

Memo

TO: City Council
FROM: Mayor John Stromberg
DATE: March 28, 2017
RE: Immediate Need For Increased Police Dept. Staffing

In a recent meeting with City staff concerning maintaining public order during our summer visitor season it became very clear to me that our current staffing is inadequate to the role we need our Police Department to play. Chief O'Meara's attached Council Communication gives the relevant background information and includes a request for Council to approve adding 5 new patrol officers and to provide a dedicated funding stream.

Our current levels are so low that we can only respond to one 'confrontational' incident at a time and have to request support from Talent or Phoenix Police Departments and/or the Sheriff's Department if another occurs simultaneously. Given some of the situations I have observed on the streets this spring, or that have been reported to some or all of us, we can easily have an influx of aggressive and confrontational individuals and groups with whom our Police would be unable to cope because our current staffing levels are too low.

To be clear: I am not referring to behavior of our local homeless population, with whom we have been building a better and more cooperative relationship through partnerships with community organizations and the hard work of a number of dedicated citizens in providing help to people who need and appreciate it. I am referring to the unpredictable but increasing flow of people 'on the road' who stop off in Ashland, some of whom are abusive of our citizens, visitors and businesses, and also disrespectful of our police and laws. This is a fact of life in many cities along the West Coast and a phenomenon that will probably only increase.

As I mentioned at our last study session, I put this item on tonight's agenda to enable you, if you deem appropriate, to authorize both the hiring and funding of this immediate and pressing need. I realize that we will be prioritizing budget add-ins on April 19 and 20 but am intentionally advancing this particular item because of its pressing need and importance - and also because of the time it takes to translate Council approval to officers on the streets. Chief O'Meara will fill in the details and answer your questions.



Council Business Meeting

April 4, 2017

Title: Police Staffing Presentation
From: Tighe O'Meara Police Chief
tighe.omeara@ashland.or.us

Summary:

The Ashland Police Department is bringing forward a staffing needs report for the Council's consideration.

Actions, Options, or Potential Motions:

The Council has several options. They can authorize increased staffing for the Police Department, direct staff to provide more information, or take no action at this time.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Council authorize the Police Department to hire five additional police officers as soon as possible after July 1, 2017, and that the Council authorizes funding in the upcoming budget process commensurate with the increase in staffing.

Resource Requirements:

The cost of the increased staffing is impossible to predict exactly, but would likely be approximately \$528,492 per year.

Policies, Plans and Goals Supported:

- 24.2 Decrease tracked quality of life calls in the downtown area
- 24.3 Continue clearance rate of at least 30 % for all crimes in the city-wide
- 24.4 Maintain and reduce crime rates city-wide
- 24.6 Monitor and evaluate SRO program to ensure it is meeting the needs of the school district and the city
- 24.7 Review, report on, and seek continuous improvement where possible on response to times to calls for service

Background and Additional Information:

The staffing of the Ashland Police Department has remained fairly consistent over the last 20 years at approximately 28 officers. This, despite the fact that the city population, the tourist population and the university population have all increased significantly. The recent citizen survey indicated that police staffing levels are a significant concern for the community, and negative behavior downtown and near exit 14 continue to be a problem for the community. It is clear that police staffing levels are increasingly inadequate. The Police Department is asking for permission and resources to hire more officers so one more officer can be assigned to each of the four patrol teams, as well as reinstate the school resource officer program.

Attachments:

Mayor's Memo

Staffing report

Officer Cost Spreadsheet

City of Ashland Police Staffing Report

Staffing Report for City of Ashland Police Department

Submitted by Tighe O'Meara, Chief of Police

Executive Summary

As the City of Ashland enters a new biennial budget process, and as we continue to find creative way to address public safety concerns, the police department has been analyzing its staffing levels. Given that the population has risen over the years, along with the tourist population and the student population, and that police staffing has remained essentially the same, it seems clear that police staffing needs to be scrutinized. This report will examine police staffing levels, tourism, population, crime trends and policing strategies, as well possible funding options should the council decide to move toward increased police staffing.

Current Staffing Overview

The Ashland Police Department is made up of 28 sworn officers, as well as several non-sworn staff members.

A sworn officer is a police officer with full powers to stop a person, investigate a crime and make an arrest when appropriate. These team members are required to attend the police academy as well as extensive in-house training. Non-sworn team members perform a variety of tasks that support the sworn officers and overall mission of the department. These positions include a community service officer, an evidence tech and various clerk positons.

