

## BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

JUNE 17, 2021

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Thursday, June 17, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber.

Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman, Chairman, presided.

Members of Committee present: Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire  
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien  
Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly  
Alderman Jan Schmidt  
Alderman Ernest Jette

Members not in Attendance: Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons, Vice Chair

Also in Attendance: Alderwoman Elizabeth Lu  
Alderman Tom Lopez  
Police Chief Michael Carignan  
Deputy Police Chief James Testaverde  
Karen Smith, Business Manager

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### Chairman Dowd

OK, I'd like to call the Budget Review Committee to order, it is June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021. It is 7:00 p.m. and we are in the Aldermanic Chamber with additional capabilities on Zoom. If you are joining on Zoom the meeting ID is 830 7412 9111 and the passcode is 275258. If you are joining by telephone, it is 1-929-205-6099 and the meeting ID is 830 7412 9111, passcode is 275258. If there are any problems with the public connecting please call 603-589-3329. So first order of business will be the Roll Call. Alderman O'Brien?

### ROLL CALL

#### Alderman Schmidt

I am here in the Chamber.

#### Alderwoman Kelly

I am here, I am alone and I can hear everyone.

#### Alderman O'Brien

And you are on Zoom, correct? Alderman-at-Large Michael O'Brien is present and I am in the Chamber. Alderman Wilshire?

#### Alderman Wilshire

I am here in the Chamber.

#### Chairman Dowd

Yes, I am present and I am in the Chamber.

Alderman O'Brien

Mr. Chairman we have 5 members present. Also in attendance are Alderman Lu who is present in the Chamber and Alderman Lopez who is present via Zoom. Also in attendance we welcome Police Chief Michael Carignan; Deputy Police Chief James Testaverde; Karen Smith, Business Manager; and Deputy Police Chief Rourke.

Alderman Wilshire

And Alderman Jette.

Alderman O'Brien

OH, welcome Alderman Jette.

Alderman Jette

I am here and I am in the Chamber.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Very good. OK. First item of business is Public Comment. Is there anyone from the public that would like to make any comments on the item on the Agenda this evening? Seeing no one we will move on.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

COMMUNICATIONS

From: David G. Fredette, Treasurer/Tax Collector

Re: CERF Page 359 Update (blue)

***There being no objection, Chairman Dowd accepted the communication and placed it on file.***

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS - None

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES – None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE**R-20-016**

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess  
 Alderwoman Linda Harriott-Gathright  
 Alderman Thomas Lopez  
 Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.

**AMENDING THE PURPOSE OF A FISCAL YEAR 2020 UNLIKE ESCROW FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION**

(tabled at 4-20-20 mtg)

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TAKE FROM THE TABLE R-21-142 BY ROLL CALL**

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd	6
Nay:		0

**MOTION CARRIED****R-21-142**

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess  
 Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright

**RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2022 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA GENERAL, ENTERPRISE, AND SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS**

- Public hearing scheduled for 6/21/2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Nashua High School North Auditorium

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS OF THE PROPOSED FY21 BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA

<u>Dept. #</u>		<u>REVENUE</u>	<u>Appropriations</u>
	<u>Public Safety</u>		
150	Police Department	36 & 300	142

Chairman Dowd

This evening we are going to be discussing our last department and that will be under Public Safety, Department 150 – Police Department. The Revenues are on Page 36 and 300; Appropriations are on Page 142. Who would like to commence?

Alderman O'Brien

Mr. Chairman if I may, I am going to share the screen right now with Deputy Chief Testaverde.

Chairman Dowd

OK did somebody want to open before that or how are you ...

Michael Carignan, Police Chief

I would like to begin with a presentation, if that's OK.

Chairman Dowd

OK. Remember to bring your microphones real close or lean into them because they are very directional.

Chief Carignan

Thank you. Chief Michael Carignan speaking. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you tonight and make this presentation. I'd like to talk obviously tonight about our Fiscal Year '22 Budget and I'd like to go through ... in developing this Budget we had some significant challenges that we wanted to make sure you understood that we would be facing in the next year. First and foremost, I would like to talk about the upcoming influx of methamphetamines. Some of you have heard me speak over the past several months. The State has seen a much greater increase of methamphetamines coming into the State of New Hampshire. It is significant enough of a problem that we have met, at a State Level, with Federal, State and local law enforcement in an attempt to develop a strategic plan to overcome the dangers of crystal meth.

For those of you who don't know, Crystal Meth is very different than the opioid crisis we faced. It is coming to New Hampshire. The supply chains are already there; the supply lines are already there. The mechanism to get the drugs into the City is established as it was with the opioid abuse. Crystal Meth unlike opioids is a stimulant, opioids are a depressant and they require much different treatments. There is very limited effective treatments for methamphetamine misuse.

One of the things I want to make very clear to you all that we had to consider is methamphetamines – well I'll back up – when you think about opioid abuse as a depressant, typically we see crimes associated with that, that are burglaries, theft, identify theft, burglaries breaking into a house to steal stuff to supply their habits. Crystal Meth I would classify as a violent drug. With Crystal Meth comes assaults, homicides, guns, aggressive behavior. We had a Police Officer this summer within a 9 minute battle for his life down at a hotel down in Southern Nashua. This battle includes the subject who was high on Crystal Meth, took the Officer's baton, took the Officer's pepper spray, tried to take the Officer's gun. He came at the Officer with a sharpened, serrated piece of industrial plastic that could have stabbed and killed the Officer. This is a dangerous drug; it is happening all over the State and it is going to be coming to Nashua. So it is something that you all need to be put on notice for that we need to be on top of this problem and we need to really deal with it.

The second item has been recruitment and retention. We have been talking about that a lot over the past several years. As you know, this dates back pretty much to when Alderman McCarthy was still here, talking about us getting up to full complement of officers. As you know, we are authorized through the Budget for 179 officers and it has always been a challenge to get to that level. We have always had to budget through attrition limiting the ability to always get people on board and get them up and running. As you know, Officers don't just come in and start Day 1 as Police Officers, they go through an extensive background and an extensive training period. It takes a year to a year and a half from the time we find out they are interested to becoming a Police Officer to the time that we can get them out on the street. That poses significant challenges when you are trying to find new people and get them on board and getting them up and running while maintaining a budget through the year and keep officers on the street keeping everybody safe.

With that recruitment and retention is also the desire to make our Police Force as diverse as possible. It has been our goal to get a Police Force that is more reflective of the population of Nashua. We have a very diverse community, we now have a very diverse Police Department. The last year, we have hired over 22 Police Officers and those have been the most diverse we've ever hired at the Nashua Police Department. So it is exciting for us, we've been very successful, we have had different strategies to try but it is still very difficult, because as you know right now, being a Police Officer is not the most admired profession. We have significant challenges in the media, in the press, in the public on Facebook. So it's a very challenging time and for people of this generation to necessarily want to work weekends and holidays at 3:00 in the morning under that scrutiny is a very, very tall ask. But we have been very successful, we were at full staff which is something that has only been accomplished once in my experience here with the Police Department. So we have been very lucky.

One of the third challenges we are striving for this year, we have been working for the past six months to establish the Nashua Police Department as a culturally effective organization. Given the fact that our Police Department is very diverse, given the fact that our community in Nashua is very diverse, it is important for us to strive to become a culturally effective organization. And what that basically means is we need to be available to the public, we need to make sure that every person in the public has access to resources and feels comfortable coming to the Nashua Police Department to use those resources to help them get through their needs as a victim, as a victim of a crime, as a victim of an assault, or any number of reasons that they would come to the Police Department.

