



Public Safety Committee of Council Agenda

July 18, 2023 - 5:00 PM

233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio

1. Monroe Fire Department Medic Unit
2. Police Department Overtime/Staffing Appropriations
3. Discussion, questions, and requests for future meetings.
4. Adjournment

Monroe Fire Department Medic Unit

City Managers Recommendation

Approve the appropriations for the purchase of a new medic unit this year to be received in 2025 as planned, rather than waiting until the originally planned budget of 2024 due to longer lead time for these units that have developed in recent years. Review additional requests for the cot, upfitting and stripping and lettering. Review the impact on longer lead times on a revised capital replacement plan in the Fire Department.

Background

The Monroe Fire Department has a Capital Vehicle / Equipment purchasing plan that extends out through 2040. This includes units like our Medics, Engines, and Towers. This also includes equipment of significant value such as our LifePak 15's (cardiac monitors), extrication equipment, cot loading systems, electric cots, and the LUCAS units (CPR devices). This allows Council, the City Manager, and the Finance Director to look forward and plan for these major purchases when it comes to funding and scheduling.

The current plan called for beginning of the purchase process in 2024 for the replacement of the 2015 medic unit and allows for a useful life of the until of 10 years. At the time the plan was created, the delivery estimate was one year to 18 months. Since that time delivery lead times have increased. Staff will be reevaluating the current plan to adjust for increasing lead times on other large purchases to ensure that proper fiscal planning is taken into account in future budgets.

We are requesting that Council approve the funding for a new medic unit, in accordance with the existing purchasing plan, to replace the oldest unit by 2025. The purchase includes a new loading system, new electric cot, additional upfitting to include installation of electronic equipment that the manufacturer will not install due to liability, and stripping / lettering of the vehicle.

The new squad will match the style of the existing units as we have had good luck with the three prior medics. This is a Ford F550 chassis with a Horton Box unit on the back. The internal set-up will match the existing units so that placement of equipment will be identical no matter which unit you are in since personnel could move from station to station and unit to unit. We are wrapping the purchase and cost of a new load system and electric cot into the total purchase request as the life span of these units coincides with the purchasing plan for the medic units.

We are requesting the funding and approval of this unit now due to the lead time in production and the rising costs. As with most areas of vehicle production and manufacturing, we are having to deal with long delays due to part availability and work force issues. The current

production time for a medic unit is **two** years, therefore we will not receive this unit until the fall of 2025 if ordered immediately.

Therefore, time is of the essence so that we do not run into issues down the road where there is no quick fix. We anticipate the cost of the unit to increase by 2.5% to 10% if we wait until next budget year. The delay in purchase will mean the replacement unit would not be available until some time in 2026. This would also risk increase cost for maintenance of the existing vehicle.

Fiscal Information

Following is the current cost of the units as we stand today:

F550 with Horton Box: \$345,000.00

Stryker Power Load System with Electric Cot: \$72,720.00

Upfitting: \$2,000.00

Stripping and Lettering: \$6,000.00

Total: \$425,720.00

This is current pricing, which will likely continue to rise as time goes on due to demand and inflation. We are also discussing with Horton the ability to lower the cost through early payment, trade in, or additional options that might be available.

Police Department OT/Staffing Appropriations

City Managers Recommendation

Approve appropriations to cover the cost of 3 additional Police Officer salary and consider and amount of additional appropriations for overtime for the remainder of the 2023 budget to ensure the needs of officer and public safety for the remainder of the year. Additionally, review the policy of a minimum of 4 officers per shift with the Police Chief to ensure that those staffing levels can be maintained in future budgets.

Background

The Police Department's 2023 budget contained \$185,000 for patrol officer overtime and funding for 36 sworn officer, including administrative officers. During the time the staffing budget for the department was calculated, Council also approved the addition of 3 officers to the authorized strength to ensure that the SRO positions would not be pulled onto road patrol. At the time this decision was made, we did not increase the budget for those additional positions within the department for the 2023 budget, nor was the minimum staffing considered as a part of the budget that Council was presented and approved in December.

After the approval of Council to increase the authorized strength of the department from 36 to 39 sworn police officers, the department was able to hire four officers in the fall of 2022. Three of those officers had to attend the police academy. In anticipation of the addition of those officers, the department made plans to move to a minimum staffing requirement of four officers per shift at the beginning of 2023., A significant amount of budget for overtime has been used to cover vacancies in the patrol shifts caused by those new officers in the academy not being available for shift work and existing officers off on injury leave.

To compensate, in December of last year we moved specialized positions to the road. This included a detective, the community services officer, and the training officer. These specialized positions are vacant while the three newest officers attended the academy and through field training, putting stress in those areas of our operations.

Police Department policy has been to staff all road shifts at a minimum of 4 officers to ensure safety of our staff. While this policy has not been vetted by the Safety Committee or Council, staff believes this policy is prudent to operations and continued the staffing in this manner and many time using overtime to fill the shifts. Thus, we anticipate that these funds will be expended as of the pay period ending on July 8.

