

TOWN OF NORTHWOOD
POLICE COMMISSION
10/5/2021
Budget Work Session

Chairman Nicole Rodler calls the meeting to order at 5:00 pm at the town hall.

PRESENT: Chairman Nicole Rodler, Commissioner John Schlang, Commissioner Scott Bryer, Chief Glen Drolet, Police Commission Administrator Linda Smith.

Proposed 2022 Police Department Budget

Chief Drolet goes through his proposed budget and explains the lines that are being adjusted. He states that Finance Specialist Cheryl Eastman has included the new lines and account numbers for 2022 which reflect the new software that will be put in place at the end of the year.

He states that there are a number of changes to lines, and merging of lines. One change that is occurring is that salary lines will be included together for full time employees in the same department, rather than listing individual lines. He notes the position of administrative assistant as an example being added to the full time line, rather than separate.

Discussion is held on how the changes in the new format affect the understanding of year to year differences. Also discussed is the default budget which has been in place for several years and how that affects the increase to the requested amount each year which reflects actual expenses. This includes increases to fixed expenses and salary line step/promotion increases.

Chief Drolet notes the salary changes which include a step increase for the positions of Sargent, Lieutenant and Corporal, and 3.5% increase in the Chief's salary.

Lengthy discussion is held on the need to increase the starting rate for new hires in order to hire and retain officers. Chief Drolet states he would like to offer a starting wage of 43,302. In order to do that he states that he would like to increase the rate of the two existing officers who have been here for 2 years to 45,939 before the end of this year using available funds in the line. They will be eligible to receive a step next year which will bring them to 47,320 and provide a difference in pay from the new hires.

Discussion is held on the need to provide a wage survey showing starting wage for new hires in similar size towns in the area. Chief Drolet notes that Strafford is currently at 48,500. Chairman Rodler states that the situation is changing all the time due to the lack of people available to hire and competition to hire. Chief Drolet adds that SB2 makes it more difficult as there is not the interaction with voters as there was when there was Town Meeting day. Now voters go to the polls and there is not as much opportunity to provide information directly to the voters.

Chief Drolet states that the actual increase from 2021 to 2022 is 58,920.83 which includes the new position and retirement.

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Chief Drolet goes through the recommended Animal Control proposed budget, noting where reductions were made. There is no on duty Animal Control Officer at this time. The budget reflects a reduction of 3683.

Motion is made by Commissioner Schlang, second by Commissioner Bryer to accept Chief Drolet's recommended budgets for 2022 Police Department and Animal Control. Vote: 3/0.

Ms. Smith explains the proposed Police Commission budget. She states the salary line is reduced based on the total amount budgeted in the line exceeding the expenses for a number of years, with annual steps included. The equipment line is recommended to increase should there be the need to replace the recorder or another small office item. Total proposed is 6368.

Motion is made by Commissioner Schlang, second by Commissioner Bryer to accept the recommended budget for 2022 Police Commission. Vote: 3/0.

Motion to adjourn is accepted at 5:57 pm
Respectfully submitted,



Linda Smith, Police Commission Administrator