



**Chief McKenna** stated that last year, the Fire Department increased their response by over 1200 runs, which is an increase of 7%. This year, they are on that same path. Last year, they replaced two engine company through bonding and one rescue truck. They also added another bay at the Edgewood Station and hoping to replace a ladder truck there in the near future. Chief McKenna also stated that they had a great program last year dealing with smoke detectors where over 800 detectors were purchased through federal grants to install them for free in homes that needed them. The Fire Prevention Division spoke to eight public housing units and over 1800 students last year regarding fire prevention. He also stated that they have a Grant that they have in place and installing new sprinkler system in Station 4 in Garden City. They are looking forward in getting more Grants in the future and purchasing new apparatus. Fire Alarm Division is upgrading the computer system.

**Director Strom** appeared to speak and presented Revenue and Expenditure reports for this department and stated that there are a few line items that are over budget. One being, the Overtime and Severance, which have been increased; Pension Contribution is being increased by 2%; Hospitalization was reduced by \$200,000; IOD/Blue Cross has been increased because it is considerably over budget this year. Overall, the budget has been increased by 4.33%. There will also be a salary increase in the budget, which is still being negotiated.

**Councilmember Hopkins** stated that one of his sticking point is the Pilot Program with our runs to the ACI and State buildings. He asked if there has been an increase in these runs. Chief McKenna stated that he does not have the exact number, but it has remained pretty steady, which includes the homeless shelter and Harrington Hall. Director Strom stated that the reduction from State Aid is \$600,000. Councilmember Hopkins asked if correspondence could be sent to our State Senators and Representatives indicating our concerns in this. Council President Farina asked that the City Clerk draft a Resolution asking the General Assembly to restore Pilot money.

**Councilmember McAuley** asked Chief McKenna if the department is understaffed. Chief McKenna stated that right now, they have twelve vacancies.

**Council President Farina** asked for current status of the opioid epidemic in the City. Assistant Chief Valletta stated that they are waiting for the numbers from the State, but what he can say is, they have a 95% safety in the City.

**Councilmember Stycos** questioned why there is approximately a 50% increase in Fire Alarm Expenses from last year. Chief McKenna stated that that is for a lot of the systems programs, which require a user fee or licensing fee. Director Strom stated that most of the bond was for the equipment. This is for the maintenance of the equipment.

**Councilmember Stycos** questioned why Fire Inspection Auto/Body Shops is -0-. Deputy Chief MacIntosh stated that the Auto Body Shops State License is a three year license. The department inspected them in 2018 and next time they have to be inspected will be in 2021.

**Chair** stated that Fire Alarm, at this time, is under budget. He questioned why it is increased for next year. Director Strom indicated that it is actually over budget.

**Councilmember Stycos** asked Director Strom how much he thinks the Fire Department will be over by at the end of the Fiscal Year. Director Strom stated that it is hard to say, \$300,000 - \$400,000. This is a conservative number.

**Councilmember Stycos** questioned the increase in Hazardous Materials and Uniforms and asked what is driving those increases. Chief McKenna stated that Hazardous Materials has been funded in the past by State Grants, which was reduced. As to Uniforms, this amount was budgeted in anticipation that the fifteen vacancies are filled.

**Councilmember Vargas** questioned the recruitment status. Chief McKenna stated that the written exam has been given and tomorrow is the agility test. After that, a list is established and hopefully, we will hire in the fall.

No one appeared speak from the public.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**Director Strom** appeared to speak and presented Revenue and Expenditure reports for this department and stated that overall, Salary line item and Overtime is on budget. Overall, total budget, they are at 78% and should be at 77%. There is a 2.95% increase in Salary line item; 2.2% Pension Contribution was increased (\$330,000) because of the State; Maintenance Contract increased by \$24,000; Replacement Vehicles – 2 detective vehicles added.

**Colonel Michael Winqvist and Major Todd Patalano** were present.

**Council President Farina** stated that the Council has received and is receiving a lot of complaints regarding the Police Range, not just with the Range, but with the high caliber rifle shooting and noise. Colonel Winqvist stated that the high caliber weapons are the ones that make the most noise. In the past, other Police Departments used the Range at a cost, but going forward, other Police Departments no longer will use the Range with rifles other than the Cranston Police Department. He also stated that he thinks that the residents will see a difference. They do their best to try to stay within the noise Ordinance. He also stated that they are looking at installing a special curtain to drum out the noise.

**Councilmember Paplauskas** asked if the City has outgrown the VIN Station. He thinks we have and he questioned whether we should be looking at a new location possibly close to the DMV, which he thinks would increase Revenues. Colonel Winqvist stated that they are exploring locations at this time. Council President Farina stated that he will follow up with his contacts at the State House to see if there is space at the Howard Complex that could be used for the VIN Station.