Becoming a culturally effective organization has a lot of different components to it. We have developed a group within the Department that includes all ranks and all diversified people within. There's a leadership component, a component that deals with the policies and procedures, components that deal with data collection and analysis, community engagement, language and communication access plans, staff cultural competence and workforce diversity inclusion. Those are all different components that we need to strive for to make sure that we are able to provide all services to the people of Nashua in a safe and effective way. I think it's a goal worth achieving and we have been about six months into this process and it is something we can continue to do in 2022 but it does have some budgetary challenges for us.

Fourth and most important is motor vehicle enforcement. I think I've been on the phone with each of you as Aldermen, and you have been on the phone with many, many of your constituents and have dealt with the speeding motor vehicles. During the recent pandemic, we saw a lot of motor vehicle traffic slow down, kind of go by the wayside, we didn't see as much traffic out there; people started speeding. Now that restrictions are limited and people are getting back out, we are starting to see those same people still speeding, just more of them. You guys get the complaints, we get the complaints. We have worked very hard to increase our motor vehicle enforcement, our motor vehicle visibility of the enforcement and the strategies we use to get particularly speeders but erratic drivers as well. We have had some success, we are going to continue to do it. Those successes include using stealth equipment, using uniform high visibility presence, using outside agencies to partnership to get some of those motor vehicle enforcement numbers up.

So those are all different challenges we faced when we were putting together this Budget for 2022 and I just wanted you to be aware of some of the thinking that went into what we had to accomplish for next year and some of the decisions we were looking at facing. For our initial budget proposal Mayor Donchess initially requested a 0% increase to the NPD FY '22 Budget. NPD requires an increase of 2.59% to meet all the budgetary needs including the signed collective bargaining agreements. We were obligated to meet a level without adding any additional items to our Department to cover our costs that were existing under agreement at 2.59%. If we came in at this level, we would be looking at a budget cut of \$703,000.00.

To give you a little breakdown of our budget, as many of you know, we have our \$35 million dollar budget is 95% payroll and benefits. There is very little we can do because of contract obligations with the payroll and benefits except lay people off. The other 5% of our budget is operations. That's keeping the lights on, that's keeping the gas, keeping guys uniforms on, that is the non-grant equipment that we have, it is our training, all of those things make up our Operations Budget. It is a very small percentage compared to what the rest of the budget is. So when we were looking at how we were going to develop a loss of \$703,000.00 without being able to hit anything in Operations which was predominantly level funded; there was one piece of computer equipment that needed to be replaced due to the technology that we use and the technology that has been helpful in our Crime Enforcement. There was very limited options elsewhere. We were given guidelines on gas, electricity and HVAC or gas, electricity and water bills.

So for us it was coming down to OK if we are given a 0% increase which we have always said we will come in with whatever we are given, we will manage that budget, it would result in approximately the layoff of 10 officers. Now these 10 officers are 10 of the most diverse officers, like you just heard me speak, that we have ever recruited. If we were to lay off 10 people, the reputation of the Nashua Police Department would spiral downhill; and by that I mean people looking for employment, they are looking for secure jobs. They are looking from other agencies to come to work for Nashua. We just a recent female come from an agency, a

respected agency in the State, they wanted to come to work for Nashua. We would lose those officers immediately and we would also lose the desire to want to come here. It would make recruiting that much more difficult for us over a period of time.

Another result of laying off 10 officers would be a loss of services to the City of Nashua. Some of those services, we still have to keep Police Officers on the street, we still have to answer calls for service, we still have to make sure people are safe out there. So some of the services that we would have to be able to make cuts to would be things like your Nashua PAL Officers. It would be your School Resource Officers, it would be your Code Enforcement Officers, they would be your Grant Writing Officer. All of these positions that bring value to the Police Department would be the ones that we would have to eliminate. A lot of the community groups that we spend so much time really working with to gain trust and earn respect amongst each other would not be as possible because of not having the officers available to be there because of the loss.

The other thing when you start to take away 10 Police Officers and still having to fill those roles on the street, Officers get tired; it is a stressful job. Shift work is very difficult, it is a demanding job. When you start to order Police Officers in to cover the gaps in the street, they start to get sick more often, they start to get injured. Those positions still have to be filled, so now we are paying more overtime to keep those officers on the street, which in the long run costs us a lot more money than it would just to hire these officers and be at full complement. So those were some of the risks that we faced if we had to come up with a \$703,000.00 shortfall.

Following that budget meeting with the Mayor, he then proposed a 1.7% increase for the FY '22 Budget. This was great, it was wonderful for us, we would take it. But it still resulted in a shortfall of about \$241,000.00 for us. This could result in the loss of approximately 4 sworn officers if there is no other alternative but to maintain the proposed budget. Again, the 4 officers – are they as bad as 10? Nope. But you still have the long term repercussions of making that decision and making those cuts. So we have a proposed solution which I am going to bring to you tonight, one of our vehicles scheduled for the replacement on our CERF table is our Mobile Command Vehicle.

During our CERF meeting with the Mayor, he has asked if this vehicle could be deferred for one year. We took a good hard look at the vehicle, we went through it and we realized the projected replacement cost of this is about \$500,000.00. So for those of you who don't know, the Mobile Command, it looks like a big Winnebago, it runs any major incident that we have on the street, all SWAT call outs, that Mobile Command goes and they are able to dispatch directly on scene. They are able to maintain control of the area and deal with that situation specifically. If there was something catastrophic that were to happen at the Nashua Police Department, that vehicle can act as a dispatch center which would result in no loss of service to the people of Nashua. We would be able to command from that vehicle through dispatch.

After the Mayor had requested that we go through and really see if we could (inaudible) in that vehicle our Fleet Maintenance advised that the vehicle could keep running for another year; we could defer it. I want to make sure you understand that we could defer it, the vehicle would still drive from Point A to Point B but it is still a very, very old, antiquated system inside. So just because the vehicle will run, doesn't mean the technology inside is up to speed to what we need to do. So I think it is important that you remember that we could defer for a year, it would save a considerable amount of money which takes the burden off of you for what our budget crisis is this year and allows us still to keep in mind that it is important to be made next year.

And as I stated, some of the events that come – the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, the Holiday Stroll, those are major events with 30,000 people – 10,000 to 30,000 people – that come to the City of Nashua. And those are major incidents and we have to keep them safe and that vehicle is a big part of that. So what we are asking to do is for you to allow us to defer the Mobile Command Vehicle for one year. This would make us whole, the Nashua Police Department would be whole with our Fiscal Year '22 Budget. It would add the requested \$100,000.00 to the Equitable Transfer Fund, which as you all know, is that fund that is as Alderwoman Wilshire says it best, it is our snow fund. We can't predict when a snowstorm is going to come we have to have money set aside, if it is a bad year or a good year. This ETF Fund is there if we have major incidents such as a

homicide or a missing persons that take up a lot of resources. We can't budget for that over the course of a year. So we've had the fund for the last several years and have been able to tap into it as needed only. It doesn't get spent through all year, but it is critical for us to maintain this fund.

So this deferment of the Mobile Command Vehicle for one year would allow us to make ourselves whole, put that \$100,000.00 into our ETF Fund and still have the savings to the City of over \$150,000.00 which would allow you to offset some of the other costs that some of the other divisions are struggling with. So this doesn't cost any personnel loss to the Nashua Police Department, it allows us to keep all the officers, still strive for that full complement of Police Officers to keep services at 100% to what they are today. I can imagine there will be some questions, I wanted to thank you for listening to the presentation and we are here to answer any questions you may have about that. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

OK. Typically what we do is we go through the Revenues and the Appropriations and ask questions there and then if we have additional questions – so your Revenues on 300 they are just an offset some of these. The monies coming in offset the monies being spent so that's a wash, unless somebody has questions on Page 300. On Page 36 is there anyone that has any questions on the Police Revenue? Alderwoman Lu, did you have a question?

