

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

FIRE DEPARTMENT

BUDGET REPORT

THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2015

Present: Ald. Ciccone (Chair), Fuller, Yates, Schwartz, Harney, Johnson and Cote

Absent: Ald. Lipof

Also Present: Ald. Sangiolo

City Staff: Chief Howard Mintz and Lt. David MacDonald, Executive Officer, Newton Police Department; Chief Bruce Proia and Acting Assistant Chief Gino Lucchetti, Newton Fire Department, Robert Symanski, Financial Analyst and Jack Cowell, Capital Project Analyst

REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES

#375-14(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting in accordance with Section 5-1 of the City of Newton Charter the FY16 Municipal/School Operating Budget totaling \$361,997,264 passage of which shall be concurrent with the FY16-FY20 Capital Improvement Program (#375-14). [04/15/15 @ 5:08 PM]

EFFECTIVE DATE OF SUBMISSION 04/21/15; LAST DATE TO PASS THE BUDGET 06/05/15

REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES

#375-14 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting the FY16-FY20 Capital Improvement Plan pursuant to section 5-3 of the Newton City Charter. [10/15/14 @ 3:01 PM]

REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES

#375-14(4) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting the FY 2016 – FY 2020 Supplemental Capital Improvement Plan. [04/15/15 @ 4:57 PM]

ACTION: APPROVED 6-0, Ald. Harney not voting STRAW VOTE

NOTE: Chief Proia and Acting Assistant Chief Lucchetti joined the Committee for discussion on these items and discussed their FY16 Budget Summary and opening remarks.

FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL & STAFFING: (Personnel: 186 full-time and 1 part-time)
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

FIRE DEPARTMENT FY 15 ACCOMPLISHMENTS (5)

1. Communication/Prevention Bureau - Computerized all records, computerized all fire inspections and created pre-fire plans using the Firehouse software on the MDT's. Published all fire prevention requirements on the Fire Department web site, developed external communications and certified all fire prevention officers as a Fire Inspector 1 and in advanced arson investigations.
2. Emergency Medical Services Bureau - Created a better balance for medical emergency response by utilizing Ladder Companies, added 48- hours of continuing education and training for department EMT's. Increase the number of personnel to be certified EMT's.
3. Technical Rescue - Trained additional personnel on Technical Rescue including operational level. Technical Rescue remains a goal of the department to ensure the department is prepared for Specialty/Technical Rescues.
4. Fire Suppression Division - Certified all new firefighter hires to the Firefighter 1 & 2 standard by meeting National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and improve infrastructure. A goal is to complete fire department facilities.
5. Communications Division - Installed a new satellite receiver on top of Station 2 to enhance radio communications, replaced/repared two additional fire alarm circuits at Fire HQs -Beacon Street and Centre Street - Walnut Street to Beacon Street.

FIRE DEPARTMENT FY 16 GOALS (5)

1. Fire Suppression Division - Obtain self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) equipment, including each member receiving a new face piece with GPS technology to allow tracking of personnel inside a building. A goal is to develop a plan for equipment of firefighter gear following the NFPA standard of 10 years and to improve the professionalism of the department by meeting the NFPA standards.
2. Communication/Prevention Bureau - Update internal communications and infrastructures systems and polices. Transition radio circuits from Verizon copper to city owned fiber. Replace two additional fire alarm circuits. Establish a school radio system connecting to the Dispatch Center and the Emergency Operation Center.
3. Training – Place in service and train on the new confined space rescue at Station #10. Develop a Technical Rescue Team to ensure the department is prepared for Specialty/Technical Rescues.
4. Response Time – Install Opti-Comm with a smart computer aided-design interface that pre-empt traffic signals at the time of dispatch and clears the intersections ahead of the responding apparatus.
5. Communications Division - Create an electronic hydrant map to be used when clearing hydrants of snow. This will allow personnel to log the time and date as tested or in need of repair, clearing of snow or in need of heavy equipment.

FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

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

Fire/Rescue - \$20,000 increase
Fire Station Maintenance - \$11,800 increase
Fire Vehicle Maintenance - \$3,786 increase
Communication - \$5,244 decrease
Fire Training - \$50,000 increase
Emergency Operations Center - \$7,245 increase
Fire Rescue Public Safety Supplies - \$10,000 increase
Fire Rescue uniforms/clothing - \$8,100 increase
Fire Station Maintenance Electricity - \$12,800 increase
Fire Station Maintenance Natural Gas - \$5,000 increase
Fire Station Maintenance Department Equipment - \$3,960 increase
Fire Station Maintenance Cellular Telephones - \$4,100 increase
Fire Vehicles Maintenance - \$10,000 increase
Fire Training Protective Gear - \$50,000 increase
Emergency Operations Center Software Maintenance - \$6,000 increase

CIP (4)

Chief Proia and Acting Assistant Chief Lucchetti stated the CIP includes the following four scheduled projects for FY16:

Priority #7. Fire Station #3 and HQs - Replace Newton Centre Station to upgrade systems for code compliance access and for female firefighters.

