

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

PUBLIC SAFETY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

POLICE DEPARTMENT

BUDGET REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2014

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

Absent: Ald. Schwartz

City Staff: Chief Howard Mintz and Lt. David MacDonald, Executive Officer, Newton Police Department; Chief Bruce Proia and Asst. Chief Paul Chagnon, Newton Fire Department and Robert Symanski, Financial Analyst

**REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES**

#403-13(2) HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting in accordance with Section 5-1 of the City of Newton Charter the FY15 Municipal/School Operating Budget totaling \$345,044,967 passage of which shall be concurrent with the FY15-FY19 Capital Improvement Program (#403-13). [04/14/14 @ 5:43 PM]  
EFFECTIVE DATE OF SUBMISSION 04/22/14; LAST DATE TO PASS THE BUDGET 06/06/14

**REFERRED TO FINANCE AND APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES**

#403-13 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR submitting the FY15-FY19 Capital Improvement Plan and Long Range Projection pursuant to section 5-3 of the Newton City Charter. [10/21/13 @ 9:59 AM]

**ACTION:** APPROVED 7-0, STRAW VOTE

**NOTE:** Chief Mintz and Lt. David MacDonald, Executive Director joined the Committee for discussion on these items and discussed his FY14 Budget Summary and opening remarks.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL & STAFFING**

The Police Department is broken into the following five sub-divisions:

1. Traffic Safety
2. Patrol Bureau
3. Community Services Bureau
4. Crime Services
5. Dispatch Center

POLICE DEPARTMENT FY '14 ACCOMPLISHMENTS (7)

1. Patrol Bureau – Ensured safe neighborhoods throughout the City of Newton. Crime rate down over 20%. Chief Mintz noted that 20% is an error; the correct percent should reflect 8%.
2. Traffic Bureau – Safe roadways for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Significant reductions in vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian crashes. To address the concerns, vehicle and bicyclist citations have been issued. Police detail receivables continue to be concerning, the City is owed approximately \$350,000. The City receives 14 percent interest on overdue accounts and 10 percent surcharge on all non-City details. The Police Department and Law Department are continuing on making the process efficient.
3. Crime Services Bureau – Increased the amount of cleared or solved cases with successful prosecution or court diversion. The department has conducted over 800 investigations.
4. Information Technology - Replaced laptops in cruisers; developed software for crime information sharing via secure internet; improved business systems. Information Technology is available to all employees from their phone. Not many communities have this ability.
5. Community Services Bureau – Improve school safety, reduce domestic violence, educated the community on elder affairs and child passenger restraints, etc.
6. Dispatch Bureau – Accurate, efficient, fully trained emergency communications personnel and internet resources. Seven dispatchers received statewide awards and one dispatcher recognized nationally.
7. Support Services - Fuel efficiency improved and the department re-accredited. Captain Berube led the departments effort to receive accreditation. The City received national recognition.

POLICE DEPARTMENT FY' 15 GOALS (8)

1. Patrol Bureau - Increase problem-solving and contact with citizens and merchants; expand crime-analysis and data driven policing. A goal is to access data and conduct community policing.
2. Traffic Bureau - Target crash factors and complaints with unmarked vehicles; work with partners to develop parking/safety planning. The intent is also to reduce the number of drivers who text message while operating a vehicle.
3. Crime Services Bureau - Purchase new fingerprinting and interrogation crime solving gear; enhance case management and cyber-crime investigation.
4. Community Services Bureau - Adopt domestic violence high-risk assessment screening by team.

5. Information Technology - Expand crime trend information to personnel via secure internet.
6. Dispatch Bureau- Increase quality control monitoring by 50%; increase social media communications.
7. Support Services Bureau - Enhance fuel efficiency and vehicle warranties; add document or paperless accreditation system; obtain grants; achieve facility needs assessment study.
8. Special Operations Bureau - Renovate firing range; purchase patrol rifles; increase specialized training for patrol officers.

#### POLICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

Chief Mintz explained the following significant line item changes or line item additions in the budget:

Police Administration - \$51,497 decrease  
Police Building Maintenance - \$12,703 decrease  
Police Vehicle Maintenance - \$ 56,029 increase  
Information Technology – new \$90,500 line  
Police Support Services - \$76,312 decrease  
Special Operations - \$ 2,502 increase  
Consultants - \$5,005 decrease  
Temporary Staffing Service – now zero dollars  
Office Supplies - \$2,000 decrease  
Investigation Expense - \$1,000 decrease  
Electricity - \$10,000 decrease  
Natural Gas - \$7,000 decrease  
Water and Sewer - \$4,500 increase  
Cleaning/Custodial - \$1,001 decrease  
Cleaning/Custodial Supplies -\$798 increase  
Motor Vehicle –RM - \$15,433 increase  
Gasoline - \$40,596 increase  
Computer Equipment – new \$ 51,000 line  
Communications Supplies – new \$8,000 line  
Computer Supplies – new \$31,500 line  
Computer Equipment R-M – now zero dollars  
Departmental Equipment R-M - \$2,500 increase  
Cellular Telephones - \$6,888 decrease  
Communication Supplies - \$10,000 decrease  
Public Safety Supplies - \$6,932 decrease  
Uniforms/Protective \$1,154 increase  
Computer Supplies - now zero dollars  
Awards and Trophies - \$1,499 increase  
Training Expenses - \$2,502 increase

CIP (1)

Chief Mintz stated the CIP includes the following scheduled project for fiscal year 2015:

Priority #12. Police Headquarters - Mechanical upgrades replace roof top mechanical equipment that is beyond its useful life. Currently requires a lot of maintenance and service calls.

GRANT, GIFT & REVOLVING FUNDS (12)

Chief Mintz touched on a few grants, gifts and revolving funds. He stated that in FY' 15 he has requested the following:

1. Sale of Surplus Police Equipment Revolving \$50,000. This account was created when five vehicles were recently sold.
2. Community Resources Gifts \$5,000.
3. Police Dog Unit Gifts \$2,000.
4. Cops & Kids Program Gifts \$1,000. Chief Mintz is hopeful the department can again conduct summer camps and mentoring programs to promote youth safety.
5. Federal Underage Alcohol Enforcement Grant \$10,000.
6. Federal Bullet Proof Vest Reimbursement Grant \$15,000.
7. State Bullet Proof Vest Reimbursement Grant \$15,000.
8. State Municipal Police Staffing Grant \$55,000.
9. State SETB Dispatch Grant \$45,311.
10. State E911 Dispatch Grant \$190,930. This is a training grant for emergency dispatchers answering 911 and medical calls. Both types of calls are recorded and monitored to evaluate personnel and ensure correct protocol is followed.
11. State Pedestrian Safety Grant \$5,000.
12. State Traffic Safety Grant \$10,000.

POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFFING STUDY

Chair Ciccone stated that he and Ald. Fuller docketed an item to discuss the Police Department Staffing Study report, completed in April 2014. Chief Mintz has agreed to discuss the study with the Public Safety & Transportation Committee members on June 18, 2014.

Chief Mintz stated that the Subcommittee has met over the past three months with Bob Rooney and Maureen Lemieux to review the Police Department needs to fully understand and analyze all facets and functions of the Police Department. The intent of the Subcommittee is to provide recommendations as to the appropriate number of personnel necessary to staff the department while providing necessary services. If the staffing study is approved, the intent is to begin having weekend coverage in the Traffic Bureau Division and to hire youth and dispatch officers.

The report implies that “it is not fiscally feasible, nor operationally possible, to ask for or expect to add 21 new FTE to the police department budget in a single year. It is this committee’s recommendation that 3 new FTE be added to the 2015 Budget. A further recommendation for future planning is made to add 3 new FTE to future budgets in an effort to stabilize the department with the manpower to be not only reactive, but proactive. It is evident that the department is running on fumes and it is only good business and prudent to take care of the engine as a whole and to not neglect its parts”.

