

**Virtual Special Meeting of the
Community Development/Housing/General Government Committee**

August 31, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Adams called the Special Meeting of the Community Development/Housing/General Government Committee to order at 6:00 p.m. and stated due to the Safer At Home Order, all Committee Members are participating virtually. For virtual meetings, Committee Members will be muted until asked to be heard. When there is a vote, it will be necessary to conduct a roll call vote. A Committee Member will be recognized, and will raise their hand and state their vote.

Present:

Mayor Pro Tempore Denise Adams, Chair, Council Member Annette Scippio, Vice Chair, Council Member Robert Clark, and Council Member Dan Bess (arrived at 6:33 p.m.)

Additional Attendees:

Council Member Jeff MacIntosh and Council Member John Larson

1. Introduction/Purpose.

Chair Adams introduced Patrice Toney, Budget Director.

2. Presentation on the Winston-Salem Police Department Budget.

Patrice Toney, Budget Director, provided the Winston-Salem Police Department Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget Overview.

3. Questions/Comments from the Public.

Ms. Tony reviewed a few questions she received from citizens prior to the meeting and noted that answers to citizens' questions would be provided on the City's website.

4. Public Comment Period

Karen Dorr:

Hi Ms. Toney you did address my issue about the de-escalation but I just want to reiterate what I am suggesting. I feel it could come out of the field services part of the budget. I think it would really behoove this body to push for what I'm calling de-escalation response team which would consist of social workers, psychologist, police Officer, and a Community Member, who are all specifically trained in de-escalation techniques. That would be for four weeks not four days. The public would call an alternate three digit number rather than 911 for help with non-lethal crises such as domestic disputes, mental health issues, loitering complaints, and shoplifting so that these teams would arrive

Chair Adams states time is up.

Ms. Dorr final comment: The idea would be prevent harm, to prevent use of lethal force. I thank you for hearing me and I do hope you consider it.

Nia Sadler, 1325 Camden Place Court

WSPD has entered into an inter local agreement with FCSO and the City of Kernersville to form a new drug task force and the City Council unanimously approved that on the 17th of August. The City will be responsible 60% of the lease cost and will hold a 55% share of any forfeitures seized by this task force. In the outline of the task force it's stated that the actions and remedies regenerated by the task force over this ten year period cost six through ten. I take this to mean that the confiscated forfeitures that are created when officers engage in seizures are what financed the continuation of the task force for the 10 years. So it concerns me that City Council approved a task force to exist for ten years based on the finance acquired by continued crime. So my question is how will the drug task force address the root causes of drug crimes like financial insecurity, lack of affordable addiction treatment, and the added factor of a global pandemic that might be exacerbating those causes.

Ken James, 754 Chestnut Ridge Court

I just have a quick comment. I wanted to express my support for our local law enforcement agencies and while I certainly support the de-escalation type of training that previous speakers spoke about, I would say that I would oppose to any actions that would result in the police or other law enforcement agencies becoming less effective in maintaining law and order. So that's all thank you very much.

Duck McManus, 130 Secret Garden Lane, Apartment 6

On August 17th the City Council voted in favor of the Resolution awarding the purchase order for Police Pursuit vehicles from Asheville Ford, LLC for a total of \$2,042,670.60 against the wishes of the people. This purchase order is for 62 Ford Interceptors all SUV's. Garage services fee's for WSPD amounted to \$1,073,761.75 and fuel cost for WSPD vehicles amounted to \$890,767.23 in the 2019-2020 Fiscal Year. Based on Police Vehicle Memo received by City Manager's on July 15th the total life time cost per Ford Interceptor is \$62,930.00 and the vehicle replacement information none of the WSPD Crown Victoria's nor Chevrolet Caprices amount to or....

Chair Adams: Time is up; to submit a comment or question, please use online or email.

