



CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS
Public Safety Committee Agenda Communication

Meeting Date: February 8, 2021

Prepared By: Chief McCoy

Agenda Item: Follow Up to January 11, 2021 Public Safety Committee Meeting

Explanation: At the Public Safety Meeting of 1.11.21 a verbal report was given about the activities and budget of the Washington Police Department. Following that presentation, the committee suggested that major budget items that we were responsible for and major activities of the Washington Police Department be provided in written form. The attached is that the response to that request. Please understand that not all budget items are included...only major ones. Also listed are projected spending items that must be addressed in anticipation of the spending in upcoming years.

Action Requested: Request that the Public Safety Committee review and ask questions that pertain to the operation of the Washington Police Department and the affiliation that we have with other governmental entities.



CITY OF WASHINGTON, ILLINOIS

Public Safety Committee Agenda Communication

Meeting Date: February 8, 2021

Prepared By: Chief Michael D. McCoy and Deputy Chief Jeff Stevens

Agenda Item: Overview of Public Safety Budget Initiatives

Explanation: Below is an overview of Public Safety initiatives and staffing recommended for the FY 2021-22 budget.

Public Safety includes the City's Emergency Management Agency staffed by 15 volunteers, including its command staff, Director Jim Lidgard and Assistant Director Brian Becker. WEMA is under the command of the Chief of Police.

EMA regularly performs storm spotter duties and communication ability is a key component. This year, we switched from a paging system that did not serve area-wide needs to cellular communications. We augmented the Director's and Assistant Director's comms with more powerful mobile radios. As reliance on cellular communication is troublesome during disaster, we expect to include EMA in the county-wide switch to STARCOM, about January, 2023. This year's budget should include capital accumulation of a portion of the initial radio cost for that switch. We estimate the total cost at \$88,000 and propose accruing half of that total.

The City's Fire and Rescue budget provides necessary funds for those activities performed through the Washington Fire Department, which is a corporation and not a part of City government. The City pays for Fire Department services and WFD is also funded by other sources, such as the fire protection districts outside the city limits, which WFD also serves.

The City is responsible for the WFD building, which the City owns. This year, we planned to replace the emergency generator, as explained and approved at a recent Council meeting. That project was delayed at the Council's direction early in pandemic response. We expect, with other delays associated with the pandemic, that replacement will take place after May 1. In that event, we will leave the budgeted \$32,000 unspent this FY and re-budget funds next year, resulting in an apparent discrepancy between planned spending, actual spending, and an apparent increase in funds requested for next FY.

The City's fire and rescue protection would be well served by consideration of a facility west of WFD, between it and the Northern Tazewell Fire Department, where WFD currently stations an ambulance to cover both the Northern Tazewell Fire Protection District and western portions of the City of Washington. Collocating that facility with a Public Works facility could provide symbiosis for costs and security of both facilities.

The new contract with WFD provides funding differences recently discussed by this body and therefore expected to be reflected in the budget request. What is essentially pass-through funding of

dispatch services through TC3 will be affected by a change in TC3 billing that is favorable to fire service, but offset in the Public Safety budgets by corresponding increases in dispatch charges for police. The billing formula change is intended to better reflect the actual dispatch workload and is outside the direct control of this body. The shift in costs from fire to police will not be readily apparent on the fire side, where costs increased to maintain a service level, but will be apparent in police.

The Police Department is currently staffed at 23 full-time and 8 part-time officers, augmented by 4 full-time and 3 part-time civilian staff. Full-time officers provide police services 24/7 and are staffed to provide an immediate response to unpredictable, life-threatening situations, while providing extended services to situations ranging from traffic and property crime investigation to violent crime and cold case investigation. The civilian staff answers daily resident and non-resident requests 16 hours a day, every day. Civilian staff handles records, administration of property and evidence (items strictly controlled under state and federal law) and provides information support and analysis.

Our upcoming budget request for police reflects deferred purchases that appear as increases, capital accumulation, particularly for the Starcom system, and a recommendation for increased sworn staffing to address current needs and provide resiliency for upcoming challenges, both to staffing itself related to trending reform laws and to workload. Part of needs forecasting involves reading tea leaves. We are troubled by what may be the cusp of an international and significant shift upward in violent crime, something we have mentioned over the course of this year. Violent crime has generally been falling in the U.S. since the early 90s, after a steady rise over 30 years. There is not an academic agreement about causes of crime or even levels. The macro trend, potentially accelerated by or associated with social changes related to pandemic, is troubling. We are not requesting staffing spikes to respond to this anticipation. We do believe both current workload, expected adjustment to current and likely "reform" legislation, and advisable resilience make adding staff requisite to providing police protection for the City of Washington.

