

Stamford Police Department FY 2021-22 Budget Presentation

This past year has been one of the most challenging in history for law enforcement across the country. First we have had to deal with the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. While others have worked from home, the members of the Stamford Police Department have continued to come to work each day to perform their duties and keep the citizens of Stamford safe. With 59 of our officers and staff having contracted the virus, we have had to adjust staffing, and move officers around, such as our SRO's and Harbor Unit to maintain patrol strength in order to respond to the needs of the City. Then, like cities across the Nation, we became the target of mass protests after the George Floyd tragedy. While dealing with the pandemic, we also had to maintain peace during numerous demonstrations throughout the City, including ten at our headquarters, and an encampment at Latham Park. Our officers responded admirably, bravely and professionally during these times.

Even with these extreme challenges, the Stamford Police Department continued to make strides and improvements, particularly in our community outreach efforts. We hosted several successful mask giveaways in the early months of the pandemic when supplies were hard to come by for citizens. The Chief initiated a "Workout with the Chief" program throughout the summer at Leone Park in which Youth Community groups and members of the Department came together weekly to exercise, get to know each other and discuss the issues going on across the nation. Although this was a physical exercise program to give kids an outlet from being kept inside during the pandemic, an emphasis was placed on encouraging academic achievement especially with the school system struggling with in-person, remote and hybrid learning. We are currently running a "Clergy Academy" on Tuesday nights at Police HQ in which clergy of all denominations throughout Stamford were invited in to participate in a mini police academy. This effort has given the Clergy a better understanding of the training and challenges an officer faces when patrolling the streets, and has given better insight to the department on the concerns of our citizens.

In addition to these outreach programs, the Department has restructured and initiated programs and training to better serve some of our most vulnerable citizens. We have reassigned a police captain to directly oversee the Family Services Division and to focus on helping people with emotional or mental challenges. With the assistance of 911 Communications, Stamford EMS, Stamford Hospital and others, we have restructured our response to medical and emotionally disturbed person incidents. We are currently in the process of setting up a program in which an outside professional social worker will be physically assigned at Police HQ to respond to and follow up with calls involving emotional, mental and addiction issues. The Department also reallocated officers in conjunction with community stakeholders to address the nationwide opioid epidemic. The department has also begun increasing the number of "Crisis Intervention Trained (CIT)" officers. During the upcoming year we have nearly 100 officers scheduled to attend this training which would cover most of the Departments patrol force.

These are but a few examples of how the Police Department has continued to improve even during an unprecedented year. Moving forward, especially as it relates to our upcoming budget, the biggest challenges will be in incorporating the many mandates that are being imposed on law enforcement through the State's Police Accountability law. As always the Police Department attempts to be fiscally responsible in managing the department and the budgets we request. For the upcoming FY21-22 budget, the Department is requesting an overall increase of \$1,707,396 over the current \$52,965,565 budget. Of this increase, \$622,399 is a direct result of State mandates required under the new law. The budget line increases due to these mandates are as follows:

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01433014403 – **Dashboard Cameras** - \$150,000. This is a new account. The State is requiring all patrol cars to be fitted with Dash Cams before July 2022. This will require that approximately 75 black and white patrol cars be outfitted with the new technology.

01433014402 – **Body Worn Cameras** - \$220,000. This is a \$55,000 increase over the current year. The State is requiring that all sworn personnel be assigned a BWC before July 2022. Additional 75 cameras required to cover all officers.

01433001100 – **BWC Tech position** - \$37,144. A request was put in for an additional BWC Tech position starting in Jan. 2022. With the addition of another 150 cameras, increasing court reliance on video evidence and ever increasing FOI request, a second BWC Tech is required to maintain these programs.

01433003301 – **Psychological Testing** - \$33,000. The State is mandating that every sworn member pass a psychological examination every five years. This request would cover two-fifths of the department to cover FY21 and FY22 at which point the PD would be on a regular one fifth of the department each year schedule moving forward.

01433004404 – **Drug Testing** - \$35,000. The State is mandating that each sworn member pass a drug and steroid test every three years concurrent with their recertification. The current FY21 recertification group was given an extension to June 30th, 2022 to complete. This request would cover both the current FY21 and FY22 groups and moving forward only one group would be required to be tested at a time.

01433033201 – **Education & Training** - \$150,000. This is a \$32,500 increase over the last two years being requested to cover the cost of outside instructors / tuition for State mandated additional training in explicit bias, de-escalation, CIT, and officer wellness.

01433031301 – **OT Mandated Training** - \$1,000,000. This is a \$279,755 increase requested to cover the additional OT cost of training the entire department in each of the required areas listed under Education and Training above. These new requirements are in addition to the State mandated training requirements that already existed.

Outside of the above State mandated requests, most of the remaining increase requests to our budget are spread over several budget lines requiring minor increases to adjust for rising costs such as gasoline, software maintenance, or adjustments to contractual items such as shift differential, holiday pay based on prior year expenditures. The only other increase request of note is as follows:

01433011301 – **Patrol OT** - \$3,030,760. The additional \$317,911 requested is based on prior year expenditures with staffing levels in the lower 260's. Due to academy class postponements and cancelations during COVID, the department has struggled to maintain staffing levels as officers retire. We will still have actual staffing levels (officers not in academy training) in the 260's throughout FY 21-22. We are budgeted for a total of 287 sworn positions, but recruit officers at the police academy do not have an impact on minimum staffing and overtime.

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In addition to the above increase requests the department also decreased some budget line requests based on prior year expenditures as follows:

01433041301 – Investigations OT – **reduced \$44,108** from the current year budget.

01433006204 – Electric Utility – **Reduced \$35,000** from the current year budget. New efficiencies and careful program adjustments at the new HQ building have reduced costs.

01433006205 – Natural Gas Utility – **Reduced \$15,000** from the current year budget. New efficiencies and careful program adjustments at the new HQ building have reduced costs.