

**CITY OF GARDNER, MASSACHUSETTS  
CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MAY 28, 2019**

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Committee Chairman Councillor James Johnson called the Public Safety Committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Mayor's Conference Room, City Hall. Committee members Councillors Karen Hardern and Edward Gravel were present.

Other Officials present and/or participating were Fire Chief Richard Ares; Chief of Police Richard Braks; Building Commissioner Roland Jean; Assistant Director of Public Health Lauren Saunders; and, City Clerk Alan Agnelli.

**Minutes of Prior Meeting(s).**

On a motion by Councillor Hardern and seconded by Councillor Gravel, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the May 2, 2019 Public Safety Committee Meeting, as printed.

**Building Department/City Hall Maintenance Budgets – Commissioner Roland Jean**

- Professional Development & Travel - \$4,000 allowed by the Mayor. Includes funding for Commissioner and Local Inspector to attend the annual Inspectors Training in Taunton.
- City Hall Maintenance Overtime – Increase necessary to manage winter weather conditions around facilities.
- City Hall Repairs & Maintenance – Increased from \$10,000 to \$25,000 for maintenance and repairs to the City Hall and Annex. FY2019 account “in the red.”

**Fire Department Budget – Fire Chief Richard Ares**

- FD Overtime – 4 Firefighter vacancies at the present time and one more after July 1.
- Termination Leave – Budgeted under Mayor's Unclassified.
- Energy & Utilities – Gas heating for three buildings – Central Station, the adjacent former Cumberland Farms, and South Gardner station (storage). Energy savings not realized with conversion to gas (Honeywell conservation). Energy costs are rising.
- South Gardner Station (storage) energy inefficient. New insulated overhead doors would help with heat retention. Must maintain the building since it is the only storage building available for additional Fire equipment.
- Councillor Johnson cited decaying concrete wall alongside the building and adjacent to Prospect Street sidewalk & brick retaining wall behind the building and Laundromat. Chief Ares suggested that maintenance of the concrete wall may be within the purview of the DPW.
- New Fire Vehicles – The Mayor “zeroed” the line item, choosing to fund the City's share for Engine 3 replacement from Free Cash. Car 2, the Shift Commander's vehicle, may be replaced in late 2019 from Free Cash.

**Ambulance Department Budget - Fire Chief Richard Ares**

- Appears that FY2019 projected receipts and expenditures will “break even.” FY2019 YTD gross receipts are greater than budget projections.
- Professional Services - \$300k includes payments to billing company (%age of City's collections) and Wood's Ambulance for ALS intercepts.
- If \$1,000 billed for transport, \$500 retained by the City and \$500 paid to Wood's ALS – basically “a pass-through.”
- 1,867 transports since July 1, 2018 (count as of last week).

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- Inquiry concerning expanding City's BLS response – no plans to add a second BLS Ambulance at this time.
- Department not interested in van-style Ambulances – Ford engine problems and limited interior room for treating patients.
- Information Technology – IMC/2 software licenses (computers in each Ambulance).
- Professional Development & Travel – Increase for training for two EMS Coordinators – National EMS Conference. Also provides for EMS Certification renewals for 8 EMTs.

**Health Department Budget – Asst. Public Health Director Lauren Saunders**

- Department Head Salary & Wages – 55% paid from BOH and 35% paid from Solid Waste Enterprise. Position is classified as a G-10 – salary budgeted for mid-range of scale.
- Professional Services – Covers water testing at Greenwood Pool (\$75/week all summer); Kendall Pond; Constable fees.
- Municipal Dumpster Collection – For all municipal and school buildings. Included in the Waste Disposal Contract.

**Solid Waste Expenses – Asst. Public Health Director Lauren Saunders**

- Transfer Station Supervisor Salary – Position was reclassified in the Budget under Assistant Staff Salary & Wages.
- Repairs & Maintenance – Repairs to equipment, facilities, CAT loader.

**Police Department Budget – Chief Richard Braks**

- Professional Services – Provides for various systems no longer under warranty – 4<sup>th</sup> year of new facility. Includes door security (fobs), Cruiser data consoles/communication systems.
- Information Technology – Hardware, copiers, etc.
- Repairs & Maintenance – Maintenance to building; Mayor's cut may result in postponing certain repairs until the next fiscal year (e.g. electronic doors, wiring).
- Minor Equipment – Request included shelving units for storage – cut by Mayor.
- New Vehicles – Replace two marked cruisers (2014 and 2015, over 100,000 miles each) and one unmarked cruiser. All purchased from State Contract – prices up 1% this year.

**Dispatch Budget**

- Professional Development & Travel – Increase to train more dispatchers and Dispatch Supervisors. Total of 3 on duty at all times.

**Animal Shelter**

- Police Department does all hiring and training of employees.
- Shelter takes in animals from the other communities within the Intermunicipal Agreement – Ashburnham, Hubbardston, and Westminster.

**Adjournment.**

On a motion Councillor Gravel and seconded by Councillor Hardern, it was voted to adjourn at 7:18 p.m.