Committee members requested the following information be provided when the staffing study is discussed. Data to support what the department is requesting, compare data to neighboring communities and if the accreditation study proves that Newton is short staff. Chief Mintz stated that the accreditation report supports increasing staff and replacing headquarters. He then said that it is a shame that officers are forced to work days and nights. The City of Newton Police Department ratio of officers is low for the City’s population.

#### COMMITTEE QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND REQUESTS

Please explain the State dispatch grant. Chief Mintz answered that this is a training grant for emergency dispatchers answering 911 and medical calls. 911, medical calls and business calls are audio recorded and monitored to evaluate personnel and ensure correct protocol is followed.

Who reviews the departments’ quality of service, call records and satisfaction reports in the Dispatch Center? Chief Mintz answered that the Dispatch Center is pursuing accreditation. One of the responsibilities of the Quality Control Superintendent reviews five to ten percent of 911 calls, quality of service and satisfaction reports. Business calls are reviewed less.

Will the State dispatch grant assist with the issues of duplicate street names? Chief Mintz answered no; it is a training grant.

Committee members feel that there is a shortage of officers working with youth, elders and domestic issues.

Committee members asked if in-house social workers would benefit the department. Chief Mintz answered that Arlington and Framingham have in-house social workers. The Arlington social worker has met with Chief Mintz for discussion and he believes an in-house social worker would benefit the department.

Committee members stated that they are pleased to hear the department is working with the Public Buildings Department on replacing the main bureau. Physical surroundings can cause negative impacts (broken windows, old furniture). It is important to have a positive and welcoming work environment. Moral is important. Chief Mintz stated the current building was built in the 1930s. It is imperative to have operating heating, ventilation, air-conditioning and electrical system. The new building will also have larger classrooms for training.

Committee members asked if Veterans apply to the department and if an officer is assigned to attend the Post 440 informing them of Veterans events. Chief Mintz answered yes, but they do not attend monthly.

Committee members asked if the department needs both specialized officers and general officers. Chief Mintz stated that the department requires both. Some instances need experts on certain issues such as OUI's, elder affairs and crime prevention. He is hopeful a civilian in-house social worker will be hired to meet the departmental needs.

Please explain the soft targets by performing frequent Homeland Security drills and exercises. Chief Mintz answered that prior to the 911 tragedy a vulnerability study was completed. The study identified terrorist targets such as schools and churches. After the tragedy, anti-terrorism patrols were conducted and continue to identify target areas. This provides awareness and on-going departmental exercises.

Committee members asked how many complaints the department has received this fiscal year. Chief Mintz answer that no one actually filled out a citizen complaint form or filed a complaint in person, as requested. Five complaints were received regarding quality of service. Three complaints received about officer's demeanor (exonerated). Two complaints of officer's misconduct (resolved because property was located and one is pending). Two complaints of civilian employees against supervisors (one pending, one resolved). Two complaints about supervisors from officers (unfounded) and one officer against another (resolved/unfounded). Chief Mintz then stated that the departments compliment ratio is much higher than complaints.

Committee members asked how the department recruits officers and is the City is a desirable place to be employed. Chief Mintz answered that the officers are hired through the civil service. Residents, Veterans and disable Veterans have first preference. Two women veterans work in the department. He then noted that there are 481 standards to the process of being accredited. He feels that it is obvious the Police Department is succeeding or the department would not have been re-accredited. He then stated that the Special Operations Bureau hired ten and graduated nine. He is hopeful the department will soon enroll five people into the academy.

Chair Ciccone said that the Committee of the Whole would discuss the CIP in detail. He then opened the discussion to members of the public who were present. There was no public comment.

Committee members thanked and commended Chief Mintz and the department for his presentation and excellent continued work.

Chair Ciccone moved approval on a straw vote. Committee members agreed 7-0, Ald. Schwartz not voting to accept the Police Department Budget and CIP, totaling \$19,431,211.

At approximately 9:30pm, the Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Ciccone, Jr. Chairman