Traditionally when we had vacancies within the ranks that had to be covered with overtime, the salaries that were not being paid to the vacant officer positions could be moved over to compensate for the overtime usage. This was not possible since the adjustment was not made to the 2023 budget for the additional staff. The oversight of funding all 39 positions in the 2023 budget was discovered by Finance and a review of the overtime issue that it caused was then brought forward.

As of this date, we have 38 out of 39 officer positions filled, with the remaining officer to begin in two weeks. In addition to that vacancy, we also have two officers off on injury leave and three officers in field training. This continues to create gaps in the schedule, but not at the level that we saw in the first few months of 2023.

The Police Chief, working with the Finance Director, are anticipating a budget short fall of approximately \$289,000. This estimate is based off the expenditures of the first half of the department's OT budget and the inclusion of salary needed to cover the three additional officers for the remainder of 2023. It also accounts for all current funding of the police budget, including the increases approved as a part of the recent collective bargaining agreement.

Over Time = \$125,000

Three Officer Salaries= \$164,000

Analysis

Below the Police Chief has provided options for cuts that could be considered if Council were not to approve appropriations at the level requested. At the very least the amount for the funding of the 3 officers authorized by Council in 2022 should be added to the budget and if the Committee or Council would like to consider other information before considering an amount for the requested overtime, that information can be reviewed by the safety committee and a recommendation made to Council. At this time, I have instructed that the first of those cuts not be taken because of the direction of Council at this point given for authorized staffing levels.

As mentioned earlier, how we staff our department, particularly for this case the Police Department, has a major impact on the budget for the future. Review of policies and levels of service should be taken into account when considering budget as a whole. What may be considered optimal, may not always be appropriate for the level of budget that can be funded in each area and a level of service may need to be lowered to meet all the goals of Council over time. Those decisions are made at the Council level to ensure alignment with their goals and a full understanding of budget impacts.

We will also need to evaluate the forecast, as the numbers used during review of contract negotiations did not have the funding for the additional 3 officer either. This will need to be update and will be available during budget discussion moving forward.

Potential Cuts:

Without funding supplementation, the following cuts are recommended to be taken in order to begin to compensate for the shortfall:

1. Request the HR Director to rescind the conditional offer of employment to the police candidate that was scheduled to start on July 17.
 - a. This will free up that officer's salary and benefits, estimated at \$54,500 for the remainder of the year.
2. Cancel all training for July and August.
 - a. The department was scheduled to complete training for the department in Officer unarmed self-defense and less-lethal weapons training in July.

- b. The department was scheduled for firearms training in August.
- c. Eight officers were scheduled for in-service or outside training.
 - i. We will contact the outside training to see about refunds and/or penalties for cancellation.
- d. Estimated that this will save approximately \$10,000.
- 3. Cancel the remaining three weeks of Safety Town.
 - a. The two SRO positions who are working safety town will be assigned road positions to ensure that there are no open shifts.
 - b. Parents will need to be notified this week of the cancellations as the next classes were slated to begin on July 12, 19 and 26.
- 4. Community Services Officer will be reassigned to a shift.
 - a. This will require the cancellation or participation in any planned community outreach events for the rest of the year, such as the Monroe Touch a Truck or Food Truck Fair.
 - b. Providing support on the day of the event will be done by working patrol officers if possible.

The following long-term cuts will be evaluated in the following weeks:

- 1. Cancellation of all remaining training not mandated by the State of Ohio.
 - a. Estimation is additional \$20,000.
- 2. Develop a plan with the finance director to:
 - a. Move any funds in the current department benefits that will not be expended in 2023, current estimation is approximately \$20,000.
 - b. Evaluate the ability to move operational funds in the police department budget to salaries and prepare legislation for council action.
 - i. Suspend the purchase of as much equipment as possible.
 - ii. Estimated potential is \$60,000.
 - iii. This will require the evaluation additional funding in 2024 budget to provide for the purchase equipment not purchased in 2023.
 - c. Evaluate potential to move funds from current dispatch budget to the police budget through council action.
 - i. Will require leaving vacant the one open dispatch position.
 - ii. Potential of approximately \$80,000 available for transfer.
 - 1. Recommend transfer only near end of 2023 to ensure that sufficient funding remains to cover all of dispatch needs.
- 3. Layoffs of sworn personnel
 - a. The layoff of sworn police officers is not recommended, but until all information and funding is evaluated it must be part of the conversation.
 - b. This will greatly reduce operational response and require the elimination of any proactive policing to include traffic enforcement and preventative patrol activity.
 - c. It will also greatly affect moral and our ability to recruit and retain personnel.
 - i. With not filling the current vacancy this month and laying off two in the

fall, we can assume that they will find other jobs in law enforcement.

- ii. This can also impact
- d. Initial estimation is that all the cuts proposed above will provide approximately \$244,500 in relief of the \$289,000.
- e. Need to determine if there is a minimum notification time to the State. We believe that it is currently 3 months but would need to work with HR manager to confirm.
- f. The remaining estimated \$44,500.00 would require two layoffs to begin no later than the first part of October if the required notification to the State is three months.