

2019-2020 BUDGET QUESTION

Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT(S): Austin Police

REQUEST NO.: 62

REQUESTED BY: Work Session Questions

DATE REQUESTED: 8/29/19

DATE POSTED: 9/3/19

REQUEST: At the August 29, 2019 work session, a number of questions about Austin Police Department's (APD) staffing, vacancies, and overtime were asked. These questions are:

- Please provide more detail regarding APD's sworn vacancies. In addition, please provide detail