Alderwoman Lu

I was scratching my eye. I do have a question.

Chairman Dowd

On Revenues?

Alderwoman Lu

On Page 36. Thank you. The question is "Other Reimbursements" what are those? Are those grants?

Chief Carignan

Chief Mike Carignan, are you referring to the 699 Accounts, "Other Reimbursements".

Alderwoman Lu

Yes, 45699.

Chief Carignan

OK so that is going to be the, as you may recall, we were able to hire an additional part-time attorney to manage the increased workload after the COVID-19 Court shutdown. That revenue is from the Hollis Police Department providing us with 2/3rds of the salary of that attorney because that attorney is splitting between Hollis and Nashua. So that is where that income is coming in from Hollis PD.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any additional questions Alderman Lu?

Alderwoman Lu

Jus the “Alarm System Fines”. I am just curious, how do you generate revenue from an alarm system fine?

Chief Carignan

So when we respond sometimes businesses have alarms that go off. I'll give you an example of Home Depot. Birds fly in there at night and they get in and they fly around at night and they set the alarm off. And when that goes ... or a house might have a faulty alarm, if we respond there night after night and the homeowner or the business owner doesn't get that issue fixed, it is an expense to us so they start to get a fine for that. And sometimes if it is an ongoing problem and they are trying to fix it but are not able to, we are very respectful and we will try to work with them to make sure, more importantly they get the issue fixed.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. I was just curious. Thanks, I am all set.

Chairman Dowd

OK any other questions on Revenue? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Chief, I know that we have a lot of sophisticated equipment in Nashua, much more than surrounding towns, I am not sure but I think we are the best equipped Department in the State. And I know that we are called upon to bring those specialized units to other places, I can't think of what they are but like the Bomb Unit and there's a SWAT vehicle that we sometimes are called upon to go to other towns. When we do that, we are using our equipment, our people and we are sometimes paying overtime. Do we get reimbursed at all for that?

Chief Carignan

We don't and we have spoken about this many times over the past several years, we presented to the same question last year. There are a couple of reasons we do not. Number 1) I believe it is our responsibility as good neighbors to make sure we assist the agencies that are surrounding Nashua. If they need help we are going to help them. We are law enforcement, they are law enforcement there's a crime issue we are going to respond and we are going to help them. But more importantly a good majority of those “toys” for lack of a better term of what we have, your Mobile Command Vehicle or I'm sorry your Bomb Truck, your bomb equipment, the Computer Forensics Unit, a lot of those items are given to us from the Secret Service, the FBI or different organizations. They are given to us for free. Part of the expectation of that free software and free computers and that free equipment is that we will help. We will be a regional team. We will bring the expertise out and solve the problem. That benefits that citizens of Nashua because we are best equipped we are able to respond immediately to those calls because we have the equipment we don't have to wait for hours for a unit to mobilize and come help us, we are able to do it immediately.

The equipment is up-to-date, the training is up-to-date, Nashua has a group of Police Officers that are trained in such a diverse set of skills and we are able to do that at almost no cost to the City of Nashua because all that equipment is free. We have been using our Computer Forensics Unit extensively over the past probably 2 years. We are becoming one of the best units in the State. We are asked to travel to different areas. All that computer equipment that we have to get all these predators and to get all the people that are what we call “travelers” to come and have sexual relationships with minor children, we are able to capture them through equipment that was given to us from the Secret Service; equipment and training. So if you look at the pros and cons, the pros outweigh the cons by an extensive number and it allows us to be well equipped.

Alderman Jette

Thank you.

Chief Carignan

You're welcome.

Chairman Dowd

Also Chief, if we had an event here in Nashua that was large, we could possibly get assistance from the State Police and maybe Manchester or other departments.

Chief Carignan

Yes. There have been a number of occasions where we have been in a prolonged SWAT engagement or prolonged activity and our officers and the resources are depleted so Manchester will come down, State Police will come down. So other agencies will come down and help us and they will spend a considerable amount of resources in our area and they don't charge us.

Chairman Dowd

OK thanks. Any additional questions on revenue? Alderman O'Brien.

Alderman O'Brien

Well it is not so much a question. Excuse me Jeff or Jim in the control room, on the main screen we are seeing a chat feature. So I wonder if you can eliminate that, if you could please. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

OK we will go into Appropriations which are on starting on Page 146 and they are actually on 150. Are there anything specific that you – before we open it up for questions on Appropriations that you want to cover that are either increases or decreases that might warrant an explanation?

Chief Carignan

I believe it is on Page 142 is that the Page here?

Chairman Dowd

Well 150 is where they ...

Alderman Jette

150 is fire.

Alderman Wilshire

Appropriations are on 142.

Chairman Dowd

I'm sorry, wrong page. Anything that sticks out that you want to explain or do you just want to open it up to questions?

Chief Carignan

I'll open it up to questions.

Chairman Dowd

OK are there questions on the Appropriations Page? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

The replacement of this mobile unit is that in here or is that in a place where the mobile unit and other vehicles coming out of CERF, that's in a separate part of the budget isn't it – that's not in the Appropriations right?

Chief Carignan

Correct.

Alderman Jette

And so when you spoke earlier about your willingness to defer the acquisition of a new mobile unit and I can't remember how much you said that would be, you know, what the mobile unit cost was.

Chief Carignan

It's almost \$500,000.00.

Alderman Jette

OK. Forgive me, I want to make sure I was clear as to what you are saying. You said that you'd be willing to defer that so we wouldn't – I am assuming we wouldn't be spending the \$500,000.00 all at once or would we? Was the plan to buy that unit with cash or was that going to be a bonded amount do you know?

Chairman Dowd

I had a discussion with John Griffin today. If they did it on this year's CERF schedule that amount of money would come out of the CERF Reserve Fund entirely in cash. It's not slated to be bonded yet, but one thing if we deferred it a year, we might also consider bonding it in which case it would not take that money out of the CERF account. But if we get to that point in the wrap up, John Griffin will be here and we can discuss it.

Alderman Jette

OK, may I continue?

Chairman Dowd

Continue.

Alderman Jette

But your bottom line was that you'd be willing to defer the acquisition of that which would save – which would put off I suppose that'd be a better of saying it – would put off spending a half a million dollars on this mobile command unit. But you said you would be able to reduce your budget by a much smaller number, I can't remember what number you said but it struck me, it was a much smaller number.

Chief Carignan

If I understand what you are saying correctly and please correct me if I am misunderstanding it. The initial proposal to come in at a zero for the Mayor would result in a \$703,000.00 loss. The Mayor came back and was able to find some more money to give to us which then resulted in a lower number of \$241,000.00. That \$241,000.00 if we were forced to deal with that the only place that we could come up with that would be through the layoff of police officers. What we are asking to do is allow us to defer that vehicle for one year, take the funds saved from that which is \$500,000.00, make up the \$241,000.00 / \$242,000.00 put the \$100,000.00 into the Expendable Trust Fund which means if we have a homicide or if we have a significant case such as a prolonged standoff, we have money to deal with it and it doesn't have to be budgeted out at the beginning of the cycle. And that would result in approximately, and I am giving you rough numbers, \$150,000.00 left over that you would be able to reallocate to some other shortfalls in the City.

Chairman Dowd

One additional thing, that money if we put into that Expendable Trust Fund stays there. If they didn't spend it in '23 it would stay there and we could possibly in future years add a little to it and build it up. The alternative is if they have a major case and we haven't put money in that Trust Fund, we will be back here taking money out of contingency during the year to fund it because that's the only thing we can do.