Tom Chappell

D.D., thank you for your time. Mr. Clark thank you for your time. A special thanks to Patrice, the presentation was awesome. I am really looking forward to getting a copy of that and the further detail you were talking about. First, I'll second the comment from the last speaker about not wanting to have any reduction of service or reduction. One of the main things that I think we need to address the cost on is training cost, with the high turnover training cost is very expensive so bottom line is I think we should consider a little bit of a bump up for Police salaries and so forth to counter act the training cost, to enhance the enforcement side of it, to meet the objectives and priorities outlined in the

budget justification. So I really think we need to get behind our Police Department and serve as a responsible example for others.

Chair Adams: Thank you Mr. Chappell, times up.

Karen Obas, 6887 Idles Road

According to WSPD's document "Building Community Trust and Legitimacy", I've noticed a concerning imbalance of budgetary priorities. Winston-Salem Police Officer's receive only four hours of de-escalation training per year and only five hours in implicit bias training every other year. All WSPD employees are paid for 1.5 hours of exercise per week for a total of 78 hours per year. Clearly exercise for Officers is important, however, is it more important than de-escalation training and implicit bias training. How does WSPD expect to build trust within a community where Officers are carefully trained police without bias? How can you explain the lack of this training?

Desiree DeDolce, 710 S Green Street

In 1995 following the asphyxiation death of Shelia McKellar, WSPD strictly prohibited the maximum restraint defined as restraining once hands behind their back flexing their legs while connecting their restrained hands and feet. The distinction of this position being prohibited only when hands and feet are connected would not have saved the lives of Shelia McKellar or John Elliott Neville both of whom died in prone restraints without their hands and feet connected. Council Member James Taylor, asserted in the August 17th City Council Meeting that the WSPD had already banned the prone restraint of community concern. However, this by definition is not quite true. Although, WSPD does not use or teach the bent leg restraint this is not the same as being prohibited to do so. If an Officer did use this bent leg prone restraint without connecting the victims' hands and feet would it still be considered a violation of the use of force policy?

Chair Adams: Thank you times up, finish your comments online.

James Wooten, 5330 Lucon Lane

Quick question, I liked to understand if there are any specific examples across the country where budget reductions or reallocations of funds have been specifically successful. I understand everyone's concern and I feel like training increased, increased funding in training, would be beneficial but I'm kind of having a hard time where specific examples of reallocating and has been successful with the safety of citizens.

Sara Hines, 1447 W Fourth Street

The Coronavirus emergency supplement funding program from the US Department of Justice reports that it has allocated almost a billion dollars to public safety nationwide during the course of this pandemic. The program reports to have allocated these funds in the amount of \$523,520 to the City of Winston-Salem Police Department on May 29th of 202. In addition to this half million dollar grant, for the Coronavirus relief, the City Council unanimously approved a 1% salary increase to sworn public safety employees with the recently acquired Coronavirus relief funded. However, it has been stated numerous times by City Council Member that more financial support is needed for public

safety in order to retain and recruit officers. Officer detainment and recruitment has been a subject of concern for much longer than during the pandemic in this community. Can you explain how the multiple use of Coronavirus grants...

Chair Adams, thank you Ms. Hines.

Tembila Covington, 2624 Patria Street

Good evening, our agency mission is to protect and serve and as it protects and serves it is geared towards community policing, which I am pleased to know about. My concern is that we need to put a little more effort financially towards training and educational programs that will assist in some things we have already heard here listed and questioned about pertaining de-escalating tactics and training so that there are efforts placed specifically in neighborhoods where public safety is a concern and so that is certainly my comments, I believe that we have detailed a budget, perhaps developing a strategic plan would reallocate some funding towards educational and training programs would be helpful to assist in our communities.

Al Jabbar 617 Daffodil Drive.

