

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR BOARD OF SELECTMEN

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS - WORKSHOP

Wednesday, February 28, 2018
7:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room
11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT. 06016

Meeting Minutes

*** *These Minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting****

Board of Selectmen:

Robert Maynard, First Selectman
Steve Dearborn., Deputy First Selectman
Jason Bowsza, Selectman
Andy Hoffman, Selectman
Charles J. Szymanski, Selectman

ATTENDANCE: Board of Selectmen: Robert Maynard, First Selectman; Steve Dearborn, Deputy First Selectman; Selectmen: Jason Bowsza, Andy Hoffman; Charles J. Szymanski.

ABSENT: All Selectmen were present.

PRESENTERS: Town Staff: . East Windsor Police Department: Chief Edward DeMarco, Deputy Chief Roger Hart; Police Commission: Bob Leach, Chairman; **Treasurer:** Gayle Carolus, Interim Treasurer;

GUESTS: Public: John Matthews, and Keith Yagaloff.

Press: No one from the Press was present.

TIME AND PLACE OF BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING:

First Seletman Maynard called the Meeting to Order at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT.

ATTENDANCE: See above..

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**PRESENTATIONS/a. Police Commission – 810700; Police Department – 510200;
Emergency Management – 510300; Communications – 510400:**

Police Department – 510200:

Chief Edward DeMarco, Deputy Chief Roger Hart , and Bob Leach, Chairman of the Police Commission, joined the Board.

The total Budget request for the Police Department for FY 2018 – 2019 was \$3,364,107, which results in a .99 % increase.

Selectman Hoffman questioned if the replacement vehicles were included in the budget before the Board this evening? Chief DeMarco noted there are no requests for vehicles under this budget; that purchase is a CIP request. Deputy Chief Hart summarized the current vehicle fleet, which includes a vehicle for the animal control officer (ACO), and summarized the use of the various vehicles, noting that several of the vehicles are continuously in service for all three shifts. Chief DeMarco and Deputy Chief Hart reported that age, mileage, service/maintenance, and condition are all considerations for replacement of a vehicle. They noted they try to be as frugal as possible without impacting the safety and operational readiness of the vehicles. Chief DeMarco and Deputy Chief Hart noted new vehicles are purchased under a State bid process; replaced vehicles can be circulated to other Town Departments for use in the field. Chief DeMarco suggested the Department of Public Works does not have the capacity, or the manpower, to service the Police vehicles.

While reviewing the various salary lines Chief DeMarco and Deputy Chief Hart reported Department is staffed by sworn officers, including themselves, of various service levels, detectives, full time dispatchers, clerical staff, and part-time animal control officers. Noting that the chief and deputy chief salaries are included in the full time salary line, Selectman Hoffman queried how East Windsor salaries compare to surrounding towns? Chief DeMarco noted they do a comparison of like towns and 29 towns within Hartford County; East Windsor is one or two below the minimum salary. Windsor Locks, South Windsor, Vernon, and Enfield are all higher, while Suffield is lower. From a management standpoint the number of officers which comprise staff is reflective of a town's workload; larger agencies have more command staff. Chief DeMarco noted he and Deputy Chief Hart write the majority of the grants.

When reviewing overtime salaries Chief DeMarco noted that figure is 50% lower than when he and Deputy Chief Hart took over the Department. Deputy Chief Hart reported that over the past five years the figure has varied between 11% and 13% of the overall budget; contractual obligations require that some hours are required to go into the overtime budget. He reiterated Chief DeMarco's remark that they have reduced the overtime salaries over the 11 years; they constantly watch taxpayers dollars. Chief DeMarco cited there is a cost of doing this business and providing public safety with the unforeseen circumstances. Selectman Szymanski questioned if a pool of retired trained officers could be utilized to augment the overtime hours? Chief DeMarco suggested the pool of retired officers isn't there. After a separation of three