Alderman Jette

Could I follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Yes, follow up?

Alderman Jette

I just want to understand, forgive me if it is taking me awhile to completely understand what you are saying. You are saying that if you deferred the purchase of this vehicle, this half a million dollar vehicle that's \$500,000.00 you would then – your proposed budget, so you would want the Mayor to give you back the \$240,000.00 the Mayor, us to give you back the \$240,000.00. But in addition to that you want \$100,000.00 on top of that for this special overtime trust fund? That special overtime trust fund is not in your budget now?

Chief Carignan

That's correct it was specifically and correct me if I am wrong Karen, it was specifically kept out of our budget because they wanted it to be fund available as a – and they have a special word for it and forgive me, I don't recall what it was – but they wanted it to be a separated, isolated account used specifically for high incident cases. So when we need that money we have to do a request to transfer the money in and justify the reasons why. And as you may recall, when you were on as our liaison, we would report every month in the event that we needed to take that money and to what that was.

Alderman Jette

OK thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Just a little follow up. In order for them to spend out of that trust they will have to come back and ask us. But the money would be there, we wouldn't have to take money out of contingency assuming we had it in contingency and they could continue with their investigation. But it does take action to take it out of any trust fund.

Karen Smith, Business Manager

Chairman? May I take a minute to elaborate? I'll just give a quick highlight on the overtime itself and the establishment of the account. Years ago we used to return a significant amount of money from our overtime account, \$500,000.00 / \$600,000.00 that kind of dollar amount. And it was because we were budgeted appropriately for our overtime. But at the time we had vacancies in our operating payroll accounts because we didn't fill the positions. So it was normal funding for fulltime, normal funding for our overtime accounts. The change was made so that we would pay for the overtime from the surplus in the payroll for vacancies.

So the times have changed, and we are able to be fully staffed and we don't have that kind of surplus anymore. So right now you have \$1.2 is our overtime account, that averages around \$23,000.00 a week. Our overtime is \$2 million dollars year to date which is more like \$39,000.00 a week. So there's an understanding at the time when they created that "snow account" if you will, similar to a snow account which means if it snows out you need to be able to plow the streets. And it is no different if there's a major incident, homicide, whatever the major incident is, we need to make sure that we can go to that account and have the money to pay for the incident and not have a budget where I have to make sure that I have \$100,000.00 set aside. Which means I would have to take the \$23,000.00, remove \$4,000.00 a week and lower the weekly average amount in order to figure out how much I can afford for overtime and reduce services because of that lower amount. So that's how the account was established, not necessarily the amount we need, but it was a starting point of let's put some amount away so that if we have a major something that happens, I am able to – for only major incidents – ask them for reimbursement if you will for those types of incidents.

So now we are at turning point, because recruitment has changed over the past two or three years. They have achieved it more than once and the overtime that I have to figure out now is what number is the right number? It's not the \$1.2 that we are currently at; it's not \$2 million either, that is definitely going to be higher but it is somewhere in-between and until we change the way we do our budgets to some degree, we at least need to know that we have that \$100,000.00 in the account for the major incidents. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. All set Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

I'm all set on that point but I have others but I'll wait if other people have questions?

Chairman Dowd

OK I have Alderman O'Brien and Alderman Lopez in the queue.

Alderman O'Brien

I'll concede to Alderman Lopez, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Lopez, did you have a question?

Alderman Lopez

So specific to what was just commented on, I think we should probably be looking at making sure that contingency funding and special situations are being prepared for because we struggled with the opioid crisis which is a sedative and if we are looking at methamphetamines then that is a stimulant. In my experience at least as a social worker, those cases are complex, their behaviors are a little bit more involved. And I think our Police Department is already starting to see more aggressive responses to Police intervention when it comes to investigating domestic violence incidents in the home or that type of thing. We are already starting to see some demonstrations and outbursts as people come out of COVID-19. So we really should take this seriously and make sure we have that contingency funding.

My question was for the pension fund, 52150. It's up \$1.5 million is that passed down from the State, is that what we have been hearing about?

Ms. Smith

The information in that category is supplied by finance but I do know that the rates for July 1 have gone up.

Chairman Dowd

All the pension and benefits accounts that number is put in this book by John Griffin. So they just see it, they don't calculate it. And yes, the pensions are up in all departments.

Alderman Lopez

OK I just wanted to make sure that I understood why that raise was. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Except DPW. Do you have a question Alderman O'Brien?

Alderman O'Brien

No I am all set. Thank. You.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Jette, another question?

Alderman Jette

Yes. Chief, you said that in your explanation, I know you've come up with what I think seems to be a solution and I thank you very much for finding that. But when you said that to meet the Mayor's initial reduction of \$703,000.00 you would have to lay off 10 people. How did you come up with that number? When I divide \$703,000.00 by 10, that's like \$70,000.00. It doesn't seem – I think your Police Officers cost more than \$70,000.00, I think their salaries and their benefits and everything else, it must be a lot higher than that. Why did you come up with 10 to achieve that savings?

Chief Carignan

Well first of all 10 is not a hard number, like I said it was kind of speculated that it would be 10 officers / 4 officers. We took I think it was the Senior Patrolman rate or Master Patrolman rate?

Ms. Smith

The certified.

Chief Carignan

Oh certified, so it would be a patrolman. OK so we took the rate of a patrolman which is \$74,000.00 which would be the equivalent of a Certified II coming into the Police Department to work, plus their holiday. So that's how we came up with that number.

Alderman Jette

But are you including benefits in that?

Ms. Smith

No we were not including benefits at the time of the calculation. The benefits was not in the percent increase formula, so certainly you could always add benefits in the formula too.

Alderman Jette

I am just trying to, when you say you would lay off 10 people and I know it is not a hard number, it seems like \$703,000.00 would equate to laying off fewer people than 10.

Ms. Smith

Usually when they look at our increase, our benefits are removed from our calculation. So that's why we didn't use benefits.

Alderman Jette

OK but if you laid off a person you wouldn't be paying their salary and you wouldn't be paying their benefits either right?

Ms. Smith

Yes and I am talking about when they look at our percent increase change, usually we take the whole benefits out of the calculation, the pension, the medi, the benefits is also usually removed from the percent change calculation. That's why I didn't include it, OK?

Alderman Jette

OK. And on that same note, if the \$70 or so thousand dollars is what you used, wouldn't the \$241 be less than four people? Wouldn't that, you'd have to lay off to meet that?

Chief Carignan

Like Ms. Smith just said, we don't have access to those and those are removed from that bottom line so for the same reasoning we figure about 4, the same as for 10 depending on their price, because those figures are removed and we don't have access to those when we are making our calculations.

Alderman Jette

OK but you have access to them now, they are in the book.

Chief Carignan

And I'll let Karen speak to it, but when we factor in those percentage cuts, the benefits are not factored into that number, does that make sense? So if you factored in those, then you add those to the bottom line so you are making a scalable adjustment, if that makes sense. Yeah go ahead.

Jim Testaverde, Deputy Chief Nashua PD

And Ms. Smith also mentioned before that we are factoring in at a Certified II rate, so when we hired an officer from San Francisco that had 3 to 4 years' experience, he was hired at a higher wage. We don't know the exact candidates we are going to get until the hiring process is complete. So if we hire someone that was, just like I was when I started, I had no law enforcement experience. The difference in pay is roughly \$20,000.00. So it could be 4 or 5 people at that \$20,000.00 difference or it could be people at a much higher rate. That's why it is just an approximate, we don't who these candidates are going to be as they come through the door. And budgeting on a daily basis, the Captain that is in charge of recruiting will run over to Karen's office almost on a daily basis to say we have a candidate, this is a brand new candidate that will come in at this rate if he or she passes everything. We have another candidate that's coming in at a certified rate so she gets to factor that \$20,000.00 difference in, in initial pay. I understand what you are saying about the benefits but this is also part of the reason why it is an approximation.

