added into the budget until October 1, 2017.

3. Fire Prevention - Increase use of technology in fire prevention and professionalism. Increase collection, availability and use of electronic data. Upgrade technical capacity for tracking inspections and work with the Inspectional Services Department to develop a consolidated database. Certify all fire prevention officers to fire inspector 1 or 2 and to fire/arson

investigators.

4. Fire Suppression and Training - Improve training capabilities. Expansion of the fiber optic range tester infrastructure and additional standard operating procedures for tech rescue and support roles.

5. Wires Division – Improve municipal fire alarm system. Replace fire alarm cable at Centre, Mill and Sargent Streets. Replace pedestal boxes used from inventory. Replace fire alarm terminal cabinets in the three main cable runs. Replace overhead pole cables in several locations throughout the city and continue with refurbishing and painting the fireboxes throughout the city.

FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

Chief Proia and Assistant Chief Lucchetti noted the following significant line item changes to expenses in the budget:

Fire Administration - \$2,712. decrease.

Fire Prevention - \$12,703 increase.

Fire Station Maintenance - \$16,560 decrease.

Fire Vehicle Maintenance - \$16,201 decrease.

Fire Communications - \$40,631 decrease.

Fire Training - \$28,103 increase. This includes additional fire tech rescue and technician training.

Fire Emergency Operations Center - \$6,220 decrease.

CIP

Chief Proia stated the CIP includes the following project for FY18:

Priority #36 Emergency Communications. Radio System Infrastructure. Install continuous power, repeaters and receivers and other radio system infrastructure improvements \$1,035,000.

GRANTS, GIFTS AND REVOLVING FUNDS

Chief Proia and Assistant Chief Lucchetti touched on a few grants, gifts and revolving funds that have been requested for FY18:

1. Sale of Surplus Fire Equipment Revolving \$5,000. This account was created to sell surplus vehicles.
2. Newton Wellesley Hospital MDU Trailer Gift \$2,000. This is an annual grant to update and maintain the equipment for the decontamination tent.
3. Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant \$351,000. Chief Proia will hear in June 2017 if the department will receive this grant. This grant is for a vehicle training class, equipment, apparatus and the opportunity for the Fire Department to rehire firefighters who have been laid-off.
4. Federal Homeland Security Emergency Operating Center Grant \$25,000. This is an annual grant; it is received to buy equipment and furniture for the Emergency Operations Center.
5. Safer Grant \$432,900. Four firefighters to be employed on the Tech Rescue truck.
6. Federal Homeland Security (Beverly pass thru Grant) \$1,000.
7. Federal Emergency Management Performance Grant \$50,000.
8. State Regional HAZMAT Response Grant Program \$50,000. This grant covers the overtime of HAZMAT technicians.
9. State MDU Deployment Grant \$5,000. This is a biennial grant.

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, REQUESTS and SUGGESTIONS:

Please explain why large structures cause fire rescue problems and can this be resolved before structures are built, such as the Avalon developments? Chief Proia said that the Fire Department sits in and reviews large developments. Avalon does not build beyond the fourth floor and will not build any higher because a fifth story building requires a built-in piped sprinkler system. He then said that the department may make conditions before a special permit is approved including the departments suggestions. Public Safety is necessary for all.

Does the City require sprinkler systems in new construction? Chief Proia stated that he went to the State House with other Massachusetts Fire Chiefs to endorse this bill. The installation of a sprinkler system adds approximately 1.5% to 2% cost increase during construction. Chief Proia endorsed this bill because sprinkler systems save lives and properties.

When do you anticipate the completion of the new Fire Head Quarters? Chief Proia answered that he anticipates a ribbon cutting ceremony to take place in October 2017.

What is the Fire Departments experience and issues on the use of Narcan for the emergency treatment of known or suspected opioid overdose? Chief Proia said that he did not have this data available this evening but would provide the data to the City Council. He then stated that the Police and Fire Department use Narcan regularly as it has proven to save lives. He does not know of issues. Narcan is a great tool.

Please explain Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). Chief Proia stated that years ago, the Fire Department was placed in a different homeland security region. He has spoken with Chief MacDonald, the Executive Office, the Executive Office of Public Safety and Congressman Kennedy's office. The Police and Fire Departments have spoken and submitted letters describing the 10 miles of Charles River, the 5.6 miles for the Boston Marathon, the City is on an evacuation route and that Newton Wellesley Hospital is a participant for medical purposes. It is logical for the City of Newton to be a part of UASI because when the department petitions Northeast Homeland Security Regional Agency (NERAC) for a piece of equipment or something to assist with homeland security concerns they generally release federal grant funding based on regional needs. UASI funding is usually distributed based on needs; the City has not received UASI funding.

Please explain the creation of the new rank structure in the Wires Division? Assistant Chief Lucchetti stated that the Fire Department has hired a superintendent, working foreman, master electrician, journeyman electrician and two fire alarm technicians to complement the work of the superintendent. All are specialists in the field of fire alarm technicians they are not firefighters. This new rank structure has allowed the department to revamp some job descriptions. In part, the Wires Division completes all work orders at school locations, install above ground, underground and new cabling. A new cable system was installed replacing 100-year old copper wire wrapped in lead. New copper wire is being installed wrapped in weather resistant plastic. The Wires Division also maintains the fire alarm systems and conducts business fire alarm inspections.

Does the Fire Department continue to certify fire prevention officers to become fire prevention inspectors? Assistant Chief Lucchetti stated that most recently, two prevention officers graduated as fire/arson investigators. In the fall of 2017, two additional fire prevention officers will attend the academy to obtain fire inspector 1 and fire inspector 2.

Please explain the process on how the Fire Department works with the Police Department on arson investigations? Chief Proia answered that the Fire and Police Departments attend the same course on training.

Does the Fire Department desire any changes in the budget? Chief Proia stated that he is happy with the support that he has received as Chief of Fire. The department has made great strides and continues to move forward. The Executive Department and the City Council have

been very supportive of the Fire Department.

Please explain the process of maintaining a Class 1 Fire Department rating and does the rating apply to the buildings? Are operations and maintenance manuals required to maintain this status? Chief Proia answered that the department receives credit on facilities. The rating is based on dispatch, water supply, manpower, equipment, apparatus, facilities, etc. All changes the department makes helps the Fire Department to maintain Class 1 Fire Department. Chief Proia then stated that the standard operating procedure (SOP) is submitted with departmental inventories and response times.

Committee members commended Chief Proia and Assistant Chief Lucchetti for their continued excellence. They then thanked the Fire Department for their excellent continued work.

Councilor Yates moved approval on a straw vote to accept the Fire Department Budget, CIP and grants, totaling \$22,362,741, which is a 6.10% increase over FY17 budget. Committee members agreed 6-0.

At approximately 9:30 pm, the Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Ciccone, Jr. Chair