The 28 sworn officers are assigned as follows:

- 1-Chief
- 1-Deputy Chief
- 1-Patrol Lieutenant
- 1-Detective Sergeant
- 4-Detectives
 - 3-General crimes detectives
 - 1-Detective assigned to the You Have Options Program (YHOP)
- 1-Traffic Officer, responsible for all of the city's special events, traffic enforcement, and major crash investigation
- 2-Central Area Patrol (CAP) officers, working opposite days, to allow for seven day a week uniformed presence downtown
- 4-Patrol Sergeants, each supervising a patrol team made up of:

Three patrol officers, giving a minimum staffing of one supervisor on duty at any given time, as well as two officers. This is the day-to-day uniform presence, available for emergency response at any given time. Given vacations, sickness and training we often, if not usually, end up with a supervisor plus two officers as opposed to the full team, which is the supervisor and three officers.

City of Ashland Police Staffing Report

- 13 patrol officer positions in the department. Three on each of the four teams, plus one extra to help cover the busier times at night.

During the week days there are a few more resources available but this is not reliable given the admin officers' (chief, deputy chief etc.) responsibilities.

*Any critical or confrontational incident requires at least two officers to cover it safely, if not more. A basic rule of law enforcement is that we need to have any potential suspect out matched by at least a 2:1 ratio, so any confrontational investigation or even moderate incident (as opposed to major incident) will require at least two thirds of the department's on duty uniformed officers. **This means APD officers can respond safely to exactly one incident at a time given our minimum, and often in-place, staffing levels.***

If multiple incidents happen at the same time, and even if the on duty team can manage to effectively handle both incidents, it often results in the sergeant being left in the city alone, as the solitary police presence able to respond to incidents.

It should also be noted that often the decision must be made to cite someone who would otherwise go to jail, in lieu of arrest, due to staffing levels being insufficient.

On February 4th of this year there was incident on Van Ness Ave that had to be entirely handled by outside agencies as the APD officers were otherwise engaged. An APD officer was not able to respond and assume control of the incident for 40 minutes.

Additionally, in the four weeks leading up the initial presentation of this report, officers or sergeants were left in the city as the sole police presence on at least nine occasions. That's one uniformed officer/sergeant in the city to answer calls for service. This puts our officers/sergeants in a gravely dangerous situation, as well as endangering our residents.

If a sole police resource is left in town and is called to handle an emergency situation one of two things will happen. If the officer/sergeant attempts to handle the situation alone, the officer/sergeant is significantly increasing his/her exposure to danger. This will necessitate the officer potentially having to rely on a greater use of force than a two or three-officer response would require.

If the officer/sergeant were to decide that the situation is too dangerous to handle alone, then the resident requesting assistance is left without police assistance until more officers can be summoned from neighboring agencies. One of these choices increases the risk to our officers and other the risk to our residents. This is clearly not the level of service that we want to provide to our community members, or the support that we want to give to our officers.

The situation described above, as well as large fights and disturbances, often bring outside agencies into Ashland to assist the APD. It is common for Talent and Phoenix PD to both respond to assist. However, they have their own areas of responsibility, and while APD maintains an excellent partnership with TPD, PPD and other agencies, APD can't assume that they are available to help handle Ashland's police business. It also needs to be noted that while we operate with a strong mutual aid agreement, it is by nature a quid pro quo, and we are often asked to respond to their jurisdictions to assist.

The Jackson County Sheriff's Office typically has two deputies on patrol in the south county area. Just as Talent and Phoenix have their own responsibilities, the deputies do as well, covering approximately 1,400 square miles (the south half of the county). There can't be any assumption that they can assist us.

City of Ashland Police Staffing Report

Ashland's Population Numbers Have All Increased in the Last 20 Years

- Population: Up 22%
- Tourist population: Up 33%
- SOU Population: Up 15%

APD's Key Numbers Have All Been Trending Up Over the Last Five Years

- Response times to priority 1 calls are up to 281 seconds, above our goal of 264
- Number of cases is up 13% since 2012
- Number of cases handled by detectives is up 22% since 2012

Historical Staffing Levels

Since 1997 APD staffing levels for sworn police have remained essentially the same, fluctuating between a low of 26 in 1998 to a high of 31 in 2002. Even at the high point of 31 in 2002 the department was understaffed per Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) averages, which indicate that the full time sworn strength should have been 38 officers (see below for further on this).

