

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
Police Department Budget

May 1, 2003 – 6:30 p.m.

Conference Room A

Council Present: Mayor Sirrell, Assistant Mayor Hanson, Councilors Grasso, Lown, Hynes, Whitehouse, Marconi, and St. Laurent (excused at 7:35 p.m.)

Council Absent: Councilor Pantelakos

Staff Present: John Bohenko, City Manager; Michael Magnant, Police Chief; David Young, Deputy Police Chief; Bob Carbone, Captain; Len Disesa, Captain; Felicia Donovan, Police Department Personnel; Karen Senecal, Budget Coordinator; Judie Belanger, Deputy Finance Director; Dianna Fogarty, Human Resources Director; and Kelli L. Barnaby, City Clerk

Commissioners: John Kelley, Gerald Howe and William Devine

I. ROLL CALL

Mayor Sirrell called the work session to order at 6:30 p.m. She said that the City Council is here this evening to listen to the budget presentation by the Police Department. She announced that the City Council would be holding an additional budget work session following the May 19th budget public hearing. She said that the work session would be to view all budgets on final time before the adoption of the budget scheduled for June 2nd.

II. INTRODUCTION

City Manager Bohenko said that the Joint Budget Committee meet last December a set a 0% budget guideline for all departments. He said that the Police Department will discuss the impacts of a 0% increase on their budget and services.

Commissioner Kelley thanked the members of the Police Department that worked to produce this budget. He said that the department had to cut to the bone to reach the 0%.

III. PRESENTATION

Police Chief Magnant said that the department currently has 8 vacancies that would remain unfilled due to the 0% increase and additional 3 positions may need to be cut. He informed the City Council that the Police Department responded to 41,689 calls for service in 2002, which is a 9% increase over calls for 2001. He reported on the following areas of the department – Patrol Division, Detective Division, Special Investigations Unit, Family Services, School Resource Officers, K-9 Units, Accident Investigation Team, Seacoast Emergency Response Team, Animal Control, Field Training, Crossing Guards, Records Division, Police Auxiliary and Explorers Units and the Emergency Communications Center, which received 45,385 calls for service in 2002.

Captain Carbone discussed the Family Services Division in detail with the City Council. He said that we need to continue investing resources in this division and explained the social criminal evolution from the beginning stages of a child to the adult offenders. He discussed the community based child protection programs that are available and there importance. He said

that the Family Services focus on prevention, education and enforcement. He reported on the investment rewards this division has attained because of their resources. He said that the City has a low incidence of violent youth crimes, which makes for a safer community and a desirable community.

Captain DeSesa discussed the training program and their request for an additional supplemental increase of \$25,000.00 for the budget, he explained how it would be used and why it's necessary. He said that the department continually applies for and receives grants, but this supplemental request is necessary to protect this community from any terrorist attacks and enhance our homeland security responsibilities. He described the porous border with Canada, highway links, nuclear power plants, tourism and lax firearm laws as elements that would create a safe haven for terrorists. He informed the City Council that police officers must receive 12 hours of training each year as required by NH law.

Chief Magnant said that the only increases included were on items they had no control over such as retirement benefits, higher health insurance costs, two new police cruisers and salary step increases. He said he is requesting an additional \$303,147.00 which equates to a 4.97% increase over current year spending.

IV. QUESTIONS & DISCUSSIONS

Councilor Lown thanked the Police Department for the informative presentation and expressed concern with the amount of overtime. He asked if the department could use auxiliary officers to fill in for regular officers to limit the amount of overtime. Chief Magnant said due to contractual obligations that is not an option for the department. Councilor Lown asked if additional officers were hired would that cut down on the amount of overtime. Chief Magnant said that it would help.

Assistant Mayor Hanson thanked the Police Department for their professionalism and the in-depth presentation. He requested that Chief Magnant report back to the City Council following the public hearing on the budget scheduled for May 19th with a total amount to encumber for next year's budget.

City Manager Bohenko cautioned the City Council to have the Police Department encumber a large amount of money, which would compound into a large gap and create difficulty in future, budgets.

Councilor Grasso expressed concern with the number of detectives. She asked if it would be possible to use some of the detectives in other areas such as patrol.

Chief Magnant said that in the past we have put detectives in uniform on the streets when needed.

At 8:05 p.m., Mayor Sirrell closed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:
Kelli L. Barnaby, City Clerk