**Councilmember Hopkins** asked Colonel Winqvist if the Police Department has seen an increase in response at Harrington Hall. He also stated that he is hearing a lot of concerns of people leaving Harrington Hall and living at 501 Reservoir Ave. Colonel Winqvist stated that very very rarely do the Police Department respond to the State facility. The State Police respond there, but Harrington Hall is our responsibility. As to the issue of 501 Reservoir Ave., the Police Department is aware of it and as far as they know, the people living there are not in any violation.

Discussion too place on the number of arrests or incidents at Cranston High School West and Cranston High School East and question was asked of what the reasons are for these. Council President Farina asked that the City Council be provided with a breakdown of the offenses at Cranston High School West and Cranston High School East. Councilmember Hopkins stated that there are a large number of students that come into our schools from other districts that may add to these statistics.

**Councilmember Donegan** questioned what School Safety Initiative is in line item #5118. Colonel Winqvist stated that the Mayor added this line item with the Council's approval last year. This is for two Officers that rotate and visit each school daily to prevent and deter school situations. This has been really positive and we are continuing to expand on that program this year.

**Councilmember Hopkins** asked if there is any effort to create pathway system with the School System. Colonel Winqvist stated that they have made great stride in the Explorer Program and this program has been great.

**Councilmember Vargas** asked if Community Policing will be starting up soon and for how long. Colonel Winqvist stated that they will be starting this up soon and it will be on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and they are deployed at different parts of the City. Councilmember Vargas asked how often the Substation in Ward 1 is used. Colonel Winqvist stated that it is not staffed, but they encourage the Officers to stop in and be visible there.

**Councilmember McAuley** addressed the overnight parking in the City and stated that it is becoming increasingly difficult to single out one street and not another. He suggested that sometime in the near future, we can come up with a thought process of how we can rectify this. Colonel Winqvist stated that the Ordinance needs to be looked at because the way the Ordinance is worded it is a challenge for the Police Officers.

**Councilmember Stycos** asked how many night Officers there are. Colonel Winqvist stated eight. Councilmember Stycos asked Colonel Winqvist if he feels that this should be increased. Colonel Winqvist stated absolutely, even if it is a small increase. He also stated that it is impossible to increase the night patrol with the staff he has currently. Councilmember Stycos asked what it would cost to add an additional Police Officer at night. Director Strom stated approximately \$80,000.

**Detective Tom Okolowicz** addressed the Explorer Program and stated that 98% of the Explorers are from Cranston High School East. He also stated that no one is getting preferential treatment from a certain part of the City.

## **ANIMAL CONTROL**

**Director Strom** appeared to speak and presented Revenue and Expenditure reports for this department.

**Colonel Michael Winqvist and Major Todd Patalano** were present.

**Council President Farina** commended the great work done at the Animal Shelter and for the work Lou Morrocco has done on his own time.

**Major Patalano** indicated to the Animal Shelter portion of the budget and stated that a Supervisory position is added to the proposed budget at a cost of \$33,000.

No one appeared speak from the public.

### **HARBOR MASTER**

**Director Strom** appeared to speak and presented Revenue and Expenditure reports for this line item and stated that this line item is level-funded and is tracking well this year.

**Colonel Michael Winquist and Major Todd Patalano** were present.

No one appeared speak from the public.

### **MUNICIPAL COURT**

**Director Strom** appeared to speak and presented Revenue and Expenditure reports for this department.

**Chief Judge Matthew Smith** and **Elizabeth Bettis**, Municipal Court Administrator, appeared to speak.

**Director Strom** stated that this department is fully staffed now and he feels it is functioning the way that it should be right now. They are maintaining a strong collection rate and fines are not thrown out of Court, they are being pursued. The Revenues as well as the Expenditures have been increased for next year.

**Chief Judge Smith** stated that he now handles all the Housing Courts cases on Thursday morning at 9 a.m., not that the other Judges could not handle it, but it seemed like things would fall through the cracks because cases were not before the same Judge every single time. They make sure that now the Inspectors appear at Court. They basically have streamlined the process and there is follow-up. His goal is to resolve the case within sixty days. If the property owner does not appear, it would result in a default judgement, which results in a lien placed on the property. This process is working out well.

**Council President Farina** asked Chief Judge Smith if there is anything he needs from this body to do his job effectively. Chief Judge Smith stated that he would like the City Council to look at giving the Judges a little more lea way for such things as overnight parking, sliding scales for fines. He also stated that Municipal Court is using the web quite a bit.

**Ms. Bettis** stated that they also have the forms online in English as well as in Spanish. She is working with the IT Department to come up with a page for Municipal Court of all the information with questions and answers and most often asked questions.

**Councilmember Hopkins** and **Council President Farina** complimented Chief Judge Smith and his staff for the excellent job they did and continue doing.

**Chief Judge Smith** complimented the City Solicitors and stated that they are great, on time and professional.

No one appeared speak from the public.

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni  
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees