

MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING AND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2017, AT 6:30 P.M. IN ROOM 207-209, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present

Budget Committee Chairman Timothy Slocum, Michael Ecke and Sylvia Nichols.
Council Members: Chairman Robert J. Oris, Jr.; Vice Chairman Paul A. Bowman; Jeffrey Falk, Patti Flynn-Harris, Thomas Ruocco, Peter Talbot.
Staff: Michael A. Milone, Town Manager; James Jaskot, Finance Director; Gina DeFilio, Deputy Finance Director; Police Chief Neil Dryfe; Deputy Chief Brian Pichnarcik; Lt. Frederick Jortner.

1. ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll and a quorum was determined to be present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

3. AMENDMENTS OF MINUTES FROM MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2017 TOWN COUNCIL AND PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION by Mr. Talbot; seconded by Ms. Flynn-Harris

MOVED to amend the minutes of the March 20, 2017 Town Council Meeting and Public Hearing. Amend Public Hearing Grant Amount to read \$800,000; Amend Meeting minutes to reflect correct heading date of March 20, 2017.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

4. PROPOSED F.Y. 2017-2018 OPERATING BUDGET.

PUBLIC SAFETY: Police Department, Animal Control, Prison Advisory Committee, Civil Preparedness, Public Safety Commission, Fire Department, Inspection Department.

Police Chief Dryfe, Deputy Chief Pichnarcik, and Lt. Jortner represented the Cheshire Police Department.

Town Manager Milone said there are two parts to the contract negotiations that affect the CPD operating budget...medical benefits and pension. If the money for these two were applied as a reduction, the increase would be 2.% or 2.4%. The CPD budget increases by 3.79%. Over the last five years the department budget has averaged a 1.9% annual increase, and Chief Dryfe has done a good job controlling expenses. The department is operating with 47 officers; the 49th officer position was frozen; and the 48th officer was also frozen. This is a status quo budget. The operation is not status

quo; the CPD is moving ahead, and advancing things, especially technology. Savings will be reflected in the medical benefits and pension line items.

Chief Dryfe highlighted areas of the CPD budget. January 2011 was the first budget the Chief prepared for FY 2012; total of just over \$4.8 million; last year's budget was \$5.3 million; increase of \$445,000 over five years; \$74,000 average annual increase or 1.9%.

Chief Dryfe stated the 2017-2018 budget is a base budget without any fluff. He is not looking to expand the department; the cut by the Town Manager was continuation of freezing of the 48th officer position; and the department is okay for another year with this frozen position.

The Police Department completed a major upgrade of its computer aided dispatch and record management systems, major upgrade of the entire I.T. infrastructure, expanded and/or maintained popular community programs including RAD, Child Car Seat Inspections and Installations, School Resource Officer, and has started a 20 member Police Explorer Program. With Council support over the past several years, CPD has upgraded and maintained the vehicle fleet, replacement of in-car video cameras and purchase of body cameras for all officers, entered into several regional collaborations to elevate the level of services provided, reorganized the Police Department with elimination of two captain and two lieutenant positions, took those four employee positions and hired four new police officers. More officers on the street has been very successful, and this plan continues to be evaluated.

Chief Dryfe stated the major highlight of the proposed department budget is an increase of one Sergeant in the department, while still at 47 sworn personnel. He wants to make an 8th Sergeant position, and leave a police officer position unfilled. The Chief explained the reasoning behind this recommendation. On a year-to-year evaluation basis he has identified a spike in patrol supervisor's overtime. This is because of a provision in the contract for two supervisory minimum on 2nd and 3rd shift on Friday and Saturday nights...four shifts every week must have two supervisors. There are only two supervisors assigned to each shift on a regular basis. On their days off, with one day rotating into the weekend, the shift starts with only one supervisor assigned, and overtime is automatically hired. The cost estimate is about \$60,000 a year in supervisory overtime. The difference in pay between a top paid Patrol Officer and a Sergeant is \$10,000 a year. By making the additional Sergeant for \$10,000 it is estimated there will be about \$50,000 saved in overtime. Part of that is the current contract negotiations to eliminate the two supervisor requirement for the 3rd shift on Friday and Saturday. The extra Sergeant would be assigned to the 2nd shift...so there is always three supervisors on 2nd shift; if one is off there are still two Sergeants on the shift, and eliminate the need to hire for overtime. There should be ongoing overtime savings of \$60,000.