Priority #15. This is a CIP project listed under the Public Buildings Department. This is a Fire Department project to replace the Emergency Communications building on Manet Road.

Priority #16. Replace self-contained breathing apparatus gear (SCBA) purchased in FY07. This equipment includes each member receive a new face piece with GPS technology to allow tracking of personnel inside a building.

Priority #21. Replace a 1999 pumper truck in Newton Corner. The pumper truck exceeds the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 15-year life expectancy.

Priority #27. Replace a 1996 bucket truck with 165,000 miles.

GRANTS, GIFTS AND REVOLVING FUNDS (7)

Chief Proia and Acting Assistant Chief Lucchetti touched on a few grants, gifts and revolving funds. He stated that in FY16 he has requested the following:

1. Sale of Surplus Fire Equipment Revolving \$5,000. This account was created to sell surplus vehicles such as the bucket and pumper trucks.

2. NW Hospital MDU Trailer Gift \$2,000. This is an annual grant to update and maintain the equipment for the decontamination tent.
3. Fire Safety Gifts \$100. These gifts are usually monetary donations.
4. Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant \$990,000. This grant is for equipment, apparatus and the opportunity for the Fire Department to rehire firefighters who have been laid-off. Chief Proia stated that he is hopeful the department will receive this grant. If received, the grant will be used to create a Technical Rescue Team.
5. Federal Homeland Security Emergency Operating Center Grant \$21,975. This grant is received annually to buy equipment and furniture for the Emergency Operations Center.
6. State Regional HAZMAT Response Grant Program \$25,000. This grant reimburses HAZMAT firefighters for overtime pay.
7. State MDU Deployment Grant \$2,500. This is an annual grant.

COMMITTEE QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND REQUESTS

Please explain the inspections process. Chief Proia and Acting Assistant Chief Lucchetti answered that the Fire Department issues the permits and performs inspections. This information needs to become automated by providing information on the website of permit requirements and forms. Delays are due to repeat inspections. Community Plus will create efficiencies and will enable two-way communications with the inspectors from other departments especially for commercial businesses.

Please explain the budget increase. The number of personnel is at 186 full-time employees, reflecting a 4.2% increase. Chief Proia and Acting Assistant Chief Lucchetti answered that equipment, repairs, cell phones, propane, medical supplies, vehicle repairs, vehicle maintenance and personnel expenses have all increased. The Quinn Bill education incentive is up 100%, adding an additional \$135,000 to the budget. Ninety-six members have an Associate Degree or above and sixty-eight members do not have a degree but receive college credit funding incentive.

Please provide statistics on response times. Chief Proia and Acting Assistant Chief Lucchetti answered that a goal is to respond to an emergency within four minutes, this past winter response times increased for all stations including Station #10 and Station #7.

Are you concerned with the issue of duplicate street names and should it be a priority? Chief Proia answered that changing street names is very important; the problem will not go away. The Fire Department receives many calls where the emergency vehicles are dispatched to the incorrect street. He supports changing duplicate street names to improve public safety. A Committee member suggested that Chair Ciccone, Chief Mintz and Chief Proia meet with the Executive Department to discuss options on moving forward and to determine if duplicate street names shall change due to safety issues. It is necessary to make a decision either way. A request was made to report to this Committee in September on the discussion.

How is the 'adopt a hydrant' program working to identify hydrant locations that need to be shoveled? Chief Proia and Acting Assistant Chief Lucchetti answered that the Utilities Division is responsible for installing and maintaining the fire hydrants. The Fire Department shovels and tests the fire hydrants. The City's Information Technology Department created a GIS map and Google satellite is used. When fire hydrants are dug out, the GIS map is documented by color, red is incomplete, green is complete. Because of safety reasons, the department does not use flags to identify fire hydrant locations.

Please describe personnel physical fitness. Chief Proia and Acting Assistant Chief Lucchetti answered that the current fire stations have workout rooms, Station #10 and Station #3 will have fitness rooms. Firefighters are using these facilities. Chief Proia stated that he would endorse the City on creating a wellness program as he feels nutrition is very important.

Has the department communicated with the Boston Fire Department on the impacts and consequences of recent activities that they are depicting? Chief Proia answered no, but anticipates that he will.

Committee members commended Chief Proia for bringing the department to standards of the twenty-first century. They then thanked him and the department for his presentation and excellent continued work.

Ald. Yates moved approval on a straw vote to accept the Fire Department Budget, CIP and grants, totaling \$19,422,541. Committee members agreed 6-0, Ald. Harney not voting.

At approximately 10:30 pm, the Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Ciccone, Jr. Chairman