

RECEIVED
JUL 26 2023
TOWN OF AYER
TOWN CLERK

FinCom 2023 March 1st

Location: First Floor Meeting Room, Ayer Town Hall

Members Present:

Chair: Kurt Fraczkowski

Vice-Chair: Sebastian Cordoba

Clerk: Andrew Sealey

Member: Jin Hong

Extra:

Town manager – Robert Pontbriand

~~Asst. Town Manager – Carly Antenellis~~

Finance Manager: Tierney

Police Chief: Gill

Deputy Chief: Bigelow

Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:01PM.

MOTION:

Sealey to approve Jan 31st minutes minutes

Hong 2nd

Unanimous approval

Public input: open to the public

Police Presentation:

Chief: Presentation will be long, but try to be brief to meet the 1hr time limit

20 officers at full staff, 10 com staff

1 animal control

1 detainee watch

Currently have a vacancy at detective-patrol staff are a priority and therefore pulled detective staff

Swing sergeant- fills in days off of other sergeant – currently vacant

11-7 shift patrol officer is going to see a retirement mid-staff cycle this year

Reserves officers – there are currently none - Before the pandemic the state was reviewing credentials and now require fulltime training – in April/may the plan is to use a retirement to fill that reserve slot

DC:

Covering arrest statistics: arrests are higher than anytime over the last 5 years

Incidents stats and criminal application to court: are flat or trending up over the last 5 years

MV stops: spiked to highest levels in 5 years

MV collisions: are back to pre-pandemic levels

Sealey: What's driving MV stop increase

DC: Safety, increased crime, seeing more issues

Chief: one factor in stopping people is obtaining grants for specific and targeted MV stops such as aggressive driving and hands-free driving

DC: Many changes over the past few years specifically in MA is more demands like mental health, society, technical, professionalism, population increase, commuter traffic, accreditation. Expectations of a larger level of care/service that require more documentation and have a level of increased repeat calls for issues that are not resolved given the state of general mental health – calls to hospital for mental health that require an officer (Nashoba is in Ayer)

26% of calls are for mental health/domestic violence

Seeing larger Ayer population and more commuters, Main St. sees 20,000 vehicles a day

Chair: Accreditation status, does that drive the ability to increase grant requests?

Chief: yes, it's a status that is looked at professionally and helps with other things like insurance. Brings us up to a national standard level that took 3 years to obtain. Also comes with an increased level of admin. Work

Hong: how long to accreditation

Chief: every 3 years, last year we were recertified

Staffing: 20 officers including chief. 9.6sq. miles. ~8500 population, large commercial and industrial bases throughout the town, MBTA station and commercial rail line, Area hospital and ER, host the district courthouse, we have 2 of 3 main entrances for Devens. This requires a special consideration when it comes to staffing.

Per capita: Ayer is right about at the state/national average for police/population

Use 2 methods for setting staffing: current method is two officers minimum and add more for increased workload: better method is based on workforce staffing model to set staffing levels for shifts and account for shift relief factor, in ayer 1.8 is the ratio. For every officer that is how many we need to support any other officer

Incidents by time of day and day of week: standard day hours are notably higher (as expected)

DC:

Looking at org. chart, line items are broken out into separate lines

Chief: Line by line accounting

5100-salaries: Chief and deputy Chief

5110-wage: Officers, office manager, records clerk, prisoner watch (proposed admin sergeant ~96000)

Admin Sergeant: request is to cover increased paperwork and oversight of the newer officers. State standards are ever increasing and cover retirements and population growth. Allows day shift sergeant to be mostly available to be out on covering patrol.

Sealey: Where do you find sergeants:

Chief: mostly promoted from patrol, will need to fill spot if someone is promoted

Overtime request: will be 50,000 less than last time. Training, court time, community events, report writing, time off all cover overtime

5200- services: Vehicle maintenance needs are increasing, going to try a fleet management software, cover maintenance agreement, added a cruiser fee for someone requesting a cruiser

5210-Utilities: relatively new line item: using for electric and radios and phones

5400- supplies: moved stuff to other lines

5410- clothing line: contractual clothing of body armor and uniforms etc

5700- expense: C4RJ initiative for court diversion program, communities for restorative justice. Education and college tuition

5800-Capital: Cruiser prices have gone up, need radar unit upgrades and computers. Trying to continue using hybrids, \$3,000 savings so far.

Communications: been wanting to cleanup line item for a while since we regionalized with Shirley. 911 grants supply hundreds of thousands of dollars. Dollars are used for wages and equipment and training.

Sebastian has to go – Quorum maintained

Dispatchers: Money moved line items

DC: Animal control:

5110- Wages: step and COLA increases (also barn inspector)

5200-services: cover exams and kennel

5400-Supplies: leashes, treats, etc.

5700- expense: unforeseen expense

Chair: open to public comment:

Dennis: At first forum on budget the number of officers was 23?

Chief: Number is currently 19

Dennis: Looking at local neighbors, numbers roughly align. In terms of mutual aid. Is that unusual?

Chief: I wouldn't say unusual

DC: wax and wane cycles of support

Dennis: Is the frequency equal?

Chief: we probably receive more help than we give and use Littleton K-9 when needed and available

Dennis:

Eric: doesn't appear the staff is too high or low, is overtime less helpful than another officer

Chief: admin. Sergeant is proposed to help with those issues and free up others, so yes

Dennis: in terms of dispatch: how is Shirley assessment arrived at

Chief: At first it was a see where we are, wants town to know how much it is to run the comm. Center, in 2022 Ayer used just over 50% of total call volume, budget now is better reflecting real costs and assessment is too low.

Robert: The agreement is inter town and agreed on by town managers and chief of both towns. At the time the state wants 911 centers they prefer regionalized centers and we wanted to maintain a center in Ayer itself and not be pushed over to Devens for example.

Geof: First renegotiation of call center negotiation? Building data to better negotiate

Town manager: yes

Chair: Any more input from public?

Presentation was very good, thank you for all the analytics.

Motion: To adjourn by Sealey

2nd by Hong

unanimous approval

7:07pm :Adjourned.



KURT FRACZKOWSKI
CHAIR