



Special Board of Finance Meeting, Tuesday, May 31, 2022, 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm **Bushor Conference Room, Room 102, 1st Floor, City Hall OR remotely via ZOOM 5/31/2022

BURLINGTON BOARD OF FINANCE

REMOTE MEETING WITH CALL-IN NUMBER

OR

CITY HALL, 1ST FLOOR: SHARON BUSHOR CONF. ROOM

SPECIAL MEETING: FY23 BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

BURLINGTON, VERMONT

MINUTES OF MEETING

May 31, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karen Paul

Ali Dieng

Joe Magee

Miro Weinberger

OTHERS PRESENT: Katherine Schad

Rich Goodwin

Jordan Redell

Sarah E Carpenter

Mark Barlow

Gene Bergman

Jon Murad

Lise Veronneau



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1.0 CALL TO ORDER and AGENDA

Mayor Weinberger called the Board of Finance meeting to order at 5:11 PM.

2.0 PUBLIC FORUM (VERBAL)

2.01 Verbal Comments

None at this time.

3.0 POLICE DEPARTMENT FY23 BUDGET PRESENTATION

3.01 Burlington Police Department – Jon Murad

Acting Chief Jon Murad provided an overview of the Fiscal Year 2023 Burlington Police Department budget. He began by providing an overview of sworn staffing, noting that there are 66 sworn officers and that several of them are on leave, injured, or are attending the Police Academy. He said that there are currently 23 officers available for patrol. He said that there are nearly 60% fewer non-supervisory sworn officers available for patrol than in years past. He spoke about recruitment and retention patterns since 2010. He pointed out that the City Council has authorized 87 sworn officers for the Police Department, and said that though it would be challenging, he said that they could potentially grow by those 21 officers over the next several years.

He spoke about other activities that the Police Department is taking to build capacity. These including the hiring of 5 Community Service Officers (CSOs) and 3 Community Support Liaisons (CSLs). He said that they are confident that they can hire two more CSLs, but that hiring CSOs is a somewhat lengthier (though viable) process. He spoke about the Department's Crisis, Advocacy, and Intervention Programs (CAIP), which fulfills non-police officer, community-oriented services. These include CSLs, the CEDO Victim's Service Specialist, the Domestic Violence Advocate, and the Domestic Violence Prevention Officer.

He spoke about a three-pronged strategy for rebuilding the Police Department. This includes retaining officers with a competitive contract through bargaining, attracting new recruits and lateral officers with strong hiring incentives, and marketing activities around communicating about innovations and what sets Burlington apart. He said that achieving a new contract is the most urgent component of rebuilding. He said that the Department needs a Recruitment Coordinator position (estimated cost: \$65,000) to find diverse candidates to comport with the City's future goals. He also said that the Department needs a Strategic Communicator position (estimated cost: \$65,000) to address the media, shape internal and external communications and messaging campaigns, and strengthen community relationships. He spoke about active recruiting initiatives, which include recruitment incentives (such as \$15,000 for new recruits), and an initiative around hiring more women into policing. He said that the Department needs to hire a recruiting and marketing firm to help rebrand the BPD to reflect its missions and values, with attention to racial equity, inclusion, and belonging.



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He provided an overview of the rebuilding plan's cost summary. These include items within the contracting, recruiting, and marketing areas outlined above. He said that some sources for funding have already been committed or identified, but others are still pending. Chief Administration Officer Schad noted that there is \$750,000 in the FY22 budget that has been unspent and will be rolled into the FY23 budget.

Acting Chief Murad then provided an overview of the Police Department's FY23 budget. He said that they are proposing expenditures of \$17,442,123, the majority of which is for salaries and benefits. He spoke in more detail about select Police Department personnel budget lines, noting a 1% decrease from FY22 to FY23.

City Council President Paul recommended labeling the fee-for-service revenue line with further detail noting that it is for the airport police staffing. She also expressed hope that one of the training line items would have a higher dollar amount, noting a recommendation from the CNA report around the need for additional training in different areas. Acting Chief Murad replied that this line item is for training that personnel would need to go outside of the agency for. City Council President Paul asked how the Police Department will be retaining officers in supervisory roles, given that they are not covered under collective bargaining. Acting Chief Murad replied that the City's current pay structure guarantees that any contract achieved by the BPOA will see results for supervisors. City Council President Paul asked whether the two new proposed positions' costs were included in the budget, and Acting Chief Murad replied that they are.