Alderman Jette

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Jette, you are all set?

Alderman Jette

I am, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

I actually had Shoshanna Kelly on and then Alderman Lu. Alderman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you Alderman Dowd and thank you for being here Chief and the rest of the staff, I appreciated your presentation. I did have a number of questions. So one of the things you said at the top of the hour was that our Police Department is more diverse than it ever has been but that there were budgetary constraints that could potentially change that. Was that in reference to potentially having to get in last man in kind of mentality or are there other pressures that keep you from continuing to build on that.

Chief Carignan

Sure that's a great question. That last in first out is what we have to go by contractually. So we've been lucky to kind of change the way we recruit and be able to bring in diverse officers particularly over this past year. Unfortunately those are the first officers that would have to go so that would significantly impact that diversity that we have been lucky to hire.

Alderwoman Kelly

And if I could follow up. Thanks for that answer. Are there other things that you are doing around diversity that change in the budget or meeting the Mayor's budget will make you have to scale back.

Chief Carignan

I'm sorry, could you repeat that question, you came in broken briefly.

Alderwoman Kelly

I'm sorry. Thanks for bearing with me in technology. I just asked if there were other things beyond just the physical officers around diversity that you are doing that would be scaled back if the budget was cut.

Chief Carignan

Sure. Well we would have to take a look, like I said in my presentation, with the loss of officers and still having the need to cover the cost of service on the street some of the community conversations or the community involvement we have would have to be scaled back because we would not be able to have the manpower to attend those meetings or organize those events or participate at the level that we have been doing for the past 6 years. So those have started having community conversations within the schools with the students, particularly minority groups and that would also have a significant impact on our ability to do that. So those are some of the services that we do that we think are important and based on my conversations with all of the Aldermen and women we believe it is important to have those conversations and with the scaled back workforce, we may not be able to meet all those needs all the time.

Alderwoman Kelly

OK thank you. I have a few more questions but I can yield if there are other people.

Chairman Dowd

I'll come back to you. Alderwoman Lu.

Alderwoman Lu

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Through you to Chief Carignan, I am assuming you don't have the CERF replacement, maybe the Committee Chairman can confirm? Is what we are going to delay the \$495,000.00 Freight Liner, MT55 Van?

Chief Carignan

That's correct.

Alderwoman Lu

OK alright. So I just want to understand, when you said that you don't include the benefits, I just want to understand this for the whole budget process. When the Mayor asks for a certain percentage maximum increase, he is not holding you, all of the departments try to do that, are measured on how closely they stick to that minus the fringe benefits? Is that what we are seeing here or is it just the Police Department that does it this way.

Ms. Smith

I want to make a correction on that because I am looking at Page 9 and the calculation excludes pension, FICA and Medi. The health insurance is in there so I do want to go back and look at that. At the time that I had done the workup was prior to the knowledge that I had that the benefits were being rolled into that and

that's how we came to the 2.59 so I will go back and recalculate and add the health part into it. Does that answer your question?

Alderwoman Lu

It probably answers his better, Alderman Jette's better. But my main question was is that other than the health insurance, all of the departments, their target increase is calculated and it does not include those 3 items and fringe benefits?

Ms. Smith

I can't answer that because it is on the – all departments are on the same report on the same page.

Alderwoman Lu

Alright, thank you. And the only other question I had was it looks like firearms have gone up quite a bit maybe 30%. It's 71407 last page under "Equipment". And I wonder if you can provide any perspective on that? It is under "Equipment" on Page 144 of our report.

Chief Carignan

If I can answer that, that price includes an \$8,000.00 increase for tasers. We have to replace our taser units which are expensive so that's why you see a significant jump in that number.

Alderwoman Lu

And we don't do that every year is that correct?

Chief Carignan

Correct.

Alderwoman Lu

OK thank you. Actually one other question if I could follow up. Just looks like we are thinking that fuel will go down in price, unleaded fuel?

Chief Carignan

So we are given guidelines as to what to budget for fuel from the City. We don't have that estimate, hopefully it will go down.

Alderwoman Lu

That's good news. OK thank you, I am all set.

Chairman Dowd

OK, Alderwoman Kelly did you have a follow up question?

Alderwoman Kelly

I had multiple questions, thank you. I actually had questions around towards the end of our budget book you go into quite detail about your capital improvements program. Is that hitting your line or is that coming out of something else? Are we bonding that? I couldn't quite put my fingers on how that was going to be funded

Chief Carignan

Sure so which are you referring to? Are you referring to a specific project Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

I am referring to your overall proposed plan for capital improvements for 2020. It looks like there is a fence, some building work, and a few other – I'm sorry I am looking at it. So we have security funds, locker room, the parking lot repaving and the renovation and addition.

Chairman Dowd

I can address part of that. The major work that is going on at the Police Station from the windows to the AC to the lockers all of that, that is all bonded. And the only thing in the budget is the part of the debt service for the overall bond program. It's not in their particular department's budget.

Alderwoman Kelly

So Alderman Dowd, this FY 2022 has already been bonded and accounted for this, I am looking at about \$13 million?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderwoman Kelly

OK. I had another question for the Chief. So Chief I know there was some discussion earlier in the year around potentially getting body cams. I didn't see that in there. Was that just a budgetary consideration?

Chief Carignan

There is an item in the budget, I believe it's going to be...

Chairman Dowd

It's under Capital Improvements.

Chief Carignan

... Capital Improvements and we are in the process of purchasing those right now. We are going through contract negotiations. The contract is being reviewed. Deputy Rourke has been working extensively on it, we hope to have those by year end.

Alderwoman Kelly

OK. My next question is around, this is a little bit more lofty here, but I noticed that your numbers in terms of crime and mental health calls etc. in the last year were down. I am assuming that is sort of deflated due to people being at home, would you agree with that?

Chief Carignan

Absolutely. We have seen a very steep decrease in most calls for services due to the pandemic and restrictions in place.

Alderwoman Kelly

And so my follow up would be do you feel the budget that you have in front of you would allow you to continue to do the great work you do as people come back and potentially ... I know that there's definitely a mental health crisis coming out of this pandemic. Do you feel equipped to do that or are you concerned that there's going to be quite a wave of things coming up in the next year?

Chief Carignan

If you folks are kind enough to go through with the plan to allow us to maintain our budget, to be level funded and make sure that Expendable Trust is made whole, I think not only will we be able to maintain services, but part of the training and part of what we have been doing is developing a CIT Program which has our officers especially trained in mental health disorders and how to deal with people suffering from mental health issues on the street in a more effective way. So I think we've been doing bits and pieces of that so I think you will see in 2022 an even greater response to how we manage those increased calls for service. And by doing that training and by giving as many officers, we hope to be 25% trained in CIT principles, we will be able to minimize the damage by increased calls for service because of the way we are able to respond.

Alderwoman Kelly

So follow up to that, thank you. You said you wanted to do 25%, can you get me a number of what it would cost to get the entire force that training?

Chief Carignan

I can't give you a cost right now because I am not sure. We have been trying to go through with grants, we have been trying to host training so we can get free slots to get some of the officers in. I don't know what it would cost for our entire department but I would be happy to follow up. One of sergeants has been (inaudible) the program. I'd be happy to find out a per officer cost and what a backfill overtime cost would be for that to let you know.

Alderwoman Kelly

Yeah I definitely would be interested in that and I thank you. Thanks.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderwoman Kelly

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

OK. Alderman Jette, did you have additional questions?