In 2016, Mr. Milone pointed out the total CPD overtime was \$450,000; next year it is budgeted for \$375,000; it would grow from a base that is \$75,000 lower; this year it is estimated at \$421,000 for all CPD divisions.

Chief Dryfe said it is two parts - elimination of the two supervisor minimum on midnights which is hoped to be accomplished through contract negotiations, and addition of the 3rd Sergeant to the 2nd shift which takes care of the two supervisor minimum...with no call in on overtime.

#5102 Page 86 - Mr. Oris asked if the seven (7) Sergeants includes the new Sergeant position.

Chief Dryfe said there are six (6) in Patrol, and he wants to go to seven (7); there is also a Detective Sergeant. The 7th is the new position.

#5105 - Mr. Oris is where the \$50,000 overtime savings is reflected.

In #5105 Mr. Milone said just above the overtime line there is a Town Manager adjustment of \$72,434.

Mr. Oris commented on CPD having a Patrol Officer at the highest level, \$72,434, and Sergeant position at \$81,969...not quite a \$10,000 difference. Overtime savings is \$60,000 for a net of about \$50,000.

If a Sergeant is in the last 10 years of employment and earning much overtime, Chief Dryfe said it will drive up their final average compensation for purposes of retirement.

Mr. Oris asked how everything plays into overtime being done by two officers...and whether having the 48th officer would reduce overtime.

It was explained by Chief Dryfe that by putting the four management positions back into patrol after the recent reorganization, the amount of overtime has been minimized for police officer rank. This is now a Sergeant issue, and CPD can go with one less patrol officer...the three shifts are 9 officers, 8 officers, 8 officers.

Mr. Oris stated that going from 47 to 48 patrol officers does not change the overtime too much.

The 48th officer would help, but Chief Dryfe said it does not affect overtime too much.

Mr. Bowman asked about the Detective Bureau being staffed well enough.

Right now CPD is one Detective position short, and Chief Dryfe said he wants to settle the contract first. The Detective position will become a promotion, and the person must take the test and get promoted.

Page 89 - #5102. Mr. Slocum asked about the decrease of \$57,982 in this line item.

Chief Dryfe said this is the 49th officer position; it was never budgeted; and the "0" cost is shown because it has never been eliminated.

#5106 Salary Award - Mr. Talbot asked about this line item expense; 2016 actual was \$88,000; \$155,000 was then appropriated; and some were moved to other areas, i.e. patrol and traffic moved to Admin, or Support Services.

Chief Dryfe explained that this line item included longevity payments, sick time payouts for people maxed out on sick days and getting paid for excessive sick days, education and military leave, sick time day bonus, fitness incentive pay, cleaning and clothing allowance. These are all contractual items.

Mr. Milone said the reason it looks like this line item goes up so much is because the Chief consolidated some of his accounts into one Administration account...#5106 used to be spread out amongst three divisions.

According to Chief Dryfe, this was done because not all the categories were centralized into the Administrative budget; some were left in other departments with small amounts cited for shift differentials; and a few years ago he consolidated everything. The number went down for awhile when there were senior people retirements; now the savings is building up; unused sick days are paid in July; there is a 150 sick day cap and sick time payout is very high...sometimes top employee gets over \$6,000 payment.

PUBLIC

Cindy Kleist, 251 Lancaster Way, asked about using the gift account to buy equipment, and page 83 Administrative Personnel Services with \$45,00 overtime.

In reply, Chief Dryfe said this is the Administration Unit, Lieutenants, I.T. Coordinator, and five Dispatchers.

