



Allentown

435 Hamilton Street
Allentown, Pa. 18101

Minutes - Final

City Council

Thursday, November 16, 2017

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

Budget Session - Public Safety

Special Council Meeting - Public Safety

Call to Order: Chairperson Hendricks

Present: 7 - Ray O'Connell, Daryl Hendricks, Candida Affa, Roger MacLean, David McGuire, Julio Guridy, and Cynthia Mota

Budget Discussion - Public Safety

Police, Fire, EMS, Communications Center

Mr. Daryl Hendricks commended Chief Glen Dorney on the great job he did recently on the unfortunate homicide involving a teenager. Your department and Assistant Chief Reinik were personally involved in that.

Chief Glen Dorney stated that we were the surveillance unit until we got relieved. He stated great job by all including the Lehigh County District Attorney's office Homicide Taskforce. He stated that he does not have a presentation tonight. He stated that in 2018 budget they kept the manpower equal to 222 police officers. Through discussions and reality we had a difficult time coming to full staffing. We haven't been at full staffing since 2005. They put in a Department Of Justice (DOJ) grant to increase the department by six officers. One of the requirements is to have full staffing. That is the reason for not requesting manpower for this year. There is no change.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked about the parapolice and the duties. He asked if they carry guns. He asked what will be your wish list.

Chief Glen Dorney stated that the duties in which four of the parapolice work with a platoon at the 10th Street Patrol Station. They work the desk and handle phone inquiries, warrants, and the radio traffic. We have a fifth parapolice that works the front desk at city hall and greets people for a security deterrant. He stated they do not carry guns. They are not armed or not sworn. They cannot make arrest.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked about uniforms and new officers. He asked if that is what Chief Dorney is buying once they get to the full complement.

Chief Glen Dorney stated yes, when we fill the 10 vacant positions it will be a cost to get them in uniforms. He stated that always willing to increase their technology whether it be city cameras on the streets. We have tasers to look to outfit in our department. Right now, we are using to different system with the X26 and the X2. he stated that he would not turn down overtime money. We can't man positions. We have a lot of receivables.

Mr. Ray O'Connell stated that we are out of the crossing guard business. That's good.

Chief Glen Dorney stated technically we do pay, but we do contract.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked how have that worked out for us.

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Chief Glen Dorney stated much better. They are very receptive on the ideas that we have. Our resources are used less than before.

Mr. Julio Guridy asked Chief Glen Dorney to try to hire more police officers instead. We still have a high unemployment in this country. He stated that he is perplexed not have people apply. He asked how many officers are you proposing now. He stated that I see here you are requesting money to repair motorcycles. Don't they get repaired?

Chief Glen Dorney stated that they are trying. We have people in the pipeline. We have two people to pass through the process. They will not graduate until the end of October, beginning on November. People that we hired that don't have Act 120 will sit at the desk and work the desk. They have a 20 week FTO program. He stated that people apply, but unfortunately when you go through the background information and they don't pass everything it makes it difficult because it is very time consuming. People that we actually disqualified from the lower list were lower than the Bill 66 list. A lot of the Bill 66 candidates were not working in other jobs for a reason. He stated 222 in the budget and right now we have 212. He stated that Keystone Harley Davidson.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked about printing, repairs and maintenance and

other contract services.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that it is happening all across the city. We are reallocating the printing across all departments. We added funding for the use of force simulators and driving simulators that we did not have previously. That is the LexisNexis online reporting so we can have police officers on the street.

Ms. Candida Affa asked if every officers has to wear a bulletproof vest. What is the longevity? She asked about the community engagement. She stated

Chief Glen Dorney stated that it is five years. Every five years we replace them. He stated that it is going pretty well. The community engagement 365 is going pretty well. We got a lot of feedback. The schools reaching out to us to see if we will come out to the schools and interact with the kids.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked about the premium pay and an increase in overtime. He asked how many school resource officers we have now.

Chief Glen Dorney stated that includes the natural raises to get us where we need to be. He stated 10 school resource officers. It has been the same for about a year.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked about the school resource officers and the Allentown School District have security guards. Do we interact with professional development, and in service training.

Chief Glen Dorney stated that when the schools have drills our police officers are involved with that and work with the security very closely.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that one thing that worries him is the high crime. We have about 17 murders now. It is really something that we need to change our MO to curtail this. He asked Chief Dorney if he had a plan on what he will do to make sure that we stop this madness.

Chief Glen Dorney stated that they are doing the community engagement. The vast majority of the people involved in the criminal activity and violent crime here is either gang or drug involvement. We are trying to get to our kids and get them early to make sure they stay out of gangs and away from drugs.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated with all due respect that is going to take time. He stated that he is looking for something faster.

Chief Glen Dorney stated not to give out tactics, but we put a large amount of overtime out with our Vice Unit doing many sweeps. We did over 50 arrests, seized guns and we got more confidential informants that are given information.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated to Mr. Guridy that she agrees with him that they hear a lot of negatives things about homicides. At the same time, she would like to commend our police department because a couple of weeks ago I called them a few times and I cannot give details as to a lot of specifics. There was a block in our city with a lot of drugs, activities and prostitution going on and they were calling me instead of the police. I encouraged them to call the police department. They contacted the Chief and he took care of it.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that he hopes that Ms. Mota is not taking his comments as a criticism of the police department. He stated that he cannot in good conscious sit here without saying something about the murders that have happened.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that with all due respect, that was not my intention. I wanted everyone to know the good job that they are doing. I am in agreement with you that the homicides in the city have to stop.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that when he calls in and his colleagues will agree that they get great response from the police department.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked about the Community Crime Suppression Unit.

Chief Glen Dorney stated that is the grant that we applied for. It is the DOJ grant. We want to get to the 222 mark so we can draw on that. We have not heard if we were awarded that grant yet.

Mr. Roger MacLean asked where are we right now.

Chief Glen Dorney stated 212. We just interviewed two people that would move on. We are getting them through the process and we have a couple of retirements left.

Mr. Jeff Glazier stated that he wants to follow up on the tasers. Which models are the X2s. We are entering into another contract for 2018. Those will also be the newer models. Will that give you 180 tasers? What is your full complement of tasers. He asked how many of the old X26s do you have. What is the lifespan of a taser? The bulletproof vests costing about \$850.

Chief Glen Dorney stated the newer versions. He stated correct. He would loved to have 222. We have 70 plus. It is a trade in process. He stated about seven or eight years. They should be good for five years, at least. He stated with the upgrade its about \$800.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that 2017 has been an interesting year for the Allentown Fire Department for a variety of reasons, but we have worked together to successfully meet those challenges. We still have a lot of work to do and continue to work. He thanked Deputy Fire Chief James Wehr and Assistant Fire Chief Efrain Agosto for putting the budget together and the member of the Allentown Fire Department for their hard work and dedication. The bailout kits will be fully implemented in 2018. We updated SOGs and streamlined the current procedures that we use day to day. The biggest challenges was our fleet. It takes about 11 months to build these trucks. The overall 2018 budget is the same as 2017. The only increases are contractual increases for overtime pay and permanent raises.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked about bailout kits. He asked what is the cost per kit.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that it is the personal fire safety kits for each firefighter. It is rope along with a descending device. It has been used in New York City in around the country. He stated that bailout grant will cover the RPI system which is a hook, descending device and rope. Personnel will be trained on how to used it.

Dr. David McGuire asked about last year when there was a shortage there were comments about things rolling that were 12 years old. Are we fully equipped in each station.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that right now we are fully equipped. They let us have an extra engine on reserve. Unfortunately, because of our space or height limitation it would not fit in our Central Station. We have equipment that is 20 - 22 years old. Those are the ones that will be replaced as soon as trucks come in.

Dr. David McGuire asked about the stock did not have certain types of equipment. There is no generator on each truck. Do you have a ladder truck?

Chief Lee Laubach stated that the demonstrator trucks don't come with

what we want. We put a portable generator on it. They personally like the portable generator a lot more. he stated that the ladder trucks are temperamental. They are fairly new, but they will be with all respect 2009 - 2010, but I think the maintenance have been better on it.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked what is your wish list.

Chief Lee Laubach stated more personnel, more firefighters on the streets. On 2017, we had 126 members. I would like to hire seven each year to get back to our number of 146. We are at 122 now. Putting our second Ariel back into service. Reestablishing our fire academy and putting our classrooms back. Re-establishing money in our equipment budget.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked how is your wait list.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that we just finished the testing. We had 350 plus to take the test. Once we get the list back we will take the top 20 and run them through the agility test which we usually have a 50 percent failure rate. We will have an academy in March. We will have Bethlehem and Easton going through our academy.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked when does the administration start sitting down and looking at retirements that are possible.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that he does that. You could have an outlier. We need about eight to 10 guys to fill the academy.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked about Page 140, Line 42 - Repairs and Maintenance. It is a significant increase.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that this is combined fire and EMS. He stated that 42 in our account had no increase at all.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that they combined fire into a single program this year. It was \$1,000.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that the bulk of the increase will be in EMS.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that Program I and Program II. There is no real increase.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked about Line 34 - Training and Professional Development.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that Program I and Program were put together. There is no increase at all.

Ms. Cynthia Mota stated that she knows that last year you had some Spanish CPR for the community. Are you planning on doing this in 2018.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that he is sure they are. When EMS Chief Gratz comes up to do the presentation he will talk to you about that.

Mr. Julio Guridy asked about longevity on Page 148. You have a slight increase.

Chief Lee Laubach stated that the slight increase is that Program I to Program II, adding the administrative with the line firefighters.

Mr. Eric Gratz, Chief of Operations, stated that they covered what we accomplished in 2017 and what we are looking to do in 2018. We have been trying to do our best to move forward with technology. We tried to be fiscally prudent, but maintaining a reliable fleet, equipment and qualified personnel.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked how many paramedics do you currently have full-time.

Mr. Eric Gratz, Chief of Operations, stated that we have 24 paramedics, four shift supervisors and himself.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that what he is reading of 26 paramedics is incorrect or they just have not been filled.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that we have two \$1 placeholders.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked for how many years.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated at least three.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that he doesn't know how far back from 2016.

Mr. Ray O'Connell stated that it is ridiculous.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that to this date he has not received the amount of overtime that was spent by this unit. He stated that it is time to fill these positions and take the burden off of these paramedics saving lives.

Mr. Jeff Glazier stated that one of the things he noticed that the 04 Account is Temporary Labor, and 06 is Premium Pay. The 04 Account is fill-ins. The 06 Account will also be over budget. The 06 Account that so is going to be over. In fact, 2018 it is budgeted less than it is 2017.

Mr. Eric Gratz, Chief of Operations, stated per diem and part-time paramedics.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that they are aware that this situation is troublesome.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated at what point are they over-extended. We are putting people at risk.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked why do we have a budget if nobody follows it.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that at this time the administration determined that the 24 positions are what we are going to have.

Mr. Eric Gratz, Chief of Operations, stated that this is the Chapter leader of SEIU Paramedics.

Mr. Ray O'Connell asked how we do the IronPigs game.

Mr. Eric Gratz, Chief of Operations, stated that when the IronPigs came in 2007, he was not in any type of management role. It was an agreement and they agreed we would staff the IronPigs with two paramedics. The IronPigs increased their ancillary activities. It is overtime and they would pay us back. He stated that he has two other wish lists. He stated that their litters we used on Ferno's legacy page in their catalog. We have plenty of them. The problem is the mounting system. They have one automated CPR device called the Lucas II which does CPR for you. They are expensive, \$16,000 a piece. He would ideally want one on each of the frontline ambulances.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that the Police Department's budget is over \$3 million more, the Fire Department almost \$2 million, your less than \$200,000. You are equally as important to saving lives as others. We are putting two personnel and you haven't gotten them.

Mr. Eric Gratz stated that there was a \$40,000 allocation to the Premium Pay provided in there. That money was front-loaded for the IronPigs Games.

Ms. Candida Affa asked if the city only has one of those CPR devices.

