

MINUTES  
MUNCIE COMMON COUNCIL  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
300 NORTH HIGH STREET  
MUNCIE, INDIANA 47305



**OCTOBER 10, 2023**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING:** 6:00 P.M., 1<sup>st</sup> Floor City Hall Auditorium.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Led by Rick Yencer.

<b>ROLL CALL:</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Aaron Clark		X
Ro Selvey	X	
Troy Ingram		X
Jeff Green	X	
Jeff Robinson	X	
Brandon Garrett	X	
Brad Marshall	X	
Jerry Dishman	X	
Roger Overbey	X	

**ORDER OF BUSINESS:** DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED APPROPRIATIONS AND TAX RATES OF THE FOLLOWING DEPARTMENTS FOR THE YEAR 2024 (ORD. 15-23).

**MAYOR**

Craig Wright, City Controller, advises no changes are within the Mayor's budget other than the anticipated salary increases. Everything else has stayed the same and it is the same budget as the last four (4) years right on schedule to be at about 87% spent during this time of the year while currently sitting at 74%. Questions called.

Elizabeth Edgell would like to know why the Mayor isn't here and why he hasn't been attending City Council Meetings. Chairman Robinson cannot answer that question and wonders if the Controller can. Wright expresses the Mayor had a prior commitment, being at meetings and speaking engagements all day.

**STREET DEPARTMENT**

Adam Leach, City Engineer, wishes to provide a year in review and provide some basic information. The Public Works Department, also known as the Street Department, is not funded by property taxes in any way shape or form. It is paid for by the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund (#0708), Local Road & Street Fund (#0706), and the wheel tax. All those are distributed by the state so, again, no property tax funds. Himself included, there are 23 employees and they maintain a roadway system of approximately 778 lane miles, 317 center Line miles. From January 1<sup>st</sup> to October 9<sup>th</sup> they have: completed 722 total work orders in their work order system, patched 1,707 locations consisting of 795 tons, maintained about 86 signals, spent 1,320 crew hours mowing and weed eating, removed 16 in house trees, contracted 20 trees for removal, performed \$160,000 in repair maintenance to City-owned vehicles and equipment, completed 395 sign work orders and paved 3,573 tons of asphalt on 12 streets. Notable achievements for the year consist of being on track to

complete 3 miles of centerline paving in house and getting a one-man patch truck that they are probably going to purchase and currently demoing so that'll free up some crew members. This is the first entire year of having the work order management software and downtown maintenance so there is a part-time employee whose sole job is take care of downtown. They also did their first concrete panel replacements at Robinwood fixing some streets there that are concrete roads. Heekin Park drainage was completed for the playground so it no longer floods every time it rains. The City Salt Barn parking lot was repaired which was in desperate need of repair and built an ADA parking lot out at Prairie Creek. CCMG 2022 Paving and Riverside is complete while neighborhood paving with their in-house crew has been completed on the following streets: Robinwood, Meadowlark, Pettigrew, Robinwood, Petty at Pettigrew, Wheeling Avenue, Cole Lane, Shady Lane, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, Jersey Street, and as of today Sycamore Court. Continued collaboration with the utility companies lead to the following roadways being repaved: Cherokee, Seminole, Apache Pass, Chippewa, Maumee, and Apache, and 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Continuing engineering for McGalliard which is Wheeling to Tillotson and the MLK to the bypass, engineering through Tillotson which is McGalliard to Kilgore, engineering for the Kitzelman Phase 3 Trail Project, and a City and MSD standards update. As far as the budget goes, it is nearly identical to last year. They did go from individual salaries listed out in their own line items to Salaries & Wages (line item #218-35-411021), of course, the Council sets the salaries and wages by ordinance so there is no trickery going on there. It was done in anticipation of contract negotiations at the union having some changes to positions to represent the new work they are doing. It is hopeful that those negotiations will continue going well. The other increase is in the Local Roads & Street for Capital Projects (line item #221-35-444054) due to some funding they are hopeful will be able to provide for more capital projects. There is also a large number of matches that they will have to pay out next year because as the federal funds come in, they are required to pay 20% matches for anything that comes from the MPO, the most pressing of which will be McGalliard (an almost \$1 million match). That money is in the bank and Public Works is the only Department in the entire City that operates on cash balance with four or five months of operating funds on hand at all times.

Councilman Overbey refers to claims with HWC and questions if they are used for City projects or if it is MSD. Leach indicates that HWC was selected prior to his tenure as City Engineer, completing the Kitzelman Trailhead Engineering.

Councilman Marshall refers to previously not having any amount budgeted in the Equipment and Repairs (line item #220-35-421024) and this year there is \$10,000 proposed. He assumes there were repairs last year and questions if they were paid out of a different line. Leach explains there are two different lines, Repair & Maintenance (line item #220-35-422133) and Equipment/Repairs & Maintenance (previously mentioned 421024). For whatever reason at one point, Equipment & Repairs was used and then it became just Repairs & Maintenance. All maintenance and repairs come out of Repairs & Maintenance. That is why one line was zero and the other now has a budgeted amount. Marshall has a similar question on the Road Salt (line item #220-35-422146) and Paint & Sign Material (line item #218-35-422147), with zero budgeted last year but balances added this year. Leach explains there was a mistake on his part and the Deputy Controller transcribed it for him. One copy of budget Leach sent upstairs had those lines correctly populated while the other one did not and they just were populated wrong. Road salt and stripe has to be purchased every year.

Councilwoman Selvey appreciates Leach repeating and mentioning all the stuff the Board of Works does and she just wants to compliment them for all the work they do.

Chairman Robinson recalls Leach mentioning he has built some additional salaries and wages pending approval of the AFSCME contract and wants to know where we are in those contract negotiations. At last report, it was advised that those negotiations were stalled so he questions if there has been a meeting since then. Leach responds they are scheduled for another meeting tentatively next week pending the Union. They are coming back to the table which is a positive development, assuring they would rather get them paid correctly and go through the process. Robinson questions if Leach knows the percentage of the raise

calculated into the 2024 budget for those labor employees. Leach can only answer for his Department that it was different since they were going to be doing a restructuring. Due to still being in negotiations, he refers to Legal Counsel to see how much he can say. City Attorney Aubrey Crist informs him he can relay the percentage. Leach, again, can only speak on the Street Department and explains that because they are changing positions in adding CDL pay in addition to base pay, the average employee was going to get somewhere between 15% - 20%. To (kind of) stress that point a little bit, City CDL Drivers currently make \$18.12 an hour while the state of Indiana average is about \$22 an hour. Literally, everyone around us pays significantly more, even MITS. In addition, these employees are not CDL truck drivers, although that being their job title, 90% of the year they operate a shovel, run equipment, trim trees, mow grass, all the things that Public Works do. This is trying to realign their job title with the expectations of the job so that is the reason for the shift. It would be more in line with what both the state and MSD pay.

Elizabeth Edgell refers to the 23 employees and asks if that is the number that is allotted. Leach answers yes. Edgell then asks if all of those positions are currently filled. Leach replies no, there are currently six openings.

Rick Yencer wants to remind the government and the public something that affects the street and road operations is the state increasing the gasoline tax a penny or two this summer so there should be more money in these accounts to be able to cover not only employees but also streets, repairs and construction. He is hoping to start hearing nonstop about McGalliard as it has been in planning for years and needs to be done now. The Council needs to be wary of how that gasoline tax from the State House is being spent. Questions called.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Chris Deegan, Deputy Police Chief, begins by stating he is always trying to encourage involvement and engagement from the personnel so he is happy to see some officer in the audience this evening. He refers to the email he sent out earlier to quickly highlight and overview lines in their budget. There aren't that many changes to the budget and honestly, this is probably one of the more simple budgets they, as the Police Department Administration, have submitted in recent years. Deegan would like to go through some 2023 highlights sharing Muncie Police continues to make improvements and advances in both working conditions and benefits for officers. A new Training Center was complete and is located on Granville, where their police garage is located. Councilwoman Selvey had mentioned that being an eyesore a few years ago and through the Mayor's tree initiative they have planted about 20 trees around that property to provide better views and a natural barrier. The Training Center there gives the Department a central hub to offer advanced training and continuing education to officers. They have invested funding into their police gym at Uniform Division Headquarters is down in the basement of City Hall with some advances and updates down there as they want to focus on physical health. Deegan has come to the Council/Finance Committee before during budget hearings and they have heavily discussed the need for Psychological Services tied directly to the Employee Assistance Program. Those increases that the Council approved in previous years has been well spent. He is not aware of who all is using the program because it is anonymous but Deegan knows it is working as the funds rewarded in that line are spent. It is not only for employees but for their immediate families as well. This is obviously a really stressful job and there's a lot that these officers and their families have to deal with. That is a program that they have been able to continue to grow and will continue to grow with the support of the Mayor and Police Chief. Health and wellness pieces and components of what they have tried to do the last couple of years and specifically this last year has resulted in results. It is important to deliver those services to these officers because in order to deliver a professional policing service to the community we have to make sure that they're adequately cared for. If not then that is where the breakdown occurs.

