

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

1.

Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
General Government Re: Town Manager's FY 2021 Message	Cunningham: Please provide details on Fire and Ambulance Calls. How many of the 5,015 calls were dispatched calls? How many were Fire only, Ambulance only and combined?	Chief Targ: All calls were dispatched, 1,548 Fire Calls, 2,052 Ambulance Calls, Total Fire and Ambulance Responses 5,015. Includes Engine Medical Assist. The response totals are higher than the call total because of the Engine medical assist. It shows that the engines are doing calls, but not over inflating the call totals by counting a medical as two calls.
General Government: Re Town Manager's FY 2021 Message	Cunningham: Please identify the source of the "Police Calls" number of 27,456 and details as to how many are actual Calls for Service (dispatched calls e.g. 9-1-1 calls, accidents, etc.) and how many were routine, non- incident calls such as park and walk; radar assignment, etc. FYI: The Dispatched police calls in the FY 2019 Annual Town Report (ATR) show 8,559 dispatched police calls, 221 fewer than shown in the BOS 2017 Public Safety/ Staffing Discussion.	Chief McEnaney: The number used in the FY 2021 message is from Calls by Sector Stats, these stats are calendar year vs fiscal and included ALL CALLS. Fiscal '19 numbers are 25,495 (16,936 patrol-initiated action (PIA), 8,559 dispatched). Same response to 210 Police question #5.
General Government	Cunningham: The last few increases in Police staffing and the requests in the FY21 Budget have been based on the recommendations of the 2017 Public Safety/ Staffing Discussion "Working Group". Are there any agendas/minutes for meetings of the "Working Group" for review? What is the direct correlation between the data on police activity and the discussions and the decision that 5 is the right number, not 6 not 4? How did you arrive at the number 5?	Ross: BOS formed a working group who reported to the BOS in 2017. The BOS voted to support recommendations in the BOS Budget Policy Direction including increased staffing in FY19, FY20, and FY21. Here is a link to the Westford Police & Fire 2017 Public Safety/Staffing Discussion .
210 Police	Cunningham: Costs for Captains and Lieutenants increases by 26.29% and 26.29% respectively. Please explain	Chief McEnaney: CBA increases and Quinn bill applied to hourly wage. Note corresponding decrease in Quinn Bill line.
210 Police	Cunningham: Special Details funding calls for \$23,000. Which details are covered by this line item? Patrolmen contracts	Chief McEnaney: Town Elections, Annual Town Meeting, Protests/Rally coverage, Select Board

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

1.

`Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
	include the establishment of a Details Revolving Fund. How many and at what cost were details Performed by WPD in FY19?	Meetings, Memorial Day Parade, Apple Blossom Parade, Holiday Tree Lighting * See attached FY19 Summary
210 Police	Cunningham: We had an aggressive year for road construction in 2019 and the apparent increase in the need for Police Details. What impact, if any, did that have on the ability to fully staff regular patrols?	Chief McEnaney: Details did not impact the ability to staff patrols, however, time off requests did increase which created more shifts at minimum manning.
210 Police	Cunningham: It appears that with the addition of the officer in mid-FY21 the Department will have 49 Badged Officers, two of whom are assigned SRO duty during the school year. How many of the remaining are available for patrol duty on a regular basis?	Chief McEnaney: There are currently 45 officers available for assignment, including the Chief. Of those 45 Officers, 31 are assigned to patrol responsibilities.
210 Police	Cunningham: In the FY 2021 Message the Town Manager Identified the increase of "Police calls" to 27,456 as a result of a growth in population and rationale for adding 5 officers. What is the source of this number? How many of this number are actual calls for service and how many are routine patrol activities?	Chief McEnaney: The number used in the FY 2021 message is from Calls by Sector Stats, these stats are calendar year vs fiscal and included ALL CALLS. Fiscal '19 numbers are 25,495 (16,936 PIA, 8,559 dispatched)
210 Police	Cunningham: The Chief has requested an additional two officers citing the 2017 staffing analysis and an increase in traffic issues and crime as well as an increase in non-criminal complaints. What are the actual increases and how do they compare with prior years?	Chief McEnaney: Traffic citations increased from 2,622 to 4,630. Criminal complaints increased from 287 to 398. Numbers will continue to increase with higher population and full staffing of assigned personnel.
210 Police	Cunningham: How many incidents occur each year that require a 2-officer response or a 2 + supervisor response?	Chief McEnaney: Call reason types that routinely have two cars dispatched to respond is 1,861. <u>However, it is nearly impossible to accurately capture how many calls required a 2nd officer or supervisor to respond after the initial dispatch.</u> The search system does not account for evolving

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

1.

`Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		calls where additional personnel are requested to a scene, or due to call volume and staffing issues, only one officer is available to respond. Furthermore, any of the routine two car call reasons could have the second car cancelled or not dispatched due to the specifics of the call.
210 Police	Galvin: Over 40% of the Westford Police Department is involved in supervision. Please explain the difference in duties and responsibilities between a Captain and a Lieutenant, and a Lieutenant and a Sergeant.	Chief McEnaney: Correct percentage is 32.6% (which is consistent with Market Basket analysis of supervisor ratio's). Job Descriptions are attached. Staffing levels have been approved by the Town Manager and Select Board.
210 Police	Galvin: How many officers are assigned to the detective bureau and how many supervisors are in the unit as well?	Chief McEnaney: There are nine Officers assigned to the Special Services Division, which includes two Supervisors.
210 Police	Shankar Hegde: Why Quinn bill budget request went down substantially?	Chief McEnaney: Quinn Bill now in hourly wages *see first question. As of FY '21, this line will only include Chief and Deputy Chief
210 Police	Shankar Hegde: Could you provide data on Life saver project? Like how many people were helped over the course of a year?	Chief McEnaney: No current subscribers. Due to low cost of GPS monitoring devices, families now have other options. Project Life Saver is kept for those who cannot afford alternatives. The WPD does offer Cognitive Alert Registration for those with cognitive impairments.
210 Police	Bao: The overtime budget is relatively stable at about 400K per year. Some of the overtime cost is due to lack of police personal. Is there an analysis that we might (or might not) reduce overall budget by adding additional police personal?	Chief McEnaney: CBA- time off, minimum manning standards, the need to plan for additional personnel during emergency responses, weather related disasters, directed patrols etc. This line can be greatly affected by

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

1.

`Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		long term leave/retirement/transfers and increases when we are understaffed.
210 Police	Cunningham: Review of the FY18 through the proposed FY21 personnel budgets indicates an apparent increase of badged officers in FY21 by 1 Sergeant and .5 patrol officer bringing the total increase of officers from 44 in FY18 to 48.5 (nominally 49) in FY21, an increase of 5 since FY18 and the potential for another if money is available. Please clarify.	Chief McEnaney: The Special Services Division had 2 Supervisors several years ago, but the Detective Sergeant position was moved out due to staffing issues and imminent need in patrol. A Detective Sergeant was returned to the SSD to address the need for additional supervision due to the nature and complexities of the investigations. This position was approved by the Town Manager and Select Board. The Sergeant was created from existing personnel and did not require additional staffing. *In FY '18, the WPD had 45 Ofc's FY '19 went to 47 Ofc's FY '20 added 1 to make 48 (added in Sept.) FY '21 adds 1 in January for total of 49
210 Police	Cunningham: The personnel chart shows one additional Sergeant. Why add another Sergeant when additional patrols are needed? Are Sergeants available for high-risk situations and or regular patrol?	Chief McEnaney: The Special Services Division had 2 Supervisors several years ago, but the Detective Sergeant position was moved out due to staffing issues and imminent need in patrol. A Detective Sergeant was returned to the SSD to address the need for additional supervision due to the nature and complexities of the investigations. This position was approved by the Town Manager and Select Board. Sergeants are available for high-risk situations and patrol supervision.
210 Police	Cunningham: The continuing rationale for increases in staffing	Chief McEnaney: Population continues to grow

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

1.

`Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
	<p>have been population growth, increases in traffic issues, crime and non-criminal complaints. Actual Calls for Dispatch of Police have decreased from 8770 in FY17 to 8559 in FY19, a 2% decrease. The Police Log has remained relatively steady over the past few years from 10,497 in FY17 to an estimated 10,433 in FY19. What are the actual increases in traffic issues, crime and non-criminal complaints??</p>	<p>with new residential projects and commercial growth on rt. 110, increasing traffic and enforcement needs. WPD have been requesting additional personnel for years. The increase in officers requested was based upon the FY17 numbers with the number of complex calls in some cases increasing. The number of traffic citations went up more than 2K in the past year and an additional 100 criminal complaints were generated.</p>
210 Police	<p>Cunningham: In the oft-cited Public Safety/Staffing Discussion towns with similar populations and similar staffing (45-48) are able to support shifts of 5,5,5; 5,5,6; 7,7,5; 5,6,5; and 5,7,6. It appears we have difficulty supporting shifts of 4,4,4. What are they doing differently that enables them to support increased staffing?</p>	<p>Chief McEnaney: The staffing cited requires those departments to have increased overtime budgets as most fill 1 for 1. Our current minimum staffing is 3,3,3 but is scheduled at a higher ratio. The minimum manning standard was set in 1980 at 3,3,2 which was increased in 2014 to 3,3,3. If the T.M. and Select Board set the manning at 4, 4, 4, additional personnel would be needed with an increase of our O.T. budget. Our O.T. budget is amongst the lowest in the area for similar sized departments with Chelmsford at \$620,000 and Acton at \$520,000. Both fill shifts 1 for 1.</p>
210 Police	<p>Cunningham: How many vacancies do we have in the Department? Do you have officers that are unavailable for duty? If so, how many and what is the impact on your goal of 4x4x4 staffing?</p>	<p>Chief McEnaney: We have no vacancies in budgeted positions. We have three officers that are NOT AVAILABLE for assignment (1 officer is on long term injury and 2 officers are in the Academy). Our scheduled shifts are 5, 5, 4. In order to support 4, 4, 4 minimums, an increase of scheduled personnel with a higher O.T. budget is</p>

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

1.

`Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		required. This is due to contractually bargained time off such as- vacation, personal time, sick, compensatory time and bereavement leave. Long term leave such as Injured on Duty or military leave also dramatically impact our ability to schedule personnel. Further complications like retirement or transfers can set our scheduled personnel back over a year.
215 Public Safety Communications	Galvin: Is the overtime accrued in the Public Safety Communications Department charged to this Department overtime account or to the police?	Whitcomb: No. The Public Safety Communications Department has its own budget. Prior to fy16 that was not the case. At that time approx. 180k annually was paid out of OT to police dispatchers and 70k to fire dispatchers.
220 Fire Department	Cunningham: In the FY 2021 Message the Town Manager (TM) notes that Fire and Ambulance calls totaled 5,015. The Public Safety Communications Department FY19 report shows 4,435 dispatched fire and ambulance responses for FY19. What other calls are included in the TM numbers?	Chief Targ: 5015 Total Responses FY18 5442 Total Responses FY19 All Fire Department Responses are included, including Engine Medical Assists. The response totals are higher than the call total because of the Engine medical assist. It shows that the engines are doing calls, but not over inflating the call totals by counting a medical as two calls.
220 Fire Department	Galvin: The combined pay for Fire Captains and Lieutenants is significant (almost 700K). What are the differences between Captains and Lieutenants in their duties and responsibilities?	Chief Targ: The average pay difference between firefighters and Lt's is about \$13k, and between Capt. And Lt. is \$8.7k. See summary of positions attached. We maintain at least 1 officer per shift, the ideal span of control number is five employees/members answering to one officer. These eight officers are all line officers.
220 Fire Dept	Greene: Have the issues with the HVAC system been resolved?	Chief Targ: No, the issues are still being

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

1.

`Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		addressed, we have been meeting with the Architects and Design team, HVAC Contractors and Town Facilities.
220 Fire Dept – Electricity and Natural Gas	Greene: Were the initial heating and electric estimates by the architects accurate?	Chief Targ: Currently for Electric with credits we are tracking on budget for all facilities. Natural Gas usage is tracking lite and we are looking for confirmation from National Grid that we are getting actual readings and not estimated bills.
241 Building Dept.	Greene: How many vehicles does the Building department have? What are the ages, make/model and mileage?	Fontaine: Two, a 2008, Ford Escape, mileage 40,732 (this vehicle is shared amongst Building, Conservation, Planning and Zoning Departments) And a 2017, Ford Escape, mileage 15,713.
241 Building Dept.	Greene: Why is travel-mileage listed in both Personal Services and Expenses?	Fontaine: Last year with benefit of Finance Committee review, an inconsistency was identified with respect to mileage reimbursement to inspectors. To address the issue, the Town Manager decided to reimburse the permanent part-time and full-time inspectors through a mileage stipend from the Car Allowance line item. It did not make sense to reimburse the alternate (or On Call) Inspectors through a stipend because of how infrequently they work. Those inspectors are still paid \$4.00 per inspection from the Mileage Reimbursement line item.
294 Tree Warden	FitzPatrick: When do we hire out tree work as opposed to using our own people and equipment.	The Town does not own a bucket truck and we cannot do any of the aerial work. We also contract out all of the aerial work for the liability

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

1.

Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		aspect
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Cunningham: In Goals you talk of adding personnel to bring staffing up to 11 per shift. What would that require?	Chief Targ: In FY20, we are currently in the hiring process to bring staffing up to 10 per shift. To bring staffing up to 11 per shift it would require four additional personnel. There are four shifts so increasing one per shift equals four personnel.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Cunningham: How many EMT's would be needed under a 11 per shift scenario. With the new addition in 2021 won't 9 EMT's be adequate for 4 shifts?	Chief Targ: From FY20 we would need a total of four additional personnel to get to 11 per shift. In FY21 with the one additional in the budget that would be a total of five personnel increase over the last three years and it would have one shift of 11 and three shifts at 10.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Galvin: Am I correct that the Ambulance Enterprise reported 235K of uncompensated service of which 95% of this was from town residents? Does this mean that they did not pay for the service?	<p>Chief Targ: Of the \$235K written-off the Town's Receivables, approximately 60% was owed by Residents and 40% by Non-Residents.</p> <p>Approximately \$100K of the total was sent to First Financial for Collection. The vast majority (95%) of the amount sent to Collections was for Non-Residents. We only send Residents to Collections when they have been paid directly from their insurance company and have not turned over that money to the Town.</p> <p>Approximately \$125K to \$130K would have been billed to Resident patients that ended up not being paid.</p> <p>Attached is the Billing Policy approved by</p>

FY 2021 Budget Questions & Answers Finance Committee

1.

`Dept. Number, Name + Account	Questioner's Name/Question	Response
		Selectmen.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Galvin: How time consuming are the BLS Service calls? On average how many attendants do these calls require, and how much of the bad debt is due to this service?	Chief Targ: The time can vary from a quick doctor ordered transport to a psychological or alcohol abuse call that could be longer. We do not track Bad Debts based on the type of service (ALS vs. BLS). I would think the bad debt ratio of BLS to ALS service would approximate the BLS/ALS Calls ratio; i.e. 38%/62%. So, an estimated \$90K.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Galvin: You report Firefighters salaries under both the Fire Department and the Ambulance Fund. Do you report the full cost of both in each of these categories or do you divide the total cost?	Chief Targ: The salaries in fire and ambulance correspond to specific personnel in those budgets and includes their yearly base pay, Overtime. Holiday, longevity, and educational are broken out in separate lines. Ambulance Enterprise includes nine salaried position. When new personnel are hired, they are typically placed in the ambulance budget and the senior personnel are moved into the Fire Budget.
640 Ambulance Enterprise	Greene: Westford residents are not responsible for their co-pay, correct? If the resident has a high deductible health insurance plan, and the deductible has not been met, are they charged the ambulance fee? Or does the ambulance enterprise write it off as a loss? Is this policy for Westford residents stated somewhere I can read about it?	O'Donnell: Attached is the ambulance billing policy. A Westford resident only pays what their insurance covers. The remaining balance is written off as uncollectable.