Good Evening, I volunteer at Petree Elementary and also in the Rowan Hills Community and in talking to some of the residents there, the owners of those apartments have told the tenants they couldn't have enrichment programs using the facility there. My concern is that with as much violence that's going on in that area, and we're talking about defunding police, I'm totally in support of our Police Department, but my concern is that we don't hold these accountabilities to the people who own these properties. That's my comment.

Sara Blackburn

(Did not speak)

Ikulture Chandler 211 Hoover Street, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Why is more policing the option? It isn't reducing crime, but killing black people. Let me be clear. There are no special operations in urban communities in Winston-Salem. Instead of more Police funding, we need to invest in job training programs, such as YouthBuild and Fire Department training, located in black neighborhoods for easiest access. Instead invest in my communities like y'all do Downtown. And making sure black communities have jobs that require no experience, advanced job training, and education.

Miranda Jones 405 Corona Street

As has been mentioned, Police brutality kills African-Americans. We like to think our City is progressive because we have managed to escaped the rioting that is an expression of black rage, black hurt, and black pain. However, I want to say that our City is complicit because we won't reallocate enough funds for preventative measures and we spend massive amounts of money on Police. I am asking because Council Member Scippio mentioned that the unruly young people, that we reignite and reinvest YouthBuild. As an educator, I have contacted YouthBuild to no avail. My former students have contacted YouthBuild to no avail. I am also asking that we no longer invest in

programs that do not have measurable outcomes. It is going to take more than movie night and gardening to help save our young people. I am asking that we create a local database tracking Police misconduct, because unfortunately, many of my students will come into contact with law enforcement. I am not asking you to get rid of your Police. I am asking you to invest in people before they meet the Police, just like you do your fancy buildings Downtown. Are the people not better than your buildings? Thank you.

Bob Manizza 755 South Westview Drive

I have a very general comment from my heart, and that is capitalism underdeveloped black America, and this was done on purpose, and we need to do everything we can to undo that. Any family on a budget knows how to cut expenses and use money more wisely and some of the reparations we can owe are to help us. We should do just that. Use our money more wisely to invest in black America. And we can start right here. Thank you.

Eunice Campbell 5743 Antietam Drive

I basically just have a statement. I am not in approval of cutting the Police budget that only saw .7% increase over prior year. Maybe some more mindful spending within that budget. But actually allocation of money out of the Police budget completely, I don't see where that would help. Especially with the personnel issues we have and when you break the Police budget down, it's only around \$300 per person for protection. What I'm interested in is the community and economic development fund, where we saw a 92.6% increase in business development over prior year, and I hope that's the next budget that is discussed

Chair Adams: Time is up.

Sally Hirsh

Well, I had a lot of questions, but I'll just ask this one. Where will the line item budget requested by Caroline Highsmith, and other neighborhoods, I believe there were eight or nine other neighborhood directors that requested the line item budget, where will that be located and when?

Patrice Toney: The line item budget would be available on the City's website by Friday.

Mabel Hunter

My name is Mabel Hunter, 4030 (inaudible) Road.

Chair Adams asked Mrs. Hunter if she had her television on.

Mrs. Hunter: I'm trying to just comment that when we talk about defunding the Police and maybe, I don't have the exact idea of that, but it's not taking away funding from the Police, but just reallocating it to different places where it might be better used, like in training instead of riot gear and tanks and things like that. It just seemed to me that it would be better used having them trained better and then that would help them also be better active in the community and interfacing with the people. So sometimes I

Chair Adams stated time is up.

Kris McCann 205 Cool Springs Road, in Winston-Salem, 27107

I'm calling tonight to express my displeasure with our City Council to even consider such a Resolution that would defund our Police Department and reduce the budget thereof. Especially when we're in the time where we see crime and violent crime and the deaths of many of our small children and teenagers in the City. It's hard for me to understand how we can even make such a consideration but then I look back at our City Council who thinks more of criminals than they do our law abiding citizens, demonstrated in allowing them to block Interstate 40 and highway 52. Anyone that would consider this Resolution, I find it Ludacris and you're reducing the safety for our citizens, but I guess the blood will be on your hands. Have a good evening.