Ms. Kleist asked about page 84, #5301, \$63,000, which she thinks is a high cost for phones.

It was explained by Chief Dryfe that in the patrol car there is a modem and data goes back and forth.

Ms. Kleist asked about overtime of \$245,000 and if this is minimum staffing.

This is a negotiation item and Chief Dryfe stated that someone out must be replaced.

Ms. Kleist asked about page 83, Performance Awards, #5106, \$163,000.

This is many things, and Chief Dryfe noted it is cleaning and clothing allowance, sick day buyouts, education and military bonus and other items.

Ms. Kleist asked about the message board in front of the CPD building, and using the one that is there now.

Chief Dryfe said this is not in the CPD budget...it is in the gift account.

Derf Kleist, 251 Lancaster Way, talked about the 3.79% increase in the CPD budget as being the largest of all Town departments. He said any special CFD and CPD projects should be pulled out of the budget so it is not compounded next year. Mr. Kleist said the State pays for unused sick time at 1/4 day, not the whole day, while CPD has an accrual that is fully paid.

Chief Dryfe explained that when someone retires, they get maximum of 50 sick days payment.

Mr. Milone advised that the maximum sick day payment is 50 days, not 150 days. This was negotiated into the contract a few years ago when too many officers were at the maximum. The then Chief had concerns officers would start calling in sick due to loss of vacation time. This provision was negotiated in the subsequent contract so there would be some incentive not to take sick leave for the sake of not losing it.

Mr. Kleist commented on an extra Sergeant reducing overtime and pension...and now there are two people with fringe benefits. He asked the percentage of salary is fringe benefits...one-third on top of the salary.

In the CPD budget, Mr. Milone said there is no extra person. There is elimination of a Police Officer and creation of a new Sergeant position with promoting someone from within. There will be one less officer and one more Sergeant.

Mr. Kleist said minimum savings should be minimum scheduling...one person on vacation, training or whatever, deal with it.

Deputy Chief Pichnarcik informed the group that there are a certain number of officers that must be on the road at any one time, and the minimum number must be reached before hiring overtime staff.

With regard to the large increase, 3.79%, Mr. Milone explained that, as part of the negotiations, there is Council concern about medical benefits and pension costs. There were savings realized in medical benefits and pension; the value is not reflected in this budget; to get this changes were made in the salary structure as a trade-off. Taking the savings from the pension and medical benefits, the budget increase is reduced to 2.26%.

PUBLIC

Louis Nero, 55 Jesse Court, expressed appreciation to Chief Dryfe and the Cheshire Police Department for their work in keeping Cheshire a safe place. He asked about all the huge cost of overtime. Mr. Nero asked for a breakdown of what happened last year which resulted in overtime, i.e. emergency situations and other costs resulting from routine sickness, vacation, etc. in the department.

Chief Dryfe said this can be broken down, and advised much of the overtime is related to vacation, officer training, sick time, minimum Supervisor rank staffing. He stated Cheshire is at the low end of overtime for police departments similar to our department...some spend over \$1 million a year in overtime. In Cheshire nothing is being done that is excessive.

It was pointed out by Mr. Milone that the CPD supports many Town activities and events, all overtime costs, for the Memorial Day Parade, concerts, Fall Festival, and other activities.

Mr. Oris commented on the Town Council raising the issue of overtime, and the Chief working hard to reduce overtime, and doing it well. It is hard for Council to determine the optimal point. It has been on the Council's radar, and CPD has pulled overtime in and reduced costs.

The Council was told by Chief Dryfe that some of the CPD overtime numbers in the budget includes grant funding for State programs such as DUI, Distracted Driving grants. The State provides some funding for participation in these programs and this is reflected in the department budget.

For clarification, Mr. Oris stated the CPD budget increases by \$200,000; of this, \$187,000 is in salaries; other than contractual obligations the only increase requested is moving the patrol officer to a Sergeant position, with a \$50,000 savings. Mr. Oris asked about additional hours being added to another position...and other than that everything is contractual obligations in the salary lines. There are two frozen positions and overtime savings with another frozen position.

