

Stamford Police Department FY 2022-23 Budget Presentation

This past year has been another challenging one for the Police Department primarily as a result of staffing issues. During most of this FY, the Department has numbered in the low 250's of Officers available to work (not in training, military leave, etc.) and had to deal with another COVID wave infecting more than 100 officers during Dec. and Jan. The low staffing levels are a result of Police Academy classes that were canceled or postponed last year due to COVID which delayed the ability to replace retiring officers on a timely basis. As a result of staffing shortages, officers have had to be moved from investigatory units to patrol and numerous officers have been ordered to work additional shifts to cover minimum patrol staffing requirements.

Despite, these challenges, the Department has continued to make progress on numerous initiatives. Our Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) was one of the first in the country to imbed a Social Worker (MSW) with officers to make follow up home visits to assist and make service referrals to those most in need in our community. BHU had over 250 contacts with the community in this first year of the program, which helped to reduce repeat call volume. This coming FY, the Department will be expanding the program with the help of a \$550,000 federal grant.

Another ground-breaking initiative was the re-imagining of the Department's narcotics unit (NOC). In an effort to combat the nationwide epidemic of opiate overdoses, the unit has refocused on helping those struggling with drug abuse and overdose and aggressively investigate sellers and suppliers of deadly opiates like fentanyl. These difficult and time consuming investigations have led to five Manslaughter arrest warrants. In addition to the efforts of the NOC unit, the entire department has received training in the use of Narcan and to date have assisted in saving dozens of overdose victims.

Adding to the Department's already robust community outreach programs such as Project Lifesaver, Crimestopper gun seizure program, Clergy Academy, Boys and Girls Leadership program, Shoulder to Shoulder, the Department is working with numerous community groups to establish a self-supporting PAL program that will provide a wide range of support activities for at risk youth including sports, academics, drug awareness, leadership and community service.

Before the Police Accountability Law, the Department proactively partnered with the Daigle Law Group to rewrite, modify and add to our department policies and procedures. We are approximately half way through the updates that will help the Department achieve higher levels of accreditation, reduce insurance costs, and better align with the additional training officers are receiving in mental health, sensitivity, de-escalation techniques, and leadership.

To support the Department's crime fighting efforts, we have started a citywide license plate reader program (LPR) that will assist in locating wanted dangerous individuals and help solve and prevent crimes throughout the city. The system works in conjunction with similar LPR programs in surrounding areas including Bridgeport, New Haven, Fairfield, Greenwich and Westchester County, NY. Although not fully operational as of yet, the program has already assisted officers in making arrests of dangerous felons, recover stolen cars without the need for pursuits, and locating at-risk missing persons.

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For the upcoming FY22-23 budget, the Department is requesting an overall increase of \$3,516,553 above the original adopted budget line for the current year (8.9%) of which 5.4%, or \$2,055,068, of this increase is attributable to the settlement of the expired CBA contract at the beginning of the current FY which is reflected in the Revised Budget for FY21/22 in the budget books. No additional funding has been requested in the Revised Budget other than that required to cover wage and salary related expenses as a result of the settlement. The Department's request for next FY compared to the current Revised Budget is a 3.5% increase of \$1,461,485. The majority of the major expenses accounting for the additional \$1,461,485 are:

5101 – **Gasoline** - \$200,254. Due to world events such as the Russia-Ukraine war, supply chain issues, etc. the cost of gasoline is at historic highs. This increase reflects the City's projected cost of \$3.75/gallon of gasoline and is not an increase in usage.

1501 – **Clothing Allowance** - \$118,000. The upcoming FY is a "vest" year. The City's CBA provides for an additional \$400 every three years in the annual clothing allowance provided to officers to offset their cost of purchasing a replacement bullet proof vest. Note: the actual cost of a new vest system today is approx.: \$1,000.

4402 / 4403 – **Body Worn Cameras & Dashboard Cameras** - \$292,000. As part of last year's Police Accountability Law the State has mandated that all sworn officers are to be issued a body worn camera (BWC) and that all patrol cars are to be outfitted with a dashboard camera by July 1st 2022 which necessitated the additional purchase of cameras this current FY. The current five year BWC contract with Axon (BWC, dash cam, interview rm. provider) expires on March 1, 2023 during the upcoming FY and a new five year contract will need to be negotiated. The cost of BWC's has doubled since the inception of our current contract five years ago.

2200 – **Social Security** - \$109,653. Increase FICA related expenses as calculated by the City.

1301 – **Overtime** - \$657,627. This total OT cost of Department programs is primarily driven by Patrol (3300) OT which accounts for \$547,279. Staffing at the Police Department is currently at its lowest point over the last several decades. This is a result of Police Academy classes being cancelled or postponed due to COVID and the nationwide issue of hiring and retaining officers. As a result of staffing shortages, the Department has struggled to maintain minimum manpower and officers have had to be hired and often ordered to work additional shifts on an OT basis. The Department is in the process of trying to fill all budgeted openings, but as discussed numerous times, there is an approx.: 10 month lag between hiring recruit officers and them having an impact on reducing overtime while they are in training. With the number of anticipated academy seats and projected number of retirements / resignations it is not expected that staffing levels will start to improve significantly until FY23/24.

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In addition to presenting a tight budget with minimum increases, the Department is working hard to obtain available grants to offset costs as much as possible. These include grants below that have been or are in the process of being awarded:

DOJ Connect & Protect grant - \$550,000 – covers costs associated with the Department's community mental health initiatives.

CT OPM CRF grant- \$119,848 – covers costs associated with the Auto Task Force, PAL and Mental Health.

COPS Police Accreditation grant - \$74,868 – helps to cover costs associated with the Police Accountability Law's requirement to obtain accreditation.

JAG grant FY20 - \$36,395 – provides funding to certify additional officers in CIT mental health response training.

JAG grant FY21 - \$39,747 – provides funding to certify additional officers in CIT mental health response training, Roll Call & medical bag/first aid training

BJA Body Worn Camera - \$133,151. Helps to offset costs of additional BWC's, training and new BWC Tech position.

DUI FY21/22 - \$88,302 – Covers OT costs associated with DUI enforcement