Phillip Carter 1148 E Fifth Street

I'm more interested in the community resources, especially the part where by funding or monies is provided to community agencies to provide response to crime, public safety, and quality of life. Specifically the quality of life. I would like to know who those agencies are, how much money have they gotten, and have they actually made a dent in providing assistance to quality of life issues. Also, I heard when said that the forfeiture fund cannot be used for operation expenses. Can any of those funds be used also to address recidivism and quality of life issues? Thank you.

Ryan Nicholas

At this point, I am just echoing what other people have said about the need for de-escalation training for the police department and I'll also add to that, any portions of the budget that can be reallocated towards community resources like restorative justice programs and things that like, I think would be an excellent investment in the community and to decrease the burden on the Police Department by having better community responses to conflict and harm. Thank you.

Wynette M

(Did not speak)

Michael Banner 515 N Jackson Avenue

I've been sitting here listening to the words and I feel appalled that in the name of black people who are being represented by people who are standing in highways and marching in front of jail houses, so much work is going on, but no one's sat and asked the black people what they want, but yet we still, the City Council has unanimously hyper-funded the Police to further have a reign of terror on black people in the communities. So, we shouldn't even have to speak of the lack of equity due to all of the policies over the years that could have been restored through a measure like this, and the day the reparations is being spoken of, but what the reality is, we are being slapped down like a baby crying

Chair Adams stated time is up.

Evelyn Allen 1281 W Fourth Street

Hello, First of all, I want to start by arguing there may be conflict of interest, as Council Woman Annette Scippio has received \$1000 from the Southern States Police Benevolent Association, a Police pack. And, I'm also concerned about the effects of Police brutality and relating to gentrification, many of the other City Council Members have received money from real estate packs, or realtors themselves. And ultimately, I feel like the money for the Police budget should be largely defunding or reallocated into effects like housing and rent assistance. Thank you very much.

Jacky M.

Hi, I didn't expect to be called in, I was just going to listen in, but I do want to echo a lot of what everyone is saying, that I think that we definitely need more funds to be reallocated towards community services. I think it's much more effective, especially in response to mental health, we definitely need more resources for that. Thank you.

Jillian Sechrest 2524 Tanelon Place, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 27127

I was actually calling much like Jacky, to just listen in, do my due diligence on that end, but I do believe that there is some work that can be done whenever it comes to us looking at allocation to the Police budget in lieu of possibly topping off any existent Housing Authority of Winston-Salem needs and what is happening especially with the Cleveland Avenue homes, what is a dire situation for the individuals. Where we're looking at taking an additional million to give to Police for something as asinine as fleet vehicles in lieu of basically addressing material needs which would, have actually been proven to show effectively reduced crime drastically. So, I think we need to better prioritize our budgetary needs and concerns to be serve the constituents that are paying the taxes where this money is coming from. That is all. Thank you.

4. Closing Remarks.

Council Member Scippio thanked Ms. Toney for the presentation. She stated she hopes this meeting helped the public to understand how their tax dollars help to support public safety for the City. She thanked the citizens for participating in the meeting and encouraged all citizens to engage in the local government process. She thanked Mayor Pro-Tem Adams for her vision for this meeting.

Council Member Besse stated it is always good to have more information regarding the public safety budget, thanked the citizens for their participation and complimented Ms. Toney on a very good presentation. He noted the City should always be interested in how to approve the services. He stated suggestions and comments should be referred to the Public Safety Committee for discussion.

Council Member Clark stated there were very good questions asked by citizens, and staff to provide specific answers. He noted the School Resource Officers will be provided by the Sheriff's office. He read a letter by Ms. Theresa Appelboom.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Questions and answers, as well as the letter from Ms. Theresa Appelboom, are permanent records of these proceedings and will be available for inspection upon request.