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years an officer loses their certification; if the certification isn't maintained then the quality of policing goes down. He cited the difficulty of attracting full time officers in the current society, not just in East Windsor but nationally. Chief DeMarco cited they have strict hiring practices which maintains the quality of service. He reported that the department hasn't been sued in six years, or successfully sued in ten years because they are hiring properly, training personnel, paying attention to risk reduction and policy development. Chief DeMarco felt they're doing it right; he doesn't want to reduce the quality of personnel they have. Deputy Chief Hart also noted this option isn't currently possible as the current collective bargaining agreement doesn't allow it; it would have to be negotiated at a future contract negotiation. Selectman Szymanski questioned the year-to-date expenditures and projections for the overtime line? Deputy Chief Hart reported they have 9.8% left in that line but they have overages in other lines so they will be asking for transfers to cover expenditures. Chief DeMarco noted that in the last three years they department has given back money from their budget. He suggested the budget is their public safety plan; if they can do it for less they will turn back money at the end of the year. Chief DeMarco felt they provide a good, high quality product for the community they serve.

Continuing on with the budget review Professional Services includes a \$2,400 annual charge for Accurint, an investigative database. Selectman Szymanski questioned if they had considered pooling costs with another surrounding town, such as Windsor Locks? Deputy Chief Hart reported the charge is a flat rate for one unit; all department staff uses the one unit. The \$2,911 expenditure which includes copier services is the Police Department's share of the Town's lease. Under Supplies and Equipment the printing costs of \$1,800 is also high as photos/materials provided for the court must be in color. With regard to the \$45,041 request for Education & Dues, Chief DeMarco noted that four collective bargaining units require provisions for college tuition for personnel. Chief DeMarco also noted membership fees provide networking capabilities for staff, and provide the ability to keep up with changing regulations/requirements. He noted that many of these charges are the result of the collective bargaining agreements.

Emergency Management – 510300:

The total Budget request for Emergency Management for FY 2018 – 2019 was \$17,872, which results in a 2.02 % increase.

Chief DeMarco indicated that the Stipend of \$9,520 is compensation for himself, Deputy Chief Hart, and a secretary to run the Emergency Plan for East Windsor. Development of the plan requires hours of paperwork, training and certification, which includes 14 courses, and grant writing. Chief DeMarco compared this stipend to salaries in the \$25,000 to \$30,000 range in Tolland and Simsbury.

Chief DeMarco reported East Windsor has very good Fire Departments. When they go into the room they work really well as a team.

Communications – 510400:

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The total Budget request for Communications for FY 2018 – 2019 was \$53,254, which results in a *minus* 0.19 % decrease.

Radio System is \$26,698 of the Communications Budget. Deputy Chief Hart reported the Town has a communications tower on the water tank on Prospect Hill Road, and the tower here at Town Hall. Marcus is the current service provider for the major infrastructure of the system at a cost of \$16,000; the remaining \$10,000 is reserve funding for replacement of equipment not under the Marcus contract, such as portable and mobile radios for the Police Department, Department of Public Works, the Fire Departments, and Park and Recreation.

Dispatch – Tolland is \$26,566 of the total Communications Budget. Interim Treasurer Carolus noted that the entire cost of Tolland Dispatch for the Town is \$41,500; the Broad Brook Fire Department and the East Windsor Ambulance Association is paid from this budget line while the Warehouse Point Fire District pays for their services separately. Chief DeMarco noted that Tolland Dispatch covers medical dispatches for the Town.

Chief DeMarco and Deputy Chief Hart then discussed their goals and priorities.

Selectman Szymanski introduced a discussion of the local crime rate comparative to other communities. Selectman Szymanski noted the department does a good job; in addition, there's no place in this town where he would think of his safety being an issue walking down a street. Selectman Szymanski cited his confusion with information he found which reported the crime rate for East Windsor is the 4th highest in the State, ahead of Bridgeport. Selectman Szymanski cited various surrounding towns – Ellington, Suffield, Enfield, South Windsor – with larger populations which have a lower crime rate. Selectman Szymanski questioned what he was missing because it doesn't connect for him.