New Policing Strategies Affect Our Staffing

APD has always wanted, and expected, its officers to act professionally and compassionately with all members of the public. The department has always strived for engagement and education before enforcement. While these approaches have long been a part of community policing, they are very specifically integral parts of procedural justice. Procedural justice is a philosophy that is being embraced and encouraged nationally as a better way to engage the community. The fundamentals of procedural justice are that everyone needs to be given respect, needs to be treated with dignity, needs to be given voice, and needs neutrality in decision making.

Studies have shown that if the officers are given time to engage each person in a more meaningful way, allowing all to feel heard and respected, the officer is less likely to encounter resistance when arresting a suspect. This translates to less use of force, fewer injuries to suspects and officers alike, and an increase in the credibility and legitimacy of the police department in the eyes of all community members.

This necessitates officers spending more time on each call, which, combined with an increased population and case volume further demonstrates the need for more officers.

Additional Cadets

For the last several years the department has employed cadets to perform low level enforcement duties downtown. This has been a very successful program and has recently been expanded. One of the peripheral results of this is that the officers see an increased workload due to increased cadet-initiated contacts. For example, more cadets stopping more people results in more warrants being discovered

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which results in more demands on the officers' time. This is, of course, what we want our police resources to accomplish. The apprehension of fugitives is a core function of any police department. It is also an additional strain on our resources and re-affirms the need for additional officers.

Regional/City Partnerships

Due to the acute staffing crisis of 2015, along with increased demand in the city in general, and specifically downtown, the department has had to temporarily step back from city and regional partnerships. Specifically, the department no longer participates in Medford Area Drug and Gang Enforcement (MADGE), the Southern Oregon High Tech Crimes Task Force and the school resource officer program. The problem solving unit (PSU) is preparing to deploy in April of 2017. This unit will help the department address problem areas as they develop, and we are hopeful that it will be effective in dealing with some of the downtown and south end problems. However, we are still left lacking in our proactive partnerships that help the department stay ahead of issues instead of being reactive to them. Our most immediate need in partnerships is the re-establishment of the school resource officer. This can be an invaluable tool and partnership, allowing the department to stay connected to the teen community at a critical time in their lives.

Additional Officers Needed—Current Staffing is Below National Averages

Currently Ashland has 1.3 officers for every 1,000 residents, (not including tourists and SOU students). This is significantly lower than the averages presented by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS). The BJS statistics have the lowest average officer:resident ratio as 1.8:1,000 residents (for towns between 25,000 and 100,000). Following this lowest average formula APD would employ 38 officers. The average ratio as presented by the BJS for towns between 10,000 and 24,999 residents is 2:1,000, which would have us employing 42 officers. Again, this is not taking into account that Ashland is so much more than a town of 21,000 residents. When the tourist and the student population are also factored in it makes the need for more officers even more pronounced, based purely on the numbers.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) does not recommend relying solely on factors such as population, but rather on more qualitative factors. The IACP suggests that communities decide what the department's and community's priorities are and what the department wants to accomplish.

If the quantitative analysis presented by the BJS serves as a foundation it is clear that the department should have several more officers than it currently does, based purely on the city population. Add on top of that the IACP recommendation (the qualitative approach) that the community provide police staffing consistent with how the community wants its police officers to engage the community members (e.g. implementing procedural justice practices) the need for additional officers is even more clear.

If the department were to hire five additional officers, which is the immediate goal, we would increase our ratio to 1.6:1,000 residents, much closer to the national average of 1.8:1,000. This would result in one additional officer being on duty at any given time, and the re-establishment of the school resource officer program. The department's staffing would increase to a minimum of a supervisor and three officers, and the department would be able to more safely handle two critical incidents simultaneously.

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Officer Cost

How much an officer costs is dependent on whether or not the officer is an entry level or a lateral candidate. Lateral officers are easier to train, but are more expensive to employ. Entry level officers are less expensive to hire but take longer to train. Additionally, lateral candidates are in high demand and move off of eligibility fairly quickly as other opportunities develop, or their circumstances change.