Alderman Jette

Well since you asked. While we are here I was wondering does it happen when there are conflicts of interest that exist. I mean this isn't so much budgetary but I guess it could be. When there are conflicts of interest where you don't feel that your department is appropriate to do an investigation, where you refer it to the County Attorney's Office or the Attorney General's Office?

Chief Carignan

Yes.

Alderman Jette

And do you have to pay for that?

Chief Carignan

It depends if the Attorney General Office handles the investigation they don't charge us nor would the County Attorney's Office.

Alderman Jette

So when you say "it depends" what did you mean?

Chief Carignan

So if it's a law enforcement agency like you had mentioned earlier when we were not able to, we don't charge other agencies, they don't charge us. I guess they could send us a bill for work but we don't anticipate that they would.

Alderman Jette

OK thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Jette

Yes, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Are there any other questions for Appropriations relative to the Police Department budget? Alderman Lu?

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. I just missed these in the last round. What is the (audio cuts out) requested appropriations? Is it the figure in the books or has it been adjusted. I understand, I heard Mr. Fredette sent something, an updated page but I don't recall seeing that.

Chairman Dowd

OK that has to do with a CERF item and we are going to address that afterwards. It is just replacing a page in the Budget Book for a change in vehicle acquisition.

Alderwoman Lu

So I have a figure here in the book, \$3,532,0858. Is that the final number? Or are we talking about some reduced number?

Chairman Dowd

Which page are you referring?

Alderwoman Lu

Wait a minute – Police, Page 184 – the Appropriations?

Chairman Dowd

So the \$35079520 includes the Mayor reduction of \$241,338. So if that was restored, you'd have to add the \$241,338.00 to the \$35,079,520.00.

Alderman Jette

Which would be the number you're talking about.

Alderwoman Lu

OK. Thank you. And just two other questions. I know the software maintenance is expected to increase considerably. Could you just shed some light on that?

Chief Carignan

Sure part of the way law enforcement is trending now there's a lot of people with cameras, they have, you know, Ring cameras and they have cell phones and they are always recording in their cell phone devices, computer devices. So we have a lot of equipment that requires licensing and that licensing requires annual fees for it. So in order to keep the tools up and running to the level we need to, we need to keep maintaining the licenses when we get the new product. Sometimes we will get those licenses free like if we send somebody to the Secret Service School they will give us, officers give us computer equipment and they will also give us licensing for a year so those numbers fluctuate. But because of the number of computers and technology that we are using on a day to day basis to solve crime, that is kind of the cost of doing business for us.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you, I'm all set.

Chairman Dowd

All set? Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

Just to clarify, following up on Alderman Lu's question. I want to make sure I think I know what you said was that if you are offering to put off purchasing that new half a million dollar piece of equipment in exchange for the number that you had proposed of \$35,320,858.00 plus an additional \$100,000.00. So what you are asking us for is \$35,420,858.00 if we defer the purchase of the ...

Chairman Dowd

Well the \$100,000.00 wouldn't go into their budget, it goes into the Expendable Trust Fund and not into their budget and is ultimately controlled by the Board of Aldermen. They would come and ask us if they had a major case that we expect we are going to need this much money to prosecute the case and investigate the

case and we would have to transfer the money from the Expendable Trust Fund into their budget during the year. But it won't be in their budget.

Alderman Jette

So where would the \$100,000.00 come from?

Chairman Dowd

That would be determined by a motion that is made at the wrap up. John Griffin will be explaining it; I talked to him today so when we do the wrap up session. It will take a motion by someone to make the change.

Alderman Jette

OK I think I understand but the \$100,000.00 is money that we would be setting aside for this overtime account for the Police Department?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Jette

Alright.

Chairman Dowd

We will be putting into an Expendable Trust Fund that stays in that Trust Fund until they need it and they have to come to us to ask for it. And we would appropriate it at that time.

Alderman Jette

If I understood correctly that's not there yet, that's not there now.

Chairman Dowd

Not there now.

Alderman Jette

So this would be an additional \$100,000.00 that we would have to budget for?

Chairman Dowd

We would have to take it from somewhere. Right. There are a couple of alternatives and John Griffin will explain it all.

Alderman Jette

OK. Thank. You.

Chairman Dowd

Anything else that you'd like to present?

Chief Carignan

No. I appreciate your time everyone.

Chairman Dowd

I will say that I think the City is a much safer place with the Police Department that we have, being well-trained. I noticed that some efforts in Congress are trying to give money to smaller departments to be able to afford to become – go through the accreditation that we go through. And I think that the general public needs to know that we are one of the highest ranking, if not the highest ranking accredited Police Force in the country. Unless you think that's different. And there are things going on every single day that normally aren't – come out to the general public that they are protected by the efforts that you guys provide. And I personally just want to thank you all for your day to day activities. And it is not easy in any regard. Alderman Wilshire?

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you. I would like to thank the Department for coming in with a solution to the budget problem and bringing in a really good budget, really appreciate it. Thank you.

Chief Carignan

Thank you, we appreciate it.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Schmidt?

Alderman Schmidt

I also want to thank you for something. I had called the Chief about a little problem we have with speeders on Route 3. I had a couple of people complaining about how people cut to get in doing 80 or whatever. Thank you very much for working with the State. They made a big difference on that. Also, I've received calls – not of complaints of the Police Department – but thank yous. There are patrols on the streets where we see a lot of speeders and it really makes a difference and people are noticing. And so I am extremely grateful that people are seeing that you are doing the work you are for us. Also the CIT Program sounds awesome, that would be amazing for your mental health as well as the folks that you are taking care of. Mutual aid is extremely important and I am grateful that you help to take care of the whole community not just our City. But aside from that, your visibility is making a difference for people. So thank you very much.

Chief Carignan

Thank you that means a lot to the officers on the street as well. We appreciate it.

Chairman Dowd

I'll take two seconds to jump in another role I have is Chairman of the Joint Special School Building Committee. The Pennichuck site now is shut down and I think they've talked to somebody at the Department about doing a couple extra checks at night to make sure that nobody – we've already had one incident where the trailers were broken into. It's all fenced off, there should be no one in there; it is a hardhat area, even during the day, other than construction people.

Chief Carignan

We definitely will make sure we give it the special attention.

Chairman Dowd

I have Alderman Lopez waving. Alderman Lopez.

Alderman Lopez

I wanted to express my appreciation to the Police Department for the work that they do. Some of it isn't always quite so evident to the public but in terms of prevention I know they work closely with a lot of the local non-profits in order to help manage people struggling with homelessness, people struggling with mental health issues. So there's a lot of prevention that does happen on that level. And then coordinating with Youth Programs additionally is valuable. I am looking forward to the Police focus on traffic control. I know a lot of attention has been given to the Main Street traffic, but Palm Street people definitely come bombing right down the parkway and they are basically being fired right into a neighborhood with daycares and elderly people. There are a lot of concerned citizens in that area.

I also know that they have been active in coordinating with the FBI regarding the recent White Supremacy tags and stickers and that kind of thing. And that's an example of something we really don't want to see here in Nashua and it is important that Nashua PD have that ability to be – to have ambassadors in the community such as the education programs and the non-profits to make sure that citizens are willing to come forward and report these kind of things so the Police will respond. So I appreciate the job that you are doing on paper and the results that you get. I appreciate the crimes that you keep from allowing to be cultivated and I think the body cams is going to be a great step for us in terms of a budgetary investment. It is always a difficult year it seems like when we have some kind of new progressive move. But I think a reasonable alternative in offsetting the implementation of the command center replacement is a pretty good solution.