Chief DeMarco concurred; we are a safe community. The officers work hard to prevent and deter crime; they have seen reductions. Discussion followed regarding the dynamics affecting East Windsor's rate. Chief DeMarco cited East Windsor's proximity to I-91, the many automotive facilities which provide attractive opportunities for theft, East Windsor's location between two large cities, proximity to an airport, being located along a river - much of the crime is coming from people outside the community coming into town taking advantage of attractive opportunities. Chief DeMarco also noted East Windsor's socio-economic situation is different than Ellington or Suffield; our service needs are different. Our low population of 11,400 on those property crime statistics is what elevates that number. We have extremely low violent crime. Chief DeMarco suggested it's not reflective when you try to compare communities like that.

First Selectman Maynard noted that it also depends on the year being reviewed. He referenced that in 2014 the crime rate was much higher but was reduced by nearly 50% in 2016, which is the latest data available. First Selectman Maynard also noted that larcenies are the driving factor for the crime rate.

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Selectman Bowsza referenced an online data source – NeighborhoodScout.com – which states crime statistics for the Town of East Windsor: your chances of becoming a victim of violent crime in East Windsor is 1 in 710 vs. in the State of Connecticut it's 1 in 440. Selectman Bowsza concluded we're roughly twice as safe as the State average.

Discussion continued regarding sources of data. The Board thanked Chief DeMarco and Deputy Chief Hart for their presentation.

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Bowsza moved/it appeared that no one seconded the motion.

Discussion followed regarding the remaining agenda items, including review of the Police Commission Budget. It was noted that Bob Leach, Chairman of the Police Commission, had left the room.

Deputy First Selectman Dearborn requested to speak; a member of the public noted public participation was shown on the agenda; would the Board be taking any public comments?

First Selectman Maynard opened discussion. Deputy First Selectman Dearborn cited the Police Department Budget has come in low. First Selectman Maynard noted the Police Department Budget currently does not reflect the increases in salaries as negotiations are continuing on the next three year contract. Deputy First Selectman Dearborn cited vehicles used to be reflected in the Police Department Budget; they deserve good vehicles; he questioned where funding for the new vehicles would appear? First Selectman Maynard reported vehicle replacement is being requested under the CIP Budget. Discussion continued regarding the allocation of 2% after failure of the budget; it was reiterated that the 1% increase presently requested for the Police Department Budget does not reflect the salary increases

Mr. Leach reappeared; First Selectman Maynard asked if he would like to discuss the Police Commission Budget? Mr. Leach reported the following:

Police Commission – 810700:

The total Budget request for the Police Commission for FY 2018 – 2019 was \$1,600, which results in a 6.67 % increase.

Mr. Leach noted their budget reflects the pay for recording secretarial services, and a small amount for supplies. He suggested he would like to increase the recording secretarial budget at some time as this budget request covers only the regular meeting schedule; should they need to call a Special Meeting they would be over budget.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

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Keith Yagaloff: Mr. Yagaloff noted he heard discussion that medical calls went to Tolland (Dispatch), he suggested it might be good to have someone from the Ambulance or the Fire Departments come in and give a presentation. Being new to town it doesn't make him comfortable knowing someone from Tolland is dealing with medical calls in East Windsor. Selectman Szymanski noted Tolland has been serving the town for a long time; this is not a new proposal. Mr. Yagaloff suggested that was something someone new would like to hear; it might make the public more comfortable knowing how that works with the Ambulance and the Fire departments.

Mr. Yagaloff indicated he also heard that Walmart has its own security and is managing its own issues, and he presumed that Southern Auto had their own security. What he heard tonight was a large organization that has a reasonable amount of larcenies and the Police Department said they re managing their own. He realizes they have to make arrests but..... Mr. Yagaloff reported he hears people talking about the casino and the need for resources at the casino, and if the casino is going to operate like Walmart and have their own security it would be interesting to know the impact the casino will actually have on the community in terms of crime.