The cost of hiring each officer after July 1, 2017 will be:

- Entry level: \$100,905.97 per year
- Lateral hired at Step 3: \$112,887.53 per year

Even within the lateral pricing there are unknowns that can't be predicted. Any candidate coming in with a bachelor's or master's degree is entitled to an incentive, as is any officer that qualifies for an advanced certificate through the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST).

These costs will presumably go up as the contract with the Ashland Police Association is negotiated, but this is the cost as of this report.

There is a detailed costs analysis at the end of this report.

Funding Options

Utility Bill Surcharge

The City has approximately 13,000 utility accounts (not including AFN-only accounts). If each of those accounts were to be assessed a \$3.50 surcharge per month, that would raise \$45,500 per month, or \$546,000 per year, enough to cover the cost of five new officers and their related equipment and peripheral costs. If the Council were to choose this option staff asks that this surcharge be addressed as a percentage rather than as a constant \$3.50 per month. This allows for future increases in costs due to inflation, wage increases etc., and would allow the funding stream to maintain its effectiveness in the years to come.

ECSO Transitions to Special District

Currently the police department pays Emergency Communications of Southern Oregon (ECSO) \$421,160 a year in direct funding to cover costs of participating in a regional dispatch operation. There is a potential for a push toward ECSO becoming a special district under Oregon law, which would allow it to draw its funding directly from the property owners instead of it flowing through the city's general fund. If this were to happen, but the city retained this funding level to the department, the department could pay for 4.3 additional officers and the needed equipment. However, this would not be recommended unless the city were committed to funding the new officers regardless of whether or not the special district initiative were approved.

Property Tax

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The City is not currently assessing the maximum tax rate. There is an additional nine cents per \$1,000 of value that could be assessed. If the remaining nine cents were to be assessed the city's revenue would increase by approximately \$217,000.

Public Safety Bond

The City could choose to pursue a public safety bond through a May or November 2017 election. However, such a move would not be a guaranteed long-term strategy to fund these positions.

Deployment of New Officers

As noted above, each of the patrol teams, when at minimum staffing, can handle exactly one contentious incident at a time. The five new officers represent one new officer on each of the four teams, plus a school resource officer. This will allow the department to increase minimum staffing levels to a supervisor and three officers, giving us the ability to handle more calls more safely, while also allowing us to re-engage the school system in an essential program.

Summary

The population of the city has increased over the last 20 years, as has the tourist population and the student population. The call load that the officers have to handle has never been higher, and policing strategies that have been put forward as national best practices require that officers slow down their interactions with all members of the community and provide more meaningful engagement.

However, the staffing levels of the department have remained the same over the last 20 years. While the men and women who comprise the Ashland Police Department will always strive to provide the best police service possible to the community, current staffing levels do not allow the men and women of the department to safely and effectively engage the community in the manner that represents best practices in 21st century policing.

City of Ashland Police Department
 Confidential Projection
 The detail below is for budgeting purposes only.
 HR determines each employees pay