Also on that note, thank you for bringing the command center in advance. It is going to be at the Tree Streets Block Party and that's another opportunity for the Police to kind of show up and be a positive presence in the community in a non-law enforcement capacity. They are always helpful, I know at our last party in 2019 the bomb unit guys were the go-to for several non-profits that had carnival games that weren't working or tables that weren't staying up on their own. It was a way to show that those guys are really resourceful and they can make anything work out of anything. So I look forward to seeing that interaction and appreciate the Chief's efforts to support those.

Chairman Dowd

Thanks Alderman Lopez. Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. I also wanted to express my gratitude to the Police Department. I know it has been an especially tough year for many of us, including you. I know that you have done some really great work and I appreciate hearing about the cultural sensitivity training as well as bringing in more diverse officers. I think that's going to be really be an important piece of how our City as the most diverse in New Hampshire continues to have this on-going conversation. I know I was impressed with the work that you did when we had the Black Lives Matter Rally, you guys really – I was overwhelmed by how incredible you guys handled that. So I appreciate that and all the other work you do, getting people to slow down on Main Street or working on the drugs that are coming as influx. I know it's not an easy job, so thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone else? Seeing no one, thank you very much all for coming in. We appreciated having your hear and keep up the good work.

Chief Carignan

I appreciate you guys listening to us, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you Commissioners.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TABLE R-21-142 BY ROLL CALL**

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 6

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

Chairman Dowd

Before we jump into anything else, Treasurer Fredette called me a few times relative to his request to change – on Page 359 in your Budget Book – it has been changed to reflect an update. The change has no impact on the physical '22 Budget or the applicable resolutions since these funds come directly from the CERF Trust. The updated page is attached, Page 359, Line 9, 1997 Harley Davidson will be replaced with a 2009 Chevy Impala with a current replacement cost of \$43,238.00 which is a net increase of \$16,940.00 needed from CERF. And I will entertain a motion to allow us to change Page 359 in the Budget Book.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN WILSHIRE TO CHANGE PAGE 359 IN THE BUDGET BOOK IN ACCORDANCE WITH TREASURER FREDETTE'S MEMO TO US**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Alderman O'Brien?

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah thank you, it is just a housekeeping item, if I may amend the motion to as to accept the changes on the blue sheet and also to accept the communication and place it on file.

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO AMEND THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE CHANGES ON THE BLUE SHEET AND ALSO ACCEPT THE COMMUNICATION FROM TREASURER FREDETTE AND PLACE IT ON FILE**

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

Yes. OK. Are there any questions? Seeing none, would the Clerk please call the roll?

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O'Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 6

Nay: 0

## **MOTION CARRIED**

### GENERAL DISCUSSION

#### Alderman Wilshire

I think what we had before us tonight was very fortunate for this Budget Committee and for the City. The Police Department came in, they had a problem, they came in with a solution. I give them kudos for bringing in a resolution to their issue. I can't give them any more credit than that. But I really appreciate what they did and how they brought in their budget. So thanks to them.

#### Chairman Dowd

Yeah and anything that they were proposing, we will have to work out the motions and work with – in the wrap up sessions we will have John Griffin here and I am having him, I talked to him today about presenting a spread sheet that shows where we are at now with the revenues and the appropriations and what that means for a proposed tax rate. And if we make changes up or down it will automatically adjust that. So it will be much easier to see if we make a motion. I am not going to give away any of the numbers because I don't want to take away his thunder from his spread sheet. But he will be with us in all the wrap up sessions and we will start those right after the public hearing on Monday. Alderman Wilshire?

#### Alderman Wilshire

So this is our last Budget Review Meeting, correct?

#### Chairman Dowd

This is the last before Department, yes.

#### Alderman Wilshire

Thank you.

#### Chairman Dowd

The meetings after that will be wrap up where members of the Budget Committee can make motions to make changes to the Mayor's Budget and then we will send a recommendation to the Full Board and go from there. Alderman Jette?

#### Alderman Jette

So if I remember correctly, Monday is the public hearing at Nashua North.

#### Chairman Dowd

Nashua North, 7:00, no Zoom, they can't do it from there. No live TV, it is recorded.

Alderman Jette

No Zoom, they have to be present to say anything?

Chairman Dowd

Yeah.

Alderman Jette

That's unfortunate.

Alderman O'Brien

That's the way it has always been done.

Alderman Jette

I understand that but I think the silver lining of this pandemic has been our discovery of Zoom and how useful a tool it is. And it does provide access, I'm sorry that I can no longer participate by Zoom because it certainly was convenient. And for the public it gives them a chance to participate without having to get a babysitter or leave home or drive down here or whatever.

Chairman Dowd

That's why all of the City including the Aldermen are going to go through with hybrid when we have a full Aldermanic meeting here in this Chamber. We are still going to allow, as is the Planning Board, the Zoning Board, the ability for the public to Zoom in. We have the capability here. The Public Hearing is just potentially too many people. I mean just the Department Heads which we usually have are too many people to have in this Chamber. So it can't be done here and unless someone wants to call the Governor and get that changed.

Alderman Jette

If I may. So by the way you are talking that capability doesn't exist at Nashua North?

Chairman Dowd

No.

Alderman Schmidt

Not in the theater.

Chairman Dowd

No. And they – I am not sure whether they have live TV capabilities but there is no Zoom and no call in capability. I just reviewed that today with the people.

Alderman Jette

And so after the public hearing did you say we are going to right into a wrap up?

Chairman Dowd

No. I think it's the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> that we will do the wrap up.

Alderman Jette

The following week.

Chairman Dowd

And then we intend having I believe a Special Board of Aldermen meeting on July 1<sup>st</sup> to pass the budget.

Alderman Wilshire

It's possible.

Chairman Dowd

If it is not passed on July 1<sup>st</sup> we go into a continuing resolution because we won't have a budget. It's different this year because of COVID. Also, when I review the Budget at the Public Hearing, I am going to go Division by Division, not Department by Department. There are too many Departments to have and nobody has ever asked questions over the last 20 years that I've been involved. So we are just going to do it by Division. You have a question on the Division, come up. OK?

Alderman Jette

OK, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

It was almost a tie, Alderman Lu?

Alderwoman Lu

OH was I first? Thank you. Could you just, how does CERF come into the budget process. Do we actually discuss that or is that part of our vote or has it already been okayed?

Chairman Dowd

No CERF is a Special Account, as an Expendable Trust Fund for CERF that money gets put into, usually when we get into like August and we are doing the likes and unlikes or whatever it is. We sometimes plug money into CERF to build it up. But all of the expenditures for the items that are listed right now in CERF, they are either spent out of the CERF Expendable Trust in cash, they call it cash or it is bonded. So it's not part of any of the other parts of the budget, it is separate.

Alderwoman Lu

OK but one way or the other, we would have directed money probably from residuals in the different accounts to the CERF Account at the end of the budget process.

Chairman Dowd

Well it is up to the Mayor, the Mayor usually gives us a list of things he wants to move things into and we can agree or disagree or suggest other things, but that's later. Once the physical year ends, which is June 30<sup>th</sup>, and they clean up the books, which takes them at least the month of July to close everything out. Then they

will come in and there will be monies left over and how that monies gets spent comes out of the Mayor's Office.

Alderwoman Lu

OK, thank you. And does anyone know what Alderman Kelly was looking at when she was looking at the capital improvements? I just didn't see them in this book.

Chairman Dowd

OH the capital improvements are in the book; they are in the back.

Alderwoman Kelly

I was referring specifically to the book that we got from the Police that had their budget and their capital improvements and their goals and objectives. We were emailed it, Alderman Lu 230 pages and the capital improvements I was looking at was (audio inaudible – interference).

Alderwoman Lu

OK thank you. Everything did go out to the Full Board, correct?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderwoman Lu

OK probably just one of those things that got lost in my email.