Our budget request includes two sworn positions. The request is consistent with City growth that was not matched by growth in police staffing requested over several years even pre-dating the current administration. In short, police chiefs over a decade or more have been expressing the need for police staffing levels beyond what the City has been able to commit. The City has added considerably to sworn staffing, and the Department itself has added considerably to capacity through training and technology, contributing to overall efficiency.

Our range budget provides for training in use of force, including alternatives to deadly force and controlling deadly force. This is a high-risk area of policing and an area where we have made great strides in training for real world needs. Backorders of ammunition will likely require us to receive our ammunition order after May 1, leading to rebudgeting about \$9,000, which will appear as an increase in the FY 21-22 budget and leave funds unspent in the current FY.

Technology that increases our officers' efficiency on patrol and in investigations. Our budget request includes a potential to expand a project currently in testing, license plate readers, in the event that the technology proves useful and efficient. This particular vendor was chosen for, among other things, its commitment to privacy, expanding our investigative capability across patrol and detective divisions while keeping private business private. We have proposed expansion of this pilot to 10 bidirectional locations, although any expansion would be dependent on our testing experience. Our proposed budget is \$57,500 from Special Projects, funding that is not tied to the General Fund.

Also a technology item related to resident traffic concerns and efficient deployment of resources, replacement of our traffic counters is a proposed capital item. The City purchased several used Nu Metrics devices that count and classify traffic, as well as provide speed analysis. Those counters have become unreliable due to age and were intended as proof-of-concept devices for us. We believe they have the value we described. Elected officials in particular should like the idea of obtaining count and traffic speed data not tied to a speed trailer bearing a numeric display and police logo. We compared hiring a vendor for this service and purchasing equipment of various types to operate ourselves. We believe the purchase of \$16,000 in equipment is most cost effective and best allows for flexible response to incoming resident concerns. While we would prefer to use a vendor, exploration of that possibility left us considering annual costs triple our equipment costs (albeit for wider service).

We expect to use DUI-Tech fund money, not the General Fund, to replace mobile radar units. We are testing a new radar unit now.

We are exploring options for compliance checks of alcohol delivery services. Our draft budget contains \$7,000 for this item. Alcohol home delivery is not permitted in Washington.

The Washington Community High School District is concerned (and so are we) with multiple attempts to prohibit police in schools, including currently pending language very similar to a bill dropped recently by a Northern Illinois legislator. The District is asking that the City amend its SRO contract to allow partial payment toward an SRO in the event Illinois prohibits police in public schools during any portion of the contract period. This would affect expected income that offsets WPD personnel costs. Aside from potentially prorating payments, we have agreed in principle to an overall increase of 2.5% to the contract payments for FY 21-22.

The Department has a significant capital need currently related to required conditions for property and evidence storage. In the current year, we budgeted for interim measures to work toward proper environmental controls. Part of that planning would have required significant in-house work from Public Works. The City's pandemic response delayed that work. We have requested consideration in the Capital Improvement Plan for Buildings to address this long-term need. Capital requirements for this depend largely on the solution proposed by Studio K.

We planned a \$20,000 request for a building maintenance service to address ongoing needs. This request pivots on consideration of a maintenance position and funding in Public Works, as that position would eliminate our need for a separate vendor.

We will budget \$30,000 for replacement of Thor and related training. This money was donated for this purpose by the late Keith Zimmerman to ensure continuation of this valuable police service.

We expect to include police in the county-wide switch to STARCOM, about January, 2023. This year's budget should include capital accumulation of a portion of the initial radio cost for that switch. We estimate the total cost at \$170,000 and propose accruing half of that total.

We are eliminating some expenses, such as Lexipol's policy update service.

Fiscal Impact: To be determined upon direction of the Public Safety Committee.

Action Requested: Direction from the Public Safety Committee on the budget as a whole and specifically on items above. Should the Committee support any or all of the items, we will continue to refine the requests for the appropriate draft budgets and presentation to the City Council.