From a revenue perspective, Mr. Bowman asked about grants, and if there are any other revenues for the department.

Chief Dryfe said the only other significant revenue item is CPD allowing vendors to rent a marked cruiser on a job site...the program has generated about \$28,000 in new revenue. CPD does not deal with the volume of permits or licenses for pistols...and an increase in this area would generate more issues.

The per hour cost for a police officer on special duty was raised by Mr. Bowman...i.e. an officer getting a premium rate, and CPD recapturing these costs. He also asked about holiday rates being higher.

On top of the officer's hourly salary, Chief Pichnarcik advised there is an additional \$8.00 per hour charge for special duty.

Chief Dryfe said there is a holiday rate charged for special duty plus \$8.00 charge for every hour the officer is on duty.

Mr. Milone reported that \$8.00 per hour comes back to the Town. He cited page 113, #4506, Police Special Duty, at \$25,000 more this year. This is the \$8.00 plus the hourly rate. The Town looked at the cost of expenses associated with an officer on special duty...pension, workers comp, social security...and the \$8.00 per hour helps recovers the Town costs of handling and administration of the extra duty.

Mr. Bowman asked about a patrolman doing an extra duty job at a set hourly rate; if the Chief or Deputy Chief takes an extra assignment, and recovery of the flat rate.

Regardless of the rank of the officer, Mr. Milone said the extra duty rate is the same. This has always been negotiated as a flat rate...it is not based on rank...and the \$8.00 is also a flat rate.

Chief Dryfe reported it is time and a half for a top paid patrol officer. If a Lieutenant works he is taking a negative hit.

Mr. Oris asked a revenue question about rental of the police cruisers, and providing cruisers for safety on evening job sites. He said there should be a charge for these cruisers to the company...and it should be a requirement.

In January when there was request for extension of this agreement, Chief Dryfe said he is drafting the ordinance language for this issue.

Mr. Slocum asked other situation the CPD deals with, stresses, drug situation, or something the Council should be aware of.

In reply, Chief Dryfe said the Town took a beating last year with car burglaries. There were unlocked cars, items stolen, and it ended up being 40 more crimes last year than the prior year. Since CPD started carrying Narcan in January, it has been used only once, on someone highly intoxicated on alcohol, not an opioid overdose. In that case, Narcan does no harm in an alcohol overdose, but will help someone with an opioid overdose.

The #1 call to CPD is about traffic volume, speeding, cars passing school buses. The school bus revenue shows up in the judicial funds. Chief Dryfe talked about the first year of bus passing violations, and noted he views the tapes to insure there is a violation. Some of the tickets were worthy of the fine, and he has disapproved a few of the violations.

CPD GIFT ACCOUNT

Elim Park Gift Account - \$180,000 gift this year. Chief Dryfe broke out how the gift funds will be allocated to CPD needs.

\$125,000 - Equipment. \$30,000 Message Board for the front of Police Headquarters; \$43,000 for Shelving System in the Records Division and a storage area on the main floor; \$17,000 to replace Tasers.

\$55,000 Supplies and Services

\$20,000 Training Opportunities outside the mandated certifications required under State Statute; Supervisor and Management Training for newly promoted Sergeants and Lieutenants; \$10,000 for consultant support for rewrite of the policy and procedure manual; \$15,000 for community programs, including R.A.D., police explorers, DUI education, Fall Festival; \$10,000 to augment the CPD quartermaster system, update of various uniform and equipment items for ATV and bike patrol units.

Mr. Milone reported that CCM did a profile on the CPD R.A.D. program.

A request was made by Mr. Bowman for Council to receive a record of response calls to Elim Park.

Chief Dryfe will get this information for CPD and CFD and provide the report to Council.

Mr. Talbot asked about an opportunity for donations being solicited for the message board at the police headquarters...this was done with the Parks and Rec sign board.

In response, Mr. Milone stated he would be uncomfortable approaching people or organizations for donations...it could appear to be a quid pro quo.

According to Chief Dryfe, the CPD message board will be used primarily for CPD and CFD and Public Safety Commission outreach and messages.

With regard to the gift account, Mr. Oris said the police department requests are warranted. Should the State hit Cheshire harder, he asked about use of the gift account funds to supplement the CPD operating budget, and defer half of the gift funds to this purpose.

Mr. Milone stated the gift account funds would not be taken into the general fund. Nothing prohibits the gift account taking on some of the things in the operating budget. Most recently, Elim Park funds were used for rehabilitation of the Cook Hill pump station upgrade. There could be other similar type things. Elim Park likes a specific project related to their facility. Mr. Milone noted that Library Director Burkey tied to cultivate some donations from Elim Park, and was not very successful.

It was noted by Mr. Bowman that the Elim Park gift is appreciated, and the facility does receive many town services.

Mr. Milone commented on Elim Park being approached for a sponsorship at the community pool. He explained that Ms. Adams gave swim lessons at the Elim Park pool, and many people have followed her to the community pool.

**PLANNING: Planning Department, Planning and Zoning Commission,
Zoning Board of Appeals, Economic Development, Beautification**

**Committee, Public Building Commission, Inland Wetlands and
Watercourses Commission, Environment Commission, Historic District
Commission, Energy Commission.**

Mr. Milone informed the Council that this is a status quo budget.

Handout, Page #3 Potential Revisions - Mr. Milone briefly reviewed the revisions with the Council, and advised they would be discussed in greater detail following the public hearing.

The Council was informed by Mr. Milone that the BOE, Supt. Solan, has requested the Council meet on April 5th, 7:00 p.m. on the Facility Plan to narrow down the property which the BOE will pursue for its project. Council members briefly discussed this, and stated they would not be available until after the budget process is completed.

Monday, April 3, 2017 - review of changes to the operating budget.

Tuesday, April 4, 2017 - Public Information Session; followed by discussion of possible supplemental tax bill. There will be a detailed handout on the changes, by department.

Wednesday, April 5, 2017 - this date is being kept open for discussion following the public information session.

There was a brief Council discussion on adjusting the Town and BOE budgets. Per the Town Charter, the Town Government budget can be reduced at any time. Regarding a supplemental tax bill after the budget is adopted is a question to be answered. Mr. Milone said this requires a legal opinion.

Mr. Bowman stated there should be changes to the Charter related to the BOE budget and adjustments.

Mr. Oris asked for an opinion from the Town Attorney on modifications to budgets, both Town Government and BOE. There are legalities involved in making changes to the BOE budget after it is adopted. If the budgets cannot be changed, whatever comes out of the State must be borne by the local taxpayer.

The Council must adopt the budget by April 17th. The State will not adopt its budget until late May or early June. Mr. Milone said it would be better if the State changed its budget year to a calendar year. Last year, after adoption of the State budget, there was a cut of \$500,000 to Cheshire in July, and \$200,000 in December.

Mr. Slocum reported that he had heard the 1/3 or a little less contribution from towns to the teachers' pension plan is coming our way, and BOE needs to be told their budget will be adjusted. He advised that West Hartford CT is sending out 700 layoff notices to its teachers, and asked what the date is in Cheshire for this notice.

With regard to modifications to the Town Government and BOE budgets, Mr. Slocum, as Budget Chairman, will e-mail Supt. Solan and Town Manager Milone to provide their list of modifications to the Council. Supt. Solan put forward the total on the cuts, but there were no specifics stated.

Stating his support of the Library, Mr. Oris said this is not the time for additional work hours or more staff in any Town department. Everyone must do more with less, as these costs cannot be dropped on the backs of taxpayers.

Mr. Ruocco pointed out that the BOE will always talk about cutting teachers and sports, when there are many other things which can be done.

The Council members were told by Mr. Oris that Norton School sent out an e-mail to parents, stating the Council will do a 0% budget increase which is not acceptable. There are things being based on non-factual information.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Slocum; seconded by Ms. Flynn-Harris

MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk