

Police Budget Advisory Board Minutes 8/18/22

In attendance: Michele Neary (MN), John Lynch (JL), Amara Dunn (AD), Amie Hendrix, Chief Michael Passalacqua

- 1) Brief introductions for benefit of guests (share names around the room)
 - 2) Approve minutes from July – unanimously approved; AD will take notes since Andrew Spink (secretary) is absent.
 - 3) Chief Passalacqua shares answers to questions provided ahead of time; to include follow-up discussion/clarifying questions. Questions are in black below, with responses from Chief (and follow-up questions) in blue.
1. Current GPD [roster](#) is listed on the City’s website. Attached is the 2021 organizational chart that was shared with us. How many Sergeants, Lieutenants, Detectives, regular patrol (excluding SRO) do you feel are needed to adequately staff this org chart?

Organizational chart changes from year to year, depending on which positions are budgeted for, or not. Chief did a comparison between 2014 (when he would consider department fully staffed) and 2021.

Road patrol:

	2014	2021
Day	8 people	5 people
Afternoon	2 sergeants, 8 officers = 10	1 sergeants, 6 officers = 7 total
Night	2 sergeants, 5 officers = 7	2 sergeants, 3 officers = 5 total
Cover shift	3 officers	1 officer

Other staffing notes

Current:

- 1 lieutenant (oversees detective bureau; lots of responsibilities/workload; includes both administrative and “taking cases” [e.g., something a detective would normal do])
- 1 criminal investigator
- 1 narcotics detective (requires second person - usually trainee – because some of this work needs to be done with a second person present; sometimes with support from Ontario County Sheriff’s office or Canandaigua Police)
- 0 youth officers

JL: Is the second person with the narcotics detective watching from across the street?

Chief: It’s required that one other person be there as a witness (e.g., for controlled purchasing of drugs).

Responding to crime is different now than it used to be. Cell phones, Ring cameras, other cameras are everywhere. More crimes are being committed via the internet, over the phone. More search warrants are being written for cell phones (to get evidence). In the Chief's opinion, the current staffing level doesn't support a 24-hr professional police force. Current staffing levels require that officers come in early or stay past shifts in order to keep shifts covered. Vacation, personal, sick days make it that much harder to staff the schedule. Constantly every day adjustments are being made.

MN: What cameras does the City have available to capture footage [that GPD might use in investigation]?

Chief: City has ~30 cameras around the City, e.g., looking at reservoir, at front of City Hall, various intersections, Public Safety Building parking lot. Cameras cover downtown, primarily. I don't think that there are enough cameras covering the City; would like more (especially parks & playgrounds). This would probably require a multi-year plan to implement.

MN: Perhaps it would be helpful for City Council to incentivize more City residents putting cameras on their property, since the Chief said that this footage is incredibly useful.

MN: Who maintains the cameras that are already in the City?

Chief: City IT department maintains City-owned cameras (which GPD has access to footage from).

2. When will the 2021 GPD annual report be available? (we can probably wait to ask this) 2021 GPD report was submitted at the end of April to Jen Slywka, but it's not on the website, yet. And it was shared with City Council. Chief will send out digital version this evening to PBAB.

3. Who categorizes each expense when it is submitted? (i.e. deciding whether an expense is "office supplies" or "training" or "equipment purchases"). And who is the one who decides what each category is called and what it includes? If we want to make recommendations about how various expenses are classified in the budget report, who do we make such a recommendation to?

Tuesday in GPD is bill day. Chief will get a weekly update of how much money is left in each budget line, and bills that need to be paid. So money may need to be moved around between (non-fixed) lines because there isn't enough to cover bills. Chief will email Comptroller's office to move money around. Example, GPD was budgeted \$25,000 for the year to maintain 14-15 cars. Ran out of money about a month ago. So Chief took \$5000 from uniform expenses and had it transferred into maintenance line. This typically happens from August through December. This year it has happened sooner than in the past 4 years the Chief has been in his position. He thinks in large part this is because there were 2 budget years (2019 and 2020) without new vehicles, so vehicle maintenance costs have gone up (especially when vehicles hit 90-100 thousand mile

range). They currently have 7 vehicles with those higher miles. They are being strategic about repairs.

GPD just received 2022-budgetted vehicles (after lettering, upfitting with special equipment, etc.). They are immediately retiring two old vehicles and replacing them with these newest vehicles because fleet is so old. Normally they would strategically roll out use of new vehicles to maintain their longevity. They have certain vehicles used on days, afternoons, nights, weekends (so that vehicles can get a rest, too) and they try to rotate cars strategically. But sometimes things come up (e.g., vehicle damaged when struck while parked). At any given time, they may have 1-3 vehicles down (whether it's mechanical issues or computers in the vehicles).

MN: How is inflation impacting vehicle expenses (e.g., gas, parts)?

Chief: The \$25,000/yr for vehicle maintenance has been the same for the past 10 years. So they are trying to maintain the same number of cars with the same amount of money for the past 10 years. Will try to do things like use extra money at the end of the year to stock up on additional tires for next year. If there's no maintenance funds at the end of 2022, not sure what they'll do to cover tire needs in 2023.

As far as categorizing expenses, it's tough. There used to be 30 lines to categorize expenses. There are many fewer lines. Materials & Supplies are usually used to purchase evidence supplies (vs. things like pens and pencils, which would be office supplies). There are invoices and details that clarify what each purchase was. NYS sets what those budget lines can be (with some opportunity for City to modify lines).

There are fixed lines which the Chief can't modify (like in-vehicle cameras). There is a relatively small amount that the Chief uses to run the GPD on a daily basis.

AD: What are the fixed lines and the not fixed lines?

Chief: I ask for something in budget proposal. Then City Manager and Comptroller determine which line something should go on (e.g., a fixed Equipment line in the City Budget, vs. a non-fixed line in the GPD budget). Usually it's equipment expenses that come out of fixed lines. Body cameras are another fixed cost. The Chief can move money between non-fixed lines (e.g., uniform expenses to vehicle maintenance).

Amie Hendrix: These lines are called "fixed" because the money in these lines can only be used for the designated item. Chief cannot move money from these lines to other lines. Personnel costs are fixed, too.

In the Detail vs Budget Report, we are seeing the lines that expenses were placed on after money was moved around. This does not reflect that expenses are miscategorized. It sounds like getting a report on how much was actually spent in each line in each year is a question for the Comptroller's office (at least not for Chief or GPD).

However, Chief felt that how much was spent in a particular line in one year might not be very related to how much is needed in that line for the following year, as needs

change from year to year. For example, hiring new people costs extra money (new uniforms, polygraphs, physical exam, psych eval). And how many new people need to be hired is not always predictable (e.g., retirements, lateral transfers). So even if staff size stays the same, expenses on the uniform and physical evaluation lines may change if maintaining staffing levels required hiring new people.

4. You previously indicated you would be in favor of taking many non-dangerous mental health calls out of the responsibility of the GPD and have a mental health professional handle that instead (e.g., conversations with FLH). Has there been any update or follow-up to that, and how might this board be of assistance in that conversation?
GPD are not medical professionals, paramedics. In a perfect world, police wouldn't need to be involved in these calls. But in reality there are a lot of things in play. The use of iPads to connect people to Clifton Springs professionals in real time has been a huge benefit. Saves trauma to the person experiencing the crisis, and saves GPD time and resources not needing to drive people to Clifton Springs. Chief doesn't think that it's realistic for police not to respond to mental health calls at all because it's hard to predict what they might find in that situation (e.g., weapons, level of threat the individual might pose to themselves or others, situations change quickly, information received when a call comes in may not be accurate by the time GPD arrives).

Example, GPD officers tried to de-escalate a situation with a person experiencing a crisis for 20-25 minutes, and eventually had to take the person into custody forcibly (and some officers received minor injuries). GPD has reached an agreement to offer mandatory mental health treatment to this person (rather than dealing with consequences of arrest). GPD is having behind the scenes conversations when mental health is involved and trying to improve their responses.

MN: Are you satisfied with the mental health support services (to the larger community)?

Chief: No. We have transported the same person 3 times in the same shift to Clifton Springs. The whole mental health system needs an overhaul. What can be done? Chief doesn't know. Geneva General is not a psychiatric hospital. They will only accept physical injuries. No longer a psych unit at Soldiers & Sailors in Penn Yan.

5. With the current GPD system, is it possible to know how many calls, responses, and charges (as well as outcomes) come in by ward of each of these types: mental health, drug-related, domestic incidence, robbery/larceny/burglary, other Part 1 crimes? What other categories would you be interested in tracking? What would it cost for the type of reporting system that would enable this information to be tracked?
(Records Management System = RMS)
Short answer is "no". Current system is called PD Manager. They're waiting for a new platform to be rolled out. Currently there's no ability to map anything to location (e.g., ward). The new platform will enable that and generally has a lot more capability. It will cost more (\$12,000 vs. \$8,000/yr).

MN: Will that information will be available to the public? Could it be made public? Would it be useful?

Chief: Annual stats will go out in the annual report. Monthly reports will (continue to) go to the City Manager that compare monthly numbers to that time a year ago. Chief doesn't see any reason why the monthly information couldn't be made public. During the Police Reform and Reinvention Collective work, it was difficult to get Use of Force Policy on the website because the file was so large. Thinks that this has changed/improved with website updates. Chief thinks it could be helpful to share that information with the public.

AD: When will this updated system be available?

Chief: We got preliminary access to play around in new system (being built to GPD specifications) in June (Chief, lieutenants, sergeants). Because of workload, they haven't been in to the site to play around with it very much. Company can make modifications based on feedback from GPD. There is going to be a big learning curve. Goal was to go live with web version January 1, 2023. Probably we're still pretty close to on-track for that goal. No information from old system will be lost in the transfer.

6. What are the GPD's goals for the next 3-5 years? What about 10 years?

- 1) Maintain level of police service GPD provides. Very proud of work they do and how far they've come since Chief has been hired. Need to make sure they stay progressive and up-to-date with technology. Before he became Chief, he thinks they were behind. We've caught up now, but need to stay up-to-date. Technology is changing every day. May require both new equipment and additional training. In some cases, that training is free (especially from federal secret service).

MN: Will being understaffed impact to take ability of trainings?

Chief: Yes, for some trainings. We need to complete a certain number of hours to stay accredited. Because we are understaffed, can't have a single day when everyone participates in the same training. Instead we will need to do the training in a different way (e.g., multiple times with whomever is on a particular shift). But the training will still get done.

MN: Are you missing free training opportunities because of staffing?

Chief: Not necessarily, because the free training from secret service is likely only applicable to some members of GPD. The whole staff doesn't need to be there at the same time. And it's easier (with limited staff) to send a detective (who would be the more likely candidate for this free secret service training) to training for multiple weeks than a patrol person. But being short-staffed does make training more difficult.

MN: So the only way we can take advantage of some training is to hire more staff?

Chief: We are working on increasing personnel.

- 1 officer who will be ready to be on the road in December

- 2 officers are currently field training (graduate from police academy at end of August); will be on their own in mid-Sep (when this happens, Chief will be able to make a sergeant promotion from a current patrol officer, so they'll be an additional sergeant and the road patrol will still be up by 1).
- 3 officers hired to send to February police academy (hopefully). Ontario County Sheriffs office just signed a new contract, and those officers right out of the academy will be making a lot more than GPD officers right out of the academy. These 3 people could resign between now and February and seek employment somewhere else.
- Currently there are 2 sergeant positions vacant, but Chief can't fill them because he doesn't want to pull patrol officers, because they need them on patrol (hence when 2 new officers complete field training, Chief can promote someone to sergeant).
- It takes a year from hiring someone to them being on their own, unless that new hire is a lateral transfer (from another department). One person from Rochester PD called and asked about GPD, but then withdrew application after a few weeks.

Clarification on hiring process: A potential officer is hired, then they go through a police academy, then they do field training with the GPD, and then they are ready to be on patrol on their own. This process takes about a year.

MN: Why are people looking into working in Geneva? Why do they not want to work here?

Chief: The things that have been happening in Geneva over the past 2 years politically have made Geneva a place where police don't want to serve. Also, there have been fewer people taking the required agility test (either showing up or passing the test). For example, at a recent test ~30 people signed up, ~15 showed up, and only 2 passed. There just aren't as many people interested (and physically able) to be police officers. And agility tests are county-wide, so people who do pass could look for employment in any department within the county. People are coming to these tests unprepared. The number of people taking Civil Service exams are also down. And this creates competition amongst police departments. Recruits are negotiating and being selective about where they apply.

A challenge is that the Chief feels we still need more personnel. And it takes time for the current GPD employees to field train new hires coming out of the academy. Also, where recruits are sent for training (e.g., Finger Lakes Academy) has budgetary implications. Each academy has a maximum class size. Sending officers to a local academy is less expensive because you don't need to pay room, board, meals. Won't know until after City budget is passed where trainees will need to be sent (depending on class size). Also want to make sure that recruits receive quality field training (post-police academy) within the GPD. Hand-pick field training officers to make sure that recruits are seeing a good example of excellent policing. Chief aligns

certain field training officers to certain phases of training, because some are especially good at certain phases of training.

- 2) Planning ahead (for known/predicted retirements and vacancies).
- 3) More focus on officer well-being and mental health. Seeing an increased need for this over the past few years. Getting better at debriefing after traumatic incidents (e.g., involving chaplains, following up with officers). Can do better at officer wellness. Rochester PD just rolled out a new system of supporting officer wellness, that won't work for GPD because RPD is just so much bigger than us (650 people). Sometimes the fact that everyone knows everyone in Geneva (and especially GPD) can make things more difficult. Local chaplain has been very helpful. There needs to be after-care for officers when they go to scenes where there are traumatic events. Had planned to send 2 ex-military GPD members to a training in Baton Rouge to learn about officer wellness. Organized by size of department so could have been very useful in bringing back practical ideas for how to improve officer wellness here in Geneva, given the size of our department. Couldn't do it primarily because of budget constraints (week-long conference, airfare, etc.). Also, since it was in the fall and they were coming to the end of the budget year, money was tight.

7. Could you provide an estimate for us of how many person hours were spent on training (including transportation, overnight stays, etc. for out of town training) in 2021?

Chief could get us a breakdown. Lieutenant Potter is the person who keeps track of and organizes training. It depends on exactly what we're looking for.

AD: Suggest that we as a PBAB have a conversation about exactly what data we're looking for, so that we can save Chief (and other GPD personnel) time in collecting this information.

Chief: Overnights and per diems would be easier to track in budget report. Training directives would be the place to get info about training expenses, and they could send PBAB all of this information.

8. Which staffing standard or model does GPD use?

- per capita approach
- minimum staffing approach
- authorized-level approach
- Workload-based approaches

We were under the impression that the "minimum staffing approach was used, and if that's correct, why GPD has picked that one despite DCJS saying there are "no objective standards" for setting minimum staffing? Does that have to do with Geneva's small size and making sure there are always enough officers to safely respond at a given time.

Chief had previously said that he uses a mixture of workload-based approach and minimum staffing. The workload-based is driven by calls for service. But of course it's impossible to predict calls on any single day. The GPD contract does not mandate a minimum staffing level. It's not in writing anywhere, but Chief knows from experience that if there are only X officers (e.g., 2) per shift, there will be grievance complaints from the union. Chief feels that 3 is not enough per shift, either. He would like to see 4 per shift, but we're not able to do

that right now. When Chief says “minimum staffing”, he means “what he feels is safe for officers”, not a level that is mandated by anyone else. He thinks we’re at an 80% workload to 20% minimum staffing approach. Bottom line: he feels they just don’t have enough personnel.

(Still waiting for results from DCJS study.) Chief and Lieutenant went through every call for service in 2021. Found that they were not reporting federal statistics as they should have been. Officers were not reporting things correctly (e.g., went to domestic, resulted in arrest, categorized as “other”, rather than domestic incident). Lieutenant Colton is daily going back through and reviewing UCR codes (how calls are classified) now and there are improvements in categorization. Chief thinks we’ll see a big increase in June-July 2021 calls/responses/crimes over last year because of improvements to reporting. He feels that crimes are currently being under-reported. Hopes this won’t appear to some that GPD is trying to justify additional hires by inflating response/crimes statistics. New RMS system will help flag some discrepancies between UCR codes and the rest of the report, making it easier to avoid this in the future.

MN: It sounds like this mis-filing could be related to understaffing. Everyone is over-worked.
Chief: Overtime and extra hours and spreading people thin can result in errors.

MN: We have to hire more people.

Chief: Yes, we are understaffed. For example, with recent loss of Court Officer Peters, it was a huge effort to divide that workload up to others.

MN: If politics of the City has impacted the desire for people to join the GPD, how can we address that?

Chief: We push forward. There’s not a whole lot we can do to change outside perceptions of what’s happening in Geneva. Heard from recruiter that police in the Southern Tier are talking about Geneva and why would anyone want to work here.

MN: Are you getting pushback from Geneva residents who don’t want to increase the budget to give GPD what they’re asking for?

Chief: The overwhelming majority of what he hears is positive, both personally and professionally. Thinks majority of the City appreciates what GPD does. And tax increases are a concern. Excited to be able to have a ward breakdown of calls to show where calls for service and responses are coming from/to. This will provide data to show whether there is or is not over- or under-policing in different wards (something about which there has been a lot of speculation).

MN: Do we still have a DARE program?

Chief: Yes, supported by Geneva Rotary Club. Otherwise, wouldn’t be able to do the program. Used to also do programs in kindergarten, second, fifth, and eighth grades. Can’t do those any more because of insufficient staff).

Wrap-up to Chief answering questions:

Chief offered to clarify anything we are unclear on. Lieutenant Potter will look into training directives. Office staff will determine what info can be gathered on training. PBAB will have some conversation about exactly what training data we'd like.

AD: (Related to a much earlier part of the conversation) Are GPD positions budgeted individually, or is there a lump sum of money that Chief can spend how he wishes?

Chief: City Council does approve and budget each individual position. And each position comes with a total dollar amount.

- 4) Hear from City Manager Amie Hendrix about upcoming budget process (tentative)
Comptroller came on 4 weeks ago. City Manager's budget will be presented to City Council on September 21st. Starting next week, staff will talk with departments about their asks, and then will work on figuring out what will fit in the budget, and what won't. After that, City staff turns over budget to Council, and they can discuss and decide what to do with the presented budget (including voting to add/remove/change items). If Council doesn't approve something by a particular deadline, then budget reverts back to City Manager's budget.

City Manager will share with us the Chief's budget proposal right away.

City Manager would need to have our recommendations by September 5 so that City Manager can have budget finalized by September 16.

What happened last year? We think that the recommendations were included in the City budget that was published. (But probably recommendations were given to City Manager after CM budget was finalized, and reported in the budget proposal for information for the public.)

- 5) Assign next steps, schedule additional budget meetings (depending on timeline) and agenda items for September meeting

MN is out of town 8/20-8/28

AD is on staycation 8/27-9/2

JL not out of town; evenings 6 PM work well

We'll need to schedule a meeting between now and Sep 5 via email. Whenever this meeting happens, please bring with you a bulleted list of the recommendations you'd like to contribute to our report. Preferably, send them out to the group via email ahead of time.

Next (regular) meeting (others may be scheduled): Thursday, September 15, 6-7 PM