Grade	Step	Pay	Hours	Deferred Comp	Holiday	Gross Pay	HRA VEBA 2%	FICA 6.20%	Medicare 1.45%	PERS			Health Insurance				Workers Comp		Total Benefits	Total Gross plus Benefits
										Tier 1 P/F 26.39%	OPSRP P/F 19.26%	EE 6.00%	Medical & Dental	AD & D	Life	LTD	WC	Wckmp		
BN 2017-19																				
Entry level officer 302																				
Year 1	7/1/17-12/31/17	1	26.5391	1040	239.98	2,547.75	30,388.40	607.77	1,262.16	295.18	5,852.81	1,823.30	10,050.98	0.96	13.92	108.36	40.00	723.24	20,778.68	51,167.08
	1/1/2018-6/30/18	2	27.9886	1040	239.98	-	29,348.12	586.96	1,197.66	280.10	5,652.45	1,760.89	10,050.98	0.96	13.92	108.36	40.00	698.49	20,390.77	49,738.89
Total Year 1:				479.96	2,547.75	59,736.52	1,194.73	2,459.82	575.28	-	11,505.25	3,584.19	20,101.96	1.92	27.84	216.72	80.00	1,421.73	41,169.45	100,905.97
Year 2	7/1/18-12/31/18	2	28.5484	1040	239.98	2,740.64	32,670.93	653.42	1,341.36	313.71	6,292.42	1,960.26	11,056.08	0.96	13.92	109.36	40.00	777.57	22,559.05	55,229.98
	1/1/19-6/30/19	3	29.6985	1040	239.98	-	31,126.44	622.53	1,245.60	291.31	5,994.95	1,867.59	11,056.08	0.96	13.92	109.36	40.00	740.81	21,983.11	53,109.56
Total Year 2:				479.96	2,740.64	63,797.38	1,275.95	2,586.96	605.02	-	12,287.37	3,827.84	22,112.16	1.92	27.84	218.72	80.00	1,518.38	44,542.16	108,339.54
				959.92	5,288.40	123,533.90	2,470.68	5,046.79	1,180.30	-	23,792.63	7,412.03	42,214.12	3.84	55.68	435.44	160.00	2,940.11	85,711.61	209,245.51
2 officers:				1,919.84	10,576.79	247,067.79	4,941.36	10,093.57	2,360.59	-	47,585.26	14,824.07	84,428.24	7.68	111.36	870.88	320.00	5,880.21	171,423.22	418,491.01
Lateral officer 302																				
Year 1	7/1/17-12/31/17	3	29.1162	1040	239.98	2,795.16	33,315.98	666.32	1,443.67	337.63	8,792.09	1,998.96	10,050.98	0.96	13.92	108.36	40.00	792.92	24,245.81	57,561.79
	1/1/2018-6/30/18	4	30.3151	1040	239.98	-	31,767.68	635.35	1,347.68	315.18	8,383.49	1,906.06	10,050.98	0.96	13.92	108.36	40.00	756.07	23,558.06	55,325.74
Total Year 1:				479.96	2,795.16	65,083.67	1,301.67	2,791.35	652.81	17,175.58	-	3,905.02	20,101.96	1.92	27.84	216.72	80.00	1,548.99	47,803.87	112,887.53
Year 2	7/1/18-12/31/18	4	30.9214	1040	239.98	2,968.45	35,366.69	707.33	1,508.50	352.79	9,333.27	2,122.00	11,056.08	0.96	13.92	109.36	40.00	841.73	26,085.94	61,452.64
	1/1/19-6/30/19	5	32.6920	1040	239.98	-	34,239.68	684.79	1,438.62	336.45	9,035.85	2,054.38	11,056.08	0.96	13.92	109.36	40.00	814.90	25,585.33	59,825.01
Total Year 2:				479.96	2,968.45	69,606.37	1,392.13	2,947.12	689.25	18,369.12	-	4,176.38	22,112.16	1.92	27.84	218.72	80.00	1,656.63	51,671.27	121,277.64
				959.92	5,763.61	134,690.04	2,693.80	5,738.47	1,342.06	35,544.70	-	8,081.40	42,214.12	3.84	55.68	435.44	160.00	3,205.62	99,475.14	234,165.18
3 officers:				2,879.76	17,290.83	404,070.12	8,081.40	17,215.40	4,026.18	106,634.11	-	24,244.21	126,642.36	11.52	167.04	1,306.32	480.00	9,616.87	298,425.41	702,495.53
				1,919.84	10,576.79	247,067.79	4,941.36	10,093.57	2,360.59	-	47,585.26	14,824.07	84,428.24	7.68	111.36	870.88	320.00	5,880.21	171,423.22	418,491.01
				2,879.76	17,290.83	404,070.12	8,081.40	17,215.40	4,026.18	106,634.11	-	24,244.21	126,642.36	11.52	167.04	1,306.32	480.00	9,616.87	298,425.41	702,495.53
				4,799.60	27,867.62	651,137.92	13,022.76	27,308.97	6,386.78	106,634.11	47,585.26	39,068.27	211,070.60	19.20	278.40	2,177.20	800.00	15,497.08	469,848.63	1,120,986.54

Grade 302, assuming 2% COLA per year

7/1/2017	7/1/2018	7/1/2019	7/1/2020	
26.5391	27.0699	27.6113	28.1635	
27.9886	28.5484	29.1193	29.7017	
29.1162	29.6985	30.2925	30.8983	
30.3151	30.9214	31.5398	32.1706	
32.0510	32.6920	33.3459	34.0128	
33.7152	34.3895	35.0773	35.7788	
				540,474.54
				580,512.01
				1,120,986.54
				Active, non afn only accts 13150
				Year 1 3.43
				Year 2 3.68
				Average 3.55

*These projections do not include incentive or certification pay