Regarding the discussion on crime statistics in East Windsor, it wasn't all that satisfying. Mr. Yagaloff doesn't feel comfortable hearing that his risk of assault is 1 in 700; it doesn't make him comfortable that we are less than the State average. He heard tonight we were 1 in 700 for violent crime; Selectman Bowsza interjected vs. 1 in 400; Mr. Yagaloff suggested it doesn't make him feel good at all if he is 1 in 700 and the State is 1 in 400. He knows the statistics say we have a high crime rate; we should be normalizing it by population which means you have to look at a rate. A murder in East Windsor is awful, but 500 larcenies in East Windsor is also an awful thing in terms of affecting the quality of life. Mr. Yagaloff suggested it wasn't satisfying that there wasn't a really good handle on where the crime was coming from. There were theories that it comes from Route 5 and other places. They usually have a very clear indication how much crime is coming from Route 5 or I-91, how much crime is from Southern Auto, how much is local crime coming out of people's homes, what is happening in our community so we can feel comfortable knowing that our Police Department is efficiently dealing with our crime rate, and he heard the Board of Selectmen asking questions but he didn't hear the Police Department giving any clear answers about how they are addressing crime in East Windsor. He heard comments it's coming from people out of town but he also heard comments about people in town; somehow our socio-economic demographic make up in our community is different than Somers, or other towns. Mr. Yagaloff rejected that; his experience is that people in these communities are similar; maybe some people have less money or maybe some people are less economically well off but that doesn't mean that those people are committing violent crimes. He suggested South Windsor has the same drug issues, the same larcenies, the same break-ins, the same issues and why is their crime rate so much less than East Windsor? Mr. Yagaloff would like the Board to have the Police Department come back after budget season with details about what crime is happening in East Windsor. He didn't feel comfortable tonight hearing that this is the way it is; we're paying a lot of money for that Police Department; they should be applying all their efforts to consistently reduce the crime rate. They should know where the crimes are occurring and maybe even target it so that all of us are going to be safe. They should have

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specific goals as to how they will target crime so we get the most for our money and people feel safe in the community.

Deputy First Selectman Dearborn questioned that domestic crimes would be included in those statistics; he noted he's around town all the time and he's never seen anyone assaulted on the streets. He felt that much of the assaults must be happening in the homes, between husbands and wives or children. Selectman Hoffman felt they could have provided more details on the crime rates. Deputy First Selectman Dearborn didn't believe we're the top 4th in the State for our crime rate. First Selectman Maynard felt that ranking has changed; he referenced the statistics he had researched and noted that in 2014 East Windsor had 427 crimes (319 larcenies) while in 2016 the number of crimes had reduced to 215 (169 larcenies) First Selectman Maynard suggested that was a 50% reduction/difference which would make significant difference in the State ranking.

Mr. Yagaloff requested to clarify that he wasn't saying that East Windsor was a dangerous community; it's the opposite. East Windsor is a beautiful community; he loves living here. He feels as Selectman Syzmanski, that he can walk anywhere in East Windsor and feel safe. What he was trying to point out was that the Police Department has an obligation to target where the issues are and tell us where the issues are and tell us how they're dealing with the issues so they can make sure they can reduce the crime rate as much as possible. We statistically shouldn't be less than any other town, like Ellington or Somers or Suffield of South Windsor. He suggested we're paying a lot for the Police Department and they should know where the data is and know what's going on. All he was saying is that he wasn't satisfied with the level of discussion.

First Selectman Maynard suggested attending the meetings of the Police Commission might be the place to discuss that information. Selectman Hoffman suggested that if the crime rate is coming down there is some methodology that pinpoints the areas that were high; he felt they have that information but they didn't have it available tonight.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Szymanski moved/Maynard seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted

Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Board of Selectmen