Alderwoman Kelly

I'll forward it to you now Alderman Lu.

Alderwoman Lu

Thanks.

Chairman Dowd

Capital Improvements that have been approved by the Mayor for '22 are all in the book. And that's where the body cams are. There's \$100 K in deferred maintenance for the School Department.

Alderwoman Lu

My recollection was there was a pink booklet that we got after the Capital Improvement Committee finished their work in the spring and that had the capital improvement listings.

Chairman Dowd

That goes to the Mayor and he determines which ones are going to be put in the budget. Ah, it is Page 275. If you go on Page 275 you will see what was spent in FY'21 and what is intended to be spent in FY'22; there's \$50 K for Land Use Code Update; \$217,052.00 for Locke and Whitney Street Sidewalk improvements; \$183,050.00 for East Hollis Street and Bridge Street intercept improvements. Revenue shared to hydroelectric operator at 10%, \$104,000.00; Police Body Cameras \$350,000.00 and Fire deferred

maintenance \$50; School deferred maintenance \$100,000.00 and Street Infrastructure Improvement \$75,000.00. Page 275.

Alderwoman Lu

Thank you. I don't think it is in the index but thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. So I'm looking at that page and when we were talking about the \$12 million for the Police Department you had said it was under capital improvements; I don't see that here. Is it somewhere else?

Chairman Dowd

No we were talking about bonded projects. I'm sorry, the capital improvement and you get a book, some of the capital improvements, the really expensive ones are bonded. The page that I just referred is something that is coming out of this year's budget, not bonded.

Alderwoman Kelly

OK so the ones on Page 275 are general fund capital improvement projects?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderwoman Kelly

The other bonded ones are in a separate book.

Chairman Dowd

No well the bonding is also in this book in another section and it will show you the – it's the one that we went through with Treasurer Fredette and it'll show all the things that are bonded and what year. And it also shows what is paid each year out of the Budget to pay for the bonds. We try to keep that number fairly constant across many years. It goes up and down a little but it stays fairly constant. And the reason that it does and the fact that we don't bond anywhere near what we could legally, that's why we have the Triple AAA Bond Rating.

Alderwoman Kelly

OK thank you.

Chairman Dowd

I often accuse Treasurer Fredette of chasing a dime down a 12 lane highway against traffic. He's very frugal. Alderman Jette?

Alderman Jette

So I am just thinking out loud here. I see the Police Body cameras, \$350,000.00, that's on page 275 as a capital improvement. The command vehicle that they are willing to defer was on Page ...

Chairman Dowd

It's under the CERF Account.

Alderwoman Lu

OH it is 364.

Alderman Jette

359, right? 359 and that's under "CERF Replacements".

Chairman Dowd

Yes. There's and I've been asking for one for a long time, I am hoping some night we will have a complete discussion on CERF with the Mayor and John Griffin. CERF goes out like 15 / 20 years; all the vehicles, when they will be replaced. If CERF worked the way the concept is meant to be is when we buy – like we just bought or are buying two new pumper trucks which are being built right now. When those come and go in service you would estimate that say they last, I don't know hypothetically 10 years, you take 1/10<sup>th</sup> of that cost and put it in the CERF fund every year so that when you get to replace that truck, all that money would be there. Pumper trucks and ladder trucks right now we are bonding because they were very expensive and bonding is under 2%. So it makes more sense for us to do it that way but the CERF fund is not funded that way. We put money into it every year and basically figure out what we are going to buy and pay for it. Alderman O'Brien?

Alderman O'Brien

Yeah if I can say, I mean my years on the Fire Department and coming up and purchasing apparatus and for years we have dealt with the CERF account. But most unfortunately keep in mind we just came off of 25 years of a spending cap and unfortunately the CERF account was one of those accounts that was the lackey. When you have fixed spending and you have a spending cap you look for ways to try to stay under the cap and unfortunately CERF was one of those accounts that never really was truly funded. But fortunately by fate of the fiscal wizardry of the economy, bonding became a little bit better and we are on the reaping end of it and we are seeing that. But I agree with my partner here, Alderman Dowd, what happens if the bubble breaks, or the boom breaks or whatever? And we have to get back. CERF has always been something that I think we had to neglect to continue our business but as we march on in the future, keep in mind that it is an account that definitely needs to be properly funded. Where does it come out? It comes out of the General Fund and if you have a cap it is very hard to do that.

Chairman Dowd

All set. So I am hoping we will have some night we will talk nothing but CERF but it won't be before the budget is passed, it is kind of complex. Alderman Schmidt.

Alderman Schmidt

It would help. I heard the talk a couple of years ago, the CERF talk. It made a lot of sense and it matters. I only wanted to say that Monday night will probably be on television. People will not be able to call in, they will not be able to make comments, but they can still watch it. And I think that's an important thing for people.

Chairman Dowd

And they can be there in person if they want to.

Alderman Schmidt

Right. They can at least see it and hear it.

Chairman Dowd

I may have misspoken. I think they do have the online capability.

Alderman Schmidt

For TV.

Chairman Dowd

A lot of times they record but other times, they have a studio right there in that high school so I think they have the capability to go live. However, based on my experience in the last few years, probably not worth watching.

Alderman O'Brien

I thought it was must see TV.

Chairman Dowd

Corporation Counsel reminded that there's absolutely no requirement for us to have a public hearing on the budget and I said, I'm not going there.

Alderman Schmidt

Transparency, it is important.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah. Did you have something Alderwoman Kelly?

Alderwoman Kelly

I was trying to banter, but it is much harder when you are on Zoom. I was just saying those are tantalizing evenings.

Chairman Dowd

Alright. I guess we'll say that's the end of General Comment. Public Comment. Is there anyone on from the public that wishes to be heard?

PUBLIC COMMENT

Laurie Ortolano 41 Berkeley Street.

Chairman Dowd

Yes, you have 3 minutes.

Ms. Ortolano – OK just a couple of things. When Chief Carignan spoke about the drug issue, the influx of drugs and the issues associated with them and the level of violence you see with these stimulant drugs, he did say that he wanted the Aldermen to keep in mind how we get ahead of this and how we deal with it. And I am wondering how we do that and what’s in the budget to do that and what do they anticipate is actually coming to deal with that because I didn’t really hear the details of how that is addressed. I do wish there was a Zoom capability for the Budget Hearing. I know you do it over at the School but it will really be interesting to see what the attendance is and the need to be in a place that large to address the Hearing.

Also, I’ve heard a lot of complements tonight about the Police Department and they ranking it has nationally and at a State level and I want us to bear in mind that the way we select those Commissioners going through the Governor’s Office is the way it should be maintained. I am very concerned that the closer you allow these appointments to take place, politics being what it is and it is political at every level but the more local you do it through an appointment process with the Mayor and the Aldermanic President, the more apt you are to have an influence there that I think would distort the objectivity of the Department. And I think if you really want to have that type of structure with your Commissioners and people really believe that the Mayor nominated positions that would come to the Board is best on I think the next best thing, that is not a choice that I think is good; go to elected positions where the public is voting period. That’s how they have real choice. So I am really a strong supporter of keeping the Commissioner seats and the appointments of those seats as they stand right now. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Thank you. Anyone else from the public? I don’t see anyone on line.

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN - None

POSSIBLE NON-PUBLIC SESSION - None

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY ALDERMAN O’BRIEN TO ADJOURN BY ROLL CALL**

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Schmidt, Alderman Jette, Alderman Wilshire  
Alderman O’Brien, Alderwoman Kelly, Alderman Dowd 6

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting was declared closed at 8:34 p.m.

Michael B. O’Brien, Sr.  
Committee Clerk