Mr. Eric Gratz stated that it is on the shift supervisor's vehicle.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that she would like to see the city get more of those.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he can attest that we don't have many ranch homes in Center City Allentown.

Ms. Cynthia Mota asked if Mr. Gratz was planning on doing CPR in 2018.

Mr. Eric Gratz stated that he can email her his presentation. One of the things that they did was Fishing and Fun in the park which was a city sponsored event with the Coalition of Independent Living. We provided 70 CPR home kits that he had in his presentation.

Mr. Julio Guridy asked about the EMS Operations Manager that is no longer in this budget.

Mr. Eric Gratz stated years ago there was a transitional period and EMS was moved under the fire department as an administrative oversight. At that time, Brian Fritz assumed the role of Operations Manager. The EMS Operations Manager was deleted with the idea that the fire administration will provide the oversight. In order to illustrate the duties of the position when I sit up here following Chief Dorney and Chief Laubach, I'm not going to be here forever. Let's make the position and title what it should be and the responsibility that comes with it.

Dr. David McGuire asked about personnel for EMS. It says 26 paramedics full-time. The positions don't seem to get filled.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that only 24 of the positions are fully funded. Having the placeholders there makes it easier to hire them rather than creating them from scratch.

Mr. Jeff Glazier stated that last year Council passed an Ordinance that three strikes and you are walking so people won't abuse the ambulance system anymore.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated that you won the bet in terms of the revenue estimates for this year is too generous. When we did the calculations for it giving the data in somewhere about 25 percent of the trips are not medically necessary. The number of people that already committed strike three, it is increase significantly, but it is not to 100 yet. It is not a reset on this. The number that we have for 2018 which we predicted in 2017 is much in range and will get attained.

Mr. Eric Gratz stated that it is about 30 percent of our load. He stated that 1195 total amount of non-medically necessary trip through October, patients with two or more 297, patients who hit three who have medical assistance that were forbid from billing 22, and patients that have other insurance.

Mr. Jeff Glazier stated that some are frequent flyers.

Mr. Brent Hartzell stated which means that even though there are 22 individuals who done it you have far more than 22 strikes that are chargeable at this point.

Mr. Jeff Glazier stated that we can certainly hope for the best because if it brings us more revenue and lessens the load on our employees.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that it is the most desirable thing to do to cut them down from using us.

Mr. Eric Gratz stated that we want to eliminate the abuse. Unfortunately, we live in a litigious society and that is what drives everything. He acknowledged Susan Rafferty, EMS Billing Supervisor. She retired recently after 28 years of service. I would like to acknowledge her service and the excellent job she has done in EMS Billing.

Mr. Daryl thanked Ms. Rafferty and she it was quite a career.

Mr. Steve Ridgway, Operations Manager - Communications, thanked the administration, the fire, first responders, police, EMS and the dedicated dispatchers over the last year. We lost a lot of dispatchers that were transferred to other departments or have left the city completely. Our sick time has dropped tremendously. They stepped up to the plate and helped out. We are down a number of dispatchers since we are close to the merger that will take place in 2019.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked how is the transition.

Mr. Steve Ridgway stated that we are meeting the operations team meets every other week and then we meet once a month. All four 911 Centers are working to get a CAD System up and running. We selected a vendor and received the funding for that. The phone system will take place early next year. We have the phone system in place. The City of Bethlehem and Lehigh County will be doing the phone training. Northampton County has the same phone system we do. We are working through the challenges and moving forward with it.

Mr. Roger MacLean stated there are 24 dispatchers listed in the book. How many are you currently working with?

Mr. Steve Ridgway stated that they have 16 dispatchers. We just hired two dispatchers that started last Monday. We have three supervisors. We are down eight dispatchers and two supervisors.

Mr. Jeff Glazier stated with the overtime, it is an ongoing situation. Attracting talent is a challenge.

Mr. Steve Ridgway stated with the vacant positions it is helping out the premium pay. There are only so many hours that dispatchers can take overtime. We have four dispatchers and two supervisors that have stepped up to the plate.

Mr. Ray O'Connell stated that we all know we have problems in the city. Our public safety team is outstanding. I don't see egos, what I see is hardworking people who has respect for other jobs. He stated that he will make a personal commitment to fill slot A and get slots B and C done. He thanked everyone for their service.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks stated that he has much respect for fire, police, and EMS. He stated that a Baltimore Police officer was killed today, point blank range. Down there the crime is rampant and out of control. We had homicides here, but a lot of them were targeted and gang members. He told them to continue to do good work.

Mr. Julio Guridy stated that the sentiment is unanimous on this dais.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks asked if there were any questions from the public.

Mr. Will Sames, SEIU and Paramedic, stated that he doesn't understand why the administration doesn't want to hire the paramedics. They put in the fund for a dollar. Why don't we have 10 paramedics for a dollar or 20

officers for a dollar. I don't understand what they are doing here. If you are not going to fill it, what is the point. We have two part-timers. A lot of our part-timers have full-time jobs and family. They work very minimal hours. He stated Page 2 has ideas on the overtime problems. All of our 24 paramedics are paid time off 296 hours of time off. A lot of that is covered by overtime costs. We used to have float paramedics and we took those away and it boosted the overtime budget. You can hire three paramedics for the price of \$25,000. If you take the savings with the overtime that gives you three more paramedics. It cuts down the hours that are being forced on us. It helps with morale. Some of these full-timers can work for the IronPigs games, and some of these special events going on in the city. He stated that he went to J Birney Crum Stadium during one of the services that were there and they had one EMT and a first responder that is trained in CPR only.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Sames and stated that you are preaching to the choir.

Mr. Jeremy Wamkessel, President Local 302 - Allentown Firefighters, stated that the Communications Center is our lifeline. They do a fantastic job. If I was in a stairway, I would want our medics working on me. The police department with the 17 homicides. I go into some of these houses and I can't believe there are only 17 homicides. It is amazing what they do. There are two fire trucks in the budget and two paramedics in the budget. Make sure we get those fire trucks bought. They are a necessity. They are what gets us there and the most important asset they have. We had 146 personnel. We were 35 per shift. Right now, we are a 12 personnel. We are 28 per shift. That is 13 guys on the scene of a working fire. Today, we hit our 60th working fire. That is the most we had in the past five years and not even halfway through November. We have given up some of the EMS assist willing. Our call volume is still up. It is a joke. Third largest city in the stated of Pennsylvania and we act like we are going backwards. I have an obligation to the guys I represent also. They expect me to be here and make sure you are informed. As far as Eric Gratz goes that name change is the biggest joke I heard this budget season. That guy is one of the most underpaid guy and the those paramedics are the most undervalued asset you have in the city.

Mr. Daryl Hendricks thanked Mr. Wamkessel and stated that they also feel very strongly for all you do and all your men. Again, we will do all we can to make sure all those trucks are at the end of the budget and passed within the budget.

Ms. Candida Affa stated that we keep bringing up these 17 homicides.

She asked Chief Dorney how many are solved.

Chief Glen Dorney stated that vast majority. One is deemed justified. One is also an officer involved shooting. There are several that are homicides, but two are justifiable. A third one is voluntary manslaughter charge that has been brought. He stated that he believes there is one that is currently outstanding.

Ms. Candida Affa stated 16 out of 17. Good job.

[15-1960](#) Bill 68 911 Fund

Attachments: [Bill 68 2018 E911 ORD.doc](#)

Enactment No: 15414

[15-1956](#) Bill 78 General Fund

Attachments: [Bill 78 2018 General Fund](#)

[15-1962](#) Bill 72 Equipment Fund

Attachments: [Bill 72 2018 Equipment Fund](#)

Enactment No: 15415

[15-1969](#) Bill 79 Tax Rate

Attachments: [Bill 79 2018 Tax Rate](#)
[Ordinance #15420](#)

Enactment No: 15420

[15-1958](#) Bill 76 Capital Projects Fund

Attachments: [Bill 76 2018 Capital Projects Fund](#)

Enactment No: 15416

ADJOURNED: 7:40 PM