In noting some liability reductions since 2018 and police professional liability claims against the City Police Department, which councilmembers are aware of what those are and had to sit in on the meetings for the appropriations to pay some settlements. There was 32 in 2018, 22 in 2019, 6 in 2020, 3 in 2021, 4 in 2022 and 2 to date through August for 2023. That is a real cost reduction of over \$1.9 million dollars to the City. The efforts that that are being put into focusing on the health and wellness of officers is paying dividends on the return. The Mayor and Chief have both worked literally around the clock the last few years to deliver those professional services to the residents and this starts with providing the resources needed for the officers to safely and effectively do their job. A couple years ago, Deegan stood before the Committee for budget hearings discussed the implementation of a lateral hiring program and said we don't have any real raw data because it's so new. Well that raw data has been obtained due to it being almost two years since implementation. We currently employ eleven (11) lateral transfer officers and one (1) starting Monday October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Those are already sworn-in law enforcement officers that are coming to us with experience from other agencies. That is a gold mine, to pull people here to work and serve here in the Muncie community. Being asked about local recruitment and how to focus on that, Deegan explains they just resigned their contract with an advertising and recruitment company. People have probably seen the magnets on the police cars that have the QR codes to go "here" to apply. They have tried to make and streamline the application process as much as possible. You can come to City Hall and get paper application or you can do it online. The doors have been opened to resources available to people to come apply and are seeing an increase in the number of interest cards and applications coming through now that they are monitoring it online. Yet that does not necessarily turn into real results for people that show up when it is time to test, as those numbers are still somewhat low. As he said before, it is not just an issue in Muncie; it is a state and nationwide issue. It is hard to be a police officer right now and they are seeing that in transition to people that apply. He mentioned they would weather the storm then and believes they have done that pretty well. With the start of the lateral, their numbers are back to 104 due to a resignation and awaiting the last piece of the process for two (2) new hires to present conditional offers. There is also the internship program which he touched briefly on as last week's Regular October City Council meeting. They implemented an internship program with partnerships with Ivy Tech and Ball State University, which is an internship to job opportunity program. Currently, five students are set to graduate in May and entering the last phase of the selection process. His hope is to place all five of them but won't know until they reach the last part of the component. One is already a success story working here for the Muncie Police Department fulltime, graduating from Ball State and going through that program. When he was successful, Muncie offered him a job right away. Deegan jokes that he graduated and was made to come to work the next Monday.

That brings him to one last thing he wanted to touch on. At the beginning of this year, the current Administration implemented the Community Engagement Division for the Police Department. Sergeant Amy Kessler is very good at what she does. They wanted to focus on improving relations between the Police Department and the community and the only way they do that is by dedicating people to it. In previous years, they haven't been staffed as well and obviously the emergency response is going to be first and foremost. Due to now being staffed to a point where they feel like they can commit some resources to this, that is exactly what they have done. In looking at ways to grow this program and with the development of the crisis center, partnerships arose from that with Meridian, IU Health and the University. Muncie City Police was able to provide data points and a program outline was submitted for a grant for a fully licensed social worker. The grant was awarded for a licensed social worker and another community engagement officer for multiple years. That Division will focus its efforts on social service and mental health and addiction service delivery once operational and the second officer for that piece of component has been identified. It will also still continue focused on MPD's outreach into the community and to foster and build relationships. At the end of the day, that is what they need to focus on when talking about community engagements. How do we help deliver

social services and how do we help build relationships between law enforcement and the community? That is going to be the vocal point of that Division. Everyone should be very proud of that because it is something Muncie has needed.

Regarding the financials, Deegan refers to the email he provided the Committee. There isn't really much to discuss, although, there are some changes in the payroll rates obviously for the raises for the sworn police positions and the built-in raises for civilian positions that fall under the Police budget. Deegan would have to defer that to the Controller or Legal Counsel as they are still within those negotiations. Some of the questions asked beforehand was a breakdown of the salaries, which was included in the email. He essentially took the salary rates from the ordinance that is already in place and added a 10% increase. There is an exception of the first year employment because the contract was structured a little differently this year (it used to be an 18% reduction from the first class rate that was shifted to a 16% reduction) so it appears to be a little more than 10% (because it is). However, they felt like the target starting salary for the police department should at least be \$50,000. There are no changes to the rank pay structure other than the addition of Detectives. That is a hard job and those employees are on call and dedicate 24/7 of their time to this City. They are expected to answer the phone and come in when they are called and that was a needed benefit to get that reworked once through negotiations. No changes were made to the longevity pay with the exception of the state identifying a 25-year longevity rate now just adopted by the City through negotiations so \$8,000 annually for anybody with 25 years or more of service. That influences the pension base, which helps the retirement piece in the recruitment and incentive packages that are offered. Overtime (line # 101-20-411160) was increased by \$25,000 encouraging staying within 5% – 6% of what the dedicated salary rates are so the addition is due to the higher pay rates for that increase there. There were some questions about Other Services & Charges (line item # 101-20-439071) and Deegan recalled coming before the Committee in 2021 asking to appropriate an additional \$125,000 into that line which was the Axon contract for their body cams. They have actually added more body cams because they continue to grow and are now up to about \$140,000 spread across three (3) contracts. He assures they looked at other companies when initially bidding but it was decided to go with Axon as they were the mecca of what the Department wanted to do and had been operating on. They were also the ones the Prosecutor's Office wanted them to maintain. He believes there are three (3) years remaining on one and four (4) years remaining on another which the contracts are always renegotiable when they get closer to end time. Other examples paid from the Other Services & Charges line consist of maintenance for the gym and sometimes buying new gym equipment. There is also a Cintas subscription, which is a medication first aid cabinet, throughout the Police Station and the Training Center. MPD also takes care of security for the City Hall building with key fobs and allowed access. A few off-site buildings require video security because of the amount and type of equipment being stored so there are subscriptions being paid for there. Other subscriptions consist of radar certifications, fire & safety securing components, the random drug screening program for MPD employees, cleaning services for not only the police station but also the gym downstairs, BMV technical transactions, and specialty equipment. They are budgeted so much for ballistic protection every year and may have a year where they run a little light because only three or four are at expiration and need to be replaced. Sometimes they run a little heavier and there is too many that need replaced with what they are budgeted for so that is a source they can tap into. They have also just recently acquired additional ballistic protection for the entire Uniform Patrol Division in the way of ballistic resistant plates that are part of the components with the vests they were now. He wanted to throw that out there as some of the things they use that fund for. There were some reductions that were made in the Public Safety Fund such as Other Supplies (line item # 106-20-422173) by \$20,000 and Capital Equipment (line # 106-20-444058) by \$60,000. It has long been a goal to highly concentrate efforts on the capital problems they have which are radios, cars, tazers, guns, etc. That stuff cost a lot of money, none of which had been replaced in years. Decades even. Deegan assures they have tackled that head on. This Administration has been able to

secure 70 vehicles since 2020 and phase out the older maintenance-heavy and unsafe vehicles. They are seeing cost reductions in fuel leading to real time returns. They are also getting ready to finalize the final contract for the full emergency radio replacement. This has been something Deegan has talked to the Council about at great length and he would like to inform them that 75 of the 110 new portable radios are in and issued. The last batch didn't come in for about a 1.5 to 2 years but that is a product delivery issue, not specific to Motorola, just the electronic components and the issues being dealt with at a national level. He has sourced out and priced the quote for the final piece of that and hopes to get them on a lease replacement program. That means whoever is in his position later on down the line does not have to come to the then Council to ask for \$400,000 to replace 105 radios because they aren't being made anymore. That was never a good way to do business and Deegan wants to try to right that course while having the opportunity.

Long-term solutions have always been a focal point for the MPD Administration. It has been through the efforts and support of the Mayor's Office through the Union and City Council why they have been able to get a lot of this stuff done. Deegan has been a Union Board Member, on contract negotiation committees, the Head of the Union, a Department Administrator and a regular officer out on the streets. He has been around the City for multiple administrations and feels very good about what was accomplished in the last couple of years and where they are going as a Police Department. The success of this agency is a direct result of Chief Sloan and the actions he has taken to make them professional and well respected in this community.

Chairman Robinson appreciates the fact Deputy Chief Deegan provides information ahead of the meeting so they can look over it. A lot of information was just provided so it certainly helps and the thoughtfulness is always appreciated by the Council. Councilwoman Selvey knows she has asked some tough questions of Deputy Chief Deegan and it was because she did not understand the process. However, he has always been gracious no matter what questions she asked. He has always been patient, direct, clear, and very understanding from where she is coming from and appreciates that. She then refers to MPD DTF Expenses (line item # 101-20-439026) for \$20,000 and requests for an explanation as to what that goes toward. Deegan explains the Department runs a Task Force Division where they collaborate with federal agencies and sometimes expenses come up that are needed for investigation purposes. Selvey uses the example of needing to go to another state to pick someone up. Deegan replies that could be an instance but there are some direct investigating components pieces that funding could be used for but refers to the City Attorney before stating anything further. Selvey assures he answered her question and confirms that \$20,000 is a sufficient amount. Deegan answers yes.

Councilman Green refers to Ballistic Vests (line item # 101-20-444070) for \$30,000 and asks if those are giving the officers the top line of what is available. Deegan refers to the Police Officers in the audience and asks what they think. A shout comes from the crowd that these are the best on the market right now. Deegan informs they recently demoed a vest that is not the cheapest but being a firm believer that sometimes you just do not cut costs. The material and weight of these vests are always going to be two really important focal points, not only for the safety component offered to the Officers but the health and wellness offered as well. It is a lot of weight to have to wear and carry around. Again, they are expensive but he believes they have chosen the best product. They were tested in a field with demos on a handful of Officers and feedback was collected. The vests are extremely thin, so thin that for a minute Deegan was skeptical of the ballistic protection they offered. The company came out and demoed them on the range while Sergeant Rehfus was there and Deegan was truly shocked. Also added to that was some extra safety components which he touched on earlier by providing rifle-related plates. Any vest you buy specific to patrol, or standard, are not going to be rated for rifle protection, just handgun and some smaller caliber weapons protection. But, the Department has obviously seen a seen an increase of firearms in the street and need to be prepared for that (and done so by adding the ballistic rifle plate component). Green confirms the protection of all officers. Deegan answers yes. Green states that was a concern he had and wanted to make sure they had everything they could possibly have.

Deegan adds they have some funding available through federal agencies as well such as the JAG Program. Ballistic protection is not something that they are ever going to skirt the issue on. If they ran out of money and needed to purchase a vest, he would just come in before the Council and (with his tail between his legs) request more money. Green has another question and refers to the number of officers or individuals for code enforcement. Deegan responds there are three (3) officers fulltime, allowing them to do code enforcements practices across the City and provide some support to the Uniform Division and Building Commissioner's Office. He would like to grow that program in the future but right now, they are operating well. Green then asks about the electric ford mustang. He is aware they placed the order some time back and asks if that idea has been canned completely or if it is still being worked on. Deegan explains he worked with DOE (Department of Energy) to try to secure a grant for that however Muncie did not get that grant award. This is a two-part answer. It is very weird for them to get the ability to put their hands on vehicles so they had to be creative within the last few years on how to do that just because of the supply issue. With everything going on with UAW, he just doesn't know the time frame for any of this stuff but they weren't just going to go buy one off the lot. They wanted to make it specific to one of the orders made for their patrol vehicles. He believes there is a place for electric vehicles in law enforcement but it will be a trial. He will have to get the raw data points that go with it, which obviously takes time. As of right now they are nowhere with it but the order bank for some of the vehicles they have that they will be able to order starts October 17. He is hopeful to maybe have a report at the next Council meeting regarding where they are at.

Councilman Marshall sees line item # 101-20-411135 for Crossing Guards and asks for elaboration. Deegan believes that is a typo and corrects that being the new social worker. We don't have crossing guards anymore and that has been a school responsibility for several years now. MPD provides traffic support assistance as needed from the Traffic Division whenever there is complaints or concerns and apologizes for that mistake.

Audie Barber states there are 104 police officers but he wonders how many positions are currently open and how many officers are on paid administrative leave. Deputy Chief Deegan replies there are 103 officers right now but a lateral transfer will start on Monday, October 23 so that brings it to 104. There is nobody on paid administrative leave and there are three (3) on unpaid administrative leave. Barber asks if those three positions are still being held open or if there has been any attempts on trying to fill them. Deegan answers no, they are not legally allowed to fill those positions. To clarify, paid or unpaid leave, no matter what the status of the employment of an officer is, they still legally by state law have to provide benefits until it is a true separation of employment and those positions are not filled until there is a resolution with the employment status.

Elizabeth Edgell believes they started a new program with cameras on the outskirts and entrances of the city and questions the cost. At first, it was free for a short period of time just to see how it went and she never heard an update. Deputy Chief Deegan explains what Ms. Edgell is referring to is the Flock Safety System, which is a license plate reader system. It is not lifetime security feed, just photographs of vehicles in and out of areas and it depicts the car and plate. He will say that is a successful program funded by the Mayor's Office and believes the cost is about \$65,000 annually. He assures a direct result of having that program has been closure in major cases. It was used when dealing with the tragedy that happened here in July and helped identify the suspect and suspect vehicles. It has also been used in other homicide cases where they have been able to identify suspects and suspect vehicles. It is delivering real results and is a force multiplier.

Andrew Popp refers to the email the Committee received earlier outlining the proposed salaries Captain (101-20-411117), Lieutenants (101-20-411120), Sergeants & Investigators (101-20-411129). However, those lines are all listed at \$0 on the budget copy he has. He questions if the numbers provided to the Committee are included in the total amount of the budget provided to the public or if they need to be added

in. Moreover, if they need to be added in, can they let it be known what those totals are to be able to review them? Robinson believes Deputy Chief Deegan provided the broken down versions of the cumulative totals that are in the budget. Deputy Chief Deegan explains the line items for the Captain, Lieutenant, Sergeants & Investigators was zeroed out two years ago at the approval of the City Council Finance Committee. All those figures were then moved into Patrol Officer (line item # 101-20-411130) with the separation of the Administrators, the Chief and two (2) Deputy Chiefs, into their own line. The rest of the sworn personnel falling into the Patrol Officer line item. The breakdown of those salaries in full detail can be found in the salary ordinance. Popp assures those figures are represented in the line item for Patrol Officer. Deputy Chief Deegan answers yes, that is to prevent any kind of accounting error. When they all had their own line items it came difficult when they had to switch people around when somebody got promoted or if people decided to leave. It was moving different personnel between those line items and maybe those line items couldn't sustain the budgetary amount for that so they would then have to move money. It was decided to take the composite of the sworn-employee salaries, with the exception of the Administrators, and put them into one line item with, again, the breakdown of that being viewable to the public by the salary ordinance.

Councilman Overbey refers to the cameras in some of the parks and questions who actually monitors them, if they are even monitored at all and to what degree because he talked to the Parks Superintendent and was told the ones in Morningside Park have been painted over. There was some vandalism there as well. Deputy Chief Deegan cannot speak to the cameras that are not of the Police Departments and asks a location of the ones he is referring. Overbey states there are some at Morningside and Heekin. Councilman Marshall adds Cooley Park as well. Overbey was told the Parks and Police Department have the availability to those cameras but nobody has ever confirmed. Deputy Chief Deegan is not sure he will be able to confirm that tonight but will be more than happy to send a follow up email. This is not Big Brother, in real time and there isn't enough staff to sit somebody in front of monitors to watch cameras all day. That is just the reality. Overbey knows about the cameras Deegan is referring to because he was there when they were introduced and confirms these are different cameras. He was told they were put in by Sonitrol. Deegan wishes he could provide an answer right now. Overbey adds he was just relating what he was told that Parks and Police had access to those cameras and he was just wondering how that worked. Deegan knows that Parks had been working on programs to put cameras in. MPD has also talked to neighborhoods that have had interest in upridding cameras as well, through the use of ARP funds. However, if it is not a camera that they as the Police Department put in, he would have to obtain more information to provide an answer at a later time. Questions called.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Dan Burford, Muncie Fire Chief, is here tonight with the sudden retirement of Chief Mead and will be presenting this as best he can. He is excited to stand here this evening and relay how the men and women of the Muncie Fire Department show up and do phenomenal job every day. They are growing the Department as far as services. The EMS services is still relatively new and they are constantly trying to build that and bring it up to the excellent service that the citizens of Muncie deserve every day. Equipment is constantly being worked on, including upgrades to the fire stations. New roofs were replaced at Station #2, Station #3, and Station #4 this year. A contract was awarded to upgrade the restroom and locker room facilities as well as the flooring at Station #7 and that work is beginning shortly. They did roof repairs to some coping and block work at #7 as well and drywall repairs are being done to that at the same time as the facilities to bring it back up the best they can. There are some stations, obviously, where they need to do some more work on so planning began and there is money in the budget to help do that next year. They are on pace to respond to 18,000 incidents this year and so for a Department and City of this size, that is busy. Per capita, we are by far one of the busiest Departments in the Midwest, if not the top. The men and women work extremely hard



every day, as he said earlier. Jumping right into it, as he said, this is his first time here and jokes next year he is going to sit down with Deputy Police Chief Deegan assist in getting his numbers together because he was on it. In going through the Fire Department budget, the only adjustments made in the General Fund were contract items such as adjustments to meet the labor agreement between the City and the Union. They have been operating fairly well this year, as far as total percentage wise. Do not be fooled by that completely, though, assuring they will be fine but there is an engine due for delivery anytime now being a \$700,000 expense. Fire engines were able to be purchased pre-Covid at around \$400,000 but are now \$7,800,000 and that is if you can even get them. For full on custom builds, they are looking at waiting 30 to 36 months. Aerial apparatus now are starting in the \$1.2 million range for single axle straight sticks, which is something they will have to start looking at in the future. Therefore, it is always a challenge replacing the aging equipment. Luckily, it was in the budget last year and they are wanting to include it again this year (with a slight increase). A new ambulance was purchased this year and another one is on order. The first truck should be here soon and the twin to that will be ready for delivery after the first of the year. They, of course, would like to get a long-term replacement program in place but to be able to do that as needed but they have to get the fleet up to a standard to begin with. It doesn't do any good to start saying replacements will be made down the line but the fleet is not up to where it needs to be to begin a replacement program like that. Those are things Chief Burford has done for several years in helping with all the Administrations throughout the time he has been on the Fire Department. It is something he is very passionate about. In looking through the General Fund #101, the increases in Chief (line item # 101-21-411111) was contractual. The Deputy Chief (101-21-411112), Battalion Chiefs (101-21-411113), Chief Inspector (101-21-411116), Captains (101-21-411117) and so forth was moved down into the suppression side down into the fire line last year and that was approved by this Council. It is truly for accounting to help reduce those errors throughout the year. All those figures are available online as well as through the contract negotiations. Doing this, it is much easier when trying to figure out what the budget and expenditures are going to be. He has a nice flowchart that helps fill everybody in when there are promotions or retirements and by plugging the numbers in, it makes adjustments for him which is easy. They did have to adjust the Medicare (line item # 101-21-413015) and PERF (line item # 101-21-413017) expenses for that with obviously the change in the longevity of the contract. That is all for Fund #101 but they also have Fund #105. For Firefighters (line item # 105-21-411124), they had to add a Firefighter line item into the EMS budget to make that contract work out. They worked very closely with the Administration and with the Union to come in agreement where they could fund the contract. It took them, as an Administration themselves, covering a decent portion of that out of their own budgets. Everything else looks like it is going to be pretty good. They are running right along their Fuel (line item # 101-21-422021) budget by contract purchasing it at the end of the year for the following year. It should maintain the same as it was previously. Chief Burford is prepared to present on Fire Department EMS as well if they are prepared. Questions called. Councilman Marshall believes his questions tie into Fund #104, which relates to the EMS. Chairman Robinson asks they finish with Fiore before discussing further into EMS.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENT EMS**

Fire Chief Dan Burford, again, hopes by the end of this month the Fire Department EMS will be fully staffed with paramedics and that is definitely something to say with the shortage of paramedics we have in the state. Statewide, we are about 3,600 paramedics under what is required to provide service. For us to be able to fill those ranks is huge. Not to mention, they can keep suppression people on suppression apparatus so people are not being moved around. He mentions it was budgeted for the 10% increase for paramedics so he is hopeful that when those negotiations come out it will be there but he would rather budget for it now rather than not. The changes lined up for those raises increase FICA, Medicare (line item # 105-21-413015), PERF

Expense (line item # 105-21-413017) as well. They believe they are going to operate very well without increasing things next year but can tighten up if they have to.

Councilman Marshall refers to brief mention of the Firefighter line in the EMS Budget confirming that is essentially works in tandem with what is in the General Fund and asks if that is an increase in staffing or just the raises. Chief Burford answer no, that is just shifting some firefighters down into #104 to cover the contract. In working with the City, the Controller's Office provided the number the City's contribution would be and that is where the different was made to meet that contract. That is why the Firefighter line was developed and money was added to the Medicare and PERF Expenses line already there. Marshall follows up with the raises allocated there notes he didn't see an increase in the Overtime (line item # 105-21-411160) and asks if that means they are expecting less overtime. Chief Burford answers absolutely and explains they are covering several people on retirement right now and to cover on the floor they have a huge swing. As they are making replacements and getting into January, they finally start to catch up where the retirees fall off the books and further individuals can be hired. There is a process working with the Fire Merit Commission to develop a new recruit list and they plan to discuss ways to help recruit local people and people that will come and stay here. Many people come to the Fire Department to get PERF knowing it is much easier to come here and lateral out somewhere that pays more. A lateral process is currently open to bring lateral transfers into the Fire Department. In the last month to date, they have received only one. It is somewhat crazy that a Fishers firefighter and wants to come work where he can truly spend his time responding to emergencies. For staffing right now, they are just three (3) under with four (4) recruits in class going to the academy right now (3 recruits and 1 return senior firefighter who will be hitting the floor soon). There are fewer vacation draws as the Department gets younger because of what is allotted based on time, which lets them know that the number of vacations next year will drop even further. They believe they are going to be in much better shape obviously with overtime next year than this year. By 2025, 70% of our Fire Department will have less than ten (10) years on. Again, that will be much lower vacation draws and longevity. Training has really been ramped up along with the peer programs to help get those individuals ready to step up and there is going to be a big change within the Fire Department as this goes forward.

Councilwoman Selvey needs an explanation after noticing the firefighter overtime is much less than the EMS overtime and asks why that is. Chief Burford states the EMS overtime was actually put in two years ago and was decided to keep it where it was last year but because running so short on civilian paramedics, they offer up to four (4) civilian paramedics a day that is budgeted for. Many paramedics worked a lot of overtime and it was not sure whether that all was going to line out. If they get to the point of being fully staffed on paramedics, (which they are so close to now) it will make a big difference.

Councilman Dishman asks how many ambulances there are at every fire station. Chief Burford explains they are staffing five (5) transport trucks a day at Stations #1, #2, #3, #5, and #6. Dishman asks if they plan to put one at all of them. Chief Burford states that is going to be a great discussion for the next negotiation of Council, as those numbers have to be negotiated to be able to do. With the staffing they have right now, they just cannot. Would he like to? Absolutely. Dishman would like to see that himself.

Councilwoman Selvey adds the space is needed, also, to be able to do that. Chief Burford mentions space is a problem and the stations are full right now. When the stations were built and with the way the Fire Department operated then, they didn't run EMS. Since adding the EMS Program, it has added extra apparatus.

Councilman Green refers to the Clothing Pay (line item # 104-21-413035) for \$22,800 and asks if that includes the bunker gear for the firefighters. Chief Burford refers to the Center Township Budget (10424) being initial clothing for the paramedics when they come on as well as their annual clothing allowance. It is prorated from that first year's point on their first year anniversary date. Green asks if all firefighters receive one complete set of bunker gear or two. Burford replies they get one (1) set when they come on but three (3) complete sets of uniforms are provided: work out shorts, sweatshirts, winter coats and a complete set of

structural firefighting gear. Green questions the longevity of one set. Burford says NFPA (National Fire Protection Agency) says ten years is the max if busy. He recalls when being assigned to Rescue, he purchased a set of gear roughly every three (3) years. Green has another question concerning the emission control filter systems that go on the trucks and if that is something that is included somewhere in their budget. Burford states they received a Covid reimbursement grant, which came in earlier this year that Chief Meade was working on, to allow the use of those funds to replace those systems. From his background in auto mechanics and diesel mechanics, he is not looking to add an extra diesel particulate filter on top of a diesel particulate filter. Increasing backpressure on a diesel engine is negative to its performance operation. However, they are looking to put those systems in. Bids have already been received for systems and quotes for installation and electrical are already ready. Again, that was something the Chief Meade was working on and getting relatively close on so Burford hopes to continue pushing for that. It was decided to go with the hanging units in the stations. If running properly and meeting proper standards, newer diesel engines do not put out near the particulate matter that the older pre-2007 when the first gen emission standards came out. They feel those are the best bet because it is not going to be a responsibility of the firefighters at that point to get out and hook them up. They are going to come on when the doors open and when the trucks pass through them. It will be automatic when the doors open in the summer. They, by far, meet the standards for cleaning the air and removing those the carbon black matter which is the cancer causing agents. Green has another question concerning the repair on the vehicles and asks who completes the repair work on engines and brake systems; do they get sent off to a company that does specifically firefighting equipment? Burford answers the majority of repairs are done by the Sanitary District via contract. MSD built a wonderful new facility and he encourages everyone to go take a look if they haven't already. MSD services the Fire Department's vehicles while other outside contractors come in to certify the aerials, certify and work on the pumps themselves, and perform pump testing, etc. It is kind of a mix of things. The agreement with the Sanitary District has been amazing because they do amazing work and the mechanics are great but they are limited to some of the stuff they can do that require certifications. For that, the use of outside agencies is implemented. Green asks if all vehicles are in working order or if there are any with problems at this time. Burford relays they absolutely have current problems with vehicles and he would be happy to sit and go over it all. With the fleet and the amount of vehicles they have, including the age and miles on them, they are going to have a daunting task to keep up with keeping those repaired. As mentioned, they bring in outside contractors to work on the vehicles and utilize the Sanitation garage when they can. However, he would love to sit down and further discuss the age, miles, and engine hours of the fleet. Green asks when one breaks down if they have backups. Burford states generally, they try. With the way they are staffed now, they usually have two (2) engines and one (1) aerial in reserve. Right now, he has a crashed aerial apparatus and finally received approval to get it repaired but has to have another apparatus to put in service for it. They also had two engines down simultaneously and a matched pair that simultaneously had their transmissions go out at the same time and were sitting at the garage for a while getting fixed. He had had to do engine rebuilds at \$42,000 apiece this past year and another one is getting ready to go. It is a daunting and never-ending task. Green asks if it is included in the budget. Burford states they have their repairs and stuff in the budget, obviously, as there are two line items for Equipment Repair & Maintenance (\$125,000 in line item # 105-21-436011 and \$70,000 in line item # 104-24-431050). Green asks if he feels that is enough. Burford thinks with the new engines coming in that is going to offset some of that. Yes, there will always be issues but they will deal with them the best they can. However, the two (2) new engines coming in will have warranties to cover any repairs for a period of a year (on some things) and five years (on driveline).

Councilman Dishman asks if the engines use DEF (Diesel Exhaust Fluid). Chief Burford answers everything Tier 2 and up use DEF. Tier 1 uses a diesel particulate filter that only used to burn off after treatment burn off. Dishman asks how many times a year they have to regen. Burford assures the trucks regen

often. In putting filtered systems on diesel trucks where the exhaust does not get hot enough, generally, they really are not designed for in-town use (and he hates to say that). However, it is what the Department has to get. Dishman confirms they are not designed to set and idle either because they plug up the system. Burford adds they do manual regens, driving regens and try to maintain it the best they can. Nevertheless, you have to purchase a diesel engine to put on a fire apparatus and FPA won't allow the use of a gas engine if you wanted to. Dishman adds when people start putting electronics on diesels that's a whole different story. Burford comments that being another discussion he would be happy to have as well. Dishman is very aware of this because he works on those types of trucks himself at his job every day. He knows the DEF problems they have and the clogged exhaust systems that need to be taken off to be cleaned. Burford agrees adding it cost about \$3,500 every time that is done. Dishman comments it is a lot of money to have those things cleaned and installed back in.

Elizabeth Edgell asks the profit cost of the Fire EMS Program. Chief Burford wishes he had that exact evidence as far as what they bring in verses what is put out but the estimated billing for next year is roughly \$4 million. Edgell recalls the last number provided to her was \$2.9 million. Burford asks for as far as what has been made this year. Edgell answers yes. Burford states he can work off their estimate for next year and provide that. Edgell will send him an email then. Her next question is regarding the cheating scandal and how much that is charging the City or if there is any projected losses with liability on lawsuits. Burford believes they are at about \$25,000 being paid to the individual on his paid leave. As far as cost, right now, he is still appealing with the state. Questions called.

#### **MERIT COMMISSION(S) POLICE/FIRE**

Chairman Robinson is happy to review these budgets but doesn't believe sit is necessary. Craig Wright, City Controller, is present in case there are any questions. However, these budgets stayed exactly the same as they have been and it is trusted that those Merit Commissions have what they need. The rest of the Finance Committee agrees. Questions called.

#### **ANIMAL SHELTER**



Katy Wolfe, MACS Superintendent, is happy to answer any questions. There wasn't a lot of changes from last year to this year besides an increase for the 5% raises for the full-time employees and some money moved around to other line items from last year.

Councilman Overbey noticed that Food & Litter (line item # 101-15-422141) was for \$11,000 but was \$10,000 on the budget James Turner, MACS Board President, brought in a few Council meetings ago. He asks why there was a decrease of \$1,000 there. Wolfe advises she is not sure about that. She hoped he would be here tonight to answer any questions on the budget the Board voted on. No matter the number, it is hard to forecast what food and litter is going to cost month-to-month, let alone year-to-year. Last year, a 40 lb bag of food cost \$21 but is now up to over \$30. A lot of this is unable to forecast. They are blessed to have many private citizens that donate and have spent \$55,870 this year out of donations alone. They are very lucky to have the citizens of Muncie as they are are very generous with the Shelter. Overbey wants to know why it decreased then because with the information she just provided, it would be assumed they would be asking for more money for food and litter.

Craig Wright, City Controller, advises that Food & Litter is \$15,000. As far as somebody that is resourceful with getting what is needed from donations and such, Ms. Wolfe has done an absolute fantastic job. Overbey appreciates that and mentions he has donated to the Shelter himself but many people are having trouble with the way the economy is. As she mentioned, many things are going up in price compared to just a year ago. He is hoping they do not count too much on donations. Questions called.

**ADJOURNED:**

Chairman Robinson reminds everyone that this upcoming Monday, October 16, 2023 at 7:00 PM is the City Council Special Meeting to finalize the 2024 budget. At that point in time, they will cover the last remaining City Departments which includes: Personnel, Human Rights Commission, City Court, City Clerk, City Council, and Beech Grove Cemetery. Any suggested amendment and approval will then take place after those presentations at that meeting. A motion was made by Selvey and seconded by Overbey to Adjourn. A vote by acclamation showed 8 yeas and 1 nay (Robinson). ADJOURNED.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Robinson, President of the  
Muncie Common Council  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Belinda Munson, Muncie City Clerk  
of the Muncie Common Council