Councilor Magee asked about the 18 sworn officers who left the BPD in 2018, since the number seems higher than in other years. Acting Chief Murad replied that there were a number of retirements in 2018, but that he has not reviewed those exit interviews. Councilor Magee asked about funding for a recruitment firm and advertising funding. Acting Chief Murad replied that there is currently a small amount of funding included in the budget for recruitment (such as for attendance at job fairs), but that they are proposing a heftier line item to hire a recruitment firm and conduct an advertising campaign. Councilor Magee asked about the Emergency Communications Specialist, noting that the Council had authorized funding to help with recruitment in that area. Ms. Veronneau replied that it's not called out as a specific line item. Mayor Weinberger noted that it is included in the Dispatch & Communications section of the budget, saying that that line item increased as a result of that authorized funding. He added that the regionalization of emergency dispatcher response may affect Department staffing in the future.

Mayor Weinberger provided a brief update on collective bargaining. He also said that there is \$400,000 included in the budget for crisis response capacity, where the City would partner with community mental health services agencies to increase emergency response and dispatch capacity.

Councilor Dieng asked what proportion of the City's budget goes toward the Police Department. Chief Administration Officer Schad replied that the Police Department makes up approximately 19% of the General Fund budget for FY23. Councilor Dieng asked why the City is proposing new positions prior to hiring an advertising and marketing firm. Acting Chief Murad replied that no one currently on staff has the bandwidth to manage the relationship with a recruitment or marketing firm, and so they need a new position to do that and help manage a marketing/advertising campaign. He added that community engagement is a current critical need, and that staff have not had the bandwidth to focus on more than



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just essential operations. Councilor Dieng emphasized leaning on experts to help with fixing this problem.

Councilor Bergman asked what besides salary the \$750,000 carryover funding will go toward. Chief Administration Officer Schad replied that the vast majority would go toward salaries and benefits, and the remainder would go toward other operational expenses. Councilor Bergman asked how the FY23 budget compares to the FY21 budget in terms of salaries, and Chief Administration Officer Schad displayed the figures for FY21, FY22, and FY23. Councilor Bergman asked about the current average age of the force, in order to determine whether retirement will affect it in the near future. Acting Chief Murad replied that they have relatively few prognosticated retirements over the next few years. Councilor Bergman said that it would be helpful to show comparisons between retention rates in the Burlington Police Department and other agencies in the State, if possible. He asked what the ideal number of CSOs and CSLs is. Acting Chief Murad replied that the ideal number of CSLs is 6, and the ideal number of CSOs is between 10 and 12.

Councilor Carpenter noted that constituents have complained that they will call the Police Department to report a stolen bicycle or a car break-in, and the Police Department will tell them that they have no one that they can send to investigate. She asked whether CSOs/CSLs could be sent to conduct preliminary fact-finding related to investigating the incidents. Acting Chief Murad replied that the best response to those types of crimes is to file an online incidence report. Councilor Carpenter said that many constituents view that as an unsatisfactory response. Mayor Weinberger replied that it could have implications for bargaining but that they are having further discussions around what CSOs and CSLs can do.

Councilor Bergman asked what the Human Resources Department's role is in terms of recruiting and asked what the proposed new position would do to free up those HR resources. Acting Chief Murad replied that currently, applications go to HR for an initial screening and then comes to BPD for review by an in-house recruitment sworn officer and more in-depth recruitment activities (questionnaires, screenings, panel interviews, and various tests). He said that it is valuable for potential sworn officer recruits to speak to current sworn officers to gauge what the position is like. He said that the new proposed position wouldn't necessarily free up the sworn officer position, but would augment and support it. Councilor Bergman said that it would be helpful to understand the proposed relationship between these positions.

Councilor Carpenter asked whether the CSOs could be a stepping-stone position for sworn officers, noting that there are people who are interested in public service but may not know for sure if the Police Department is the right fit for them. She also asked about the Police Academy at the State level and any changes in the trainings there. Acting Chief Murad replied that they are replacing the current academic test with a new one, and that they are currently reevaluating physical fitness standards. He noted that the Academy has had a large heat count of recruits and that there are some concerns about the level of staffing at the Academy (it may be too low). He said that this could potentially create a bottleneck in the workforce pipeline for officer recruits.

4. ADJOURNMENT

4.01 Motion to Adjourn





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With no further business and without objection the meeting was adjourned at 7:01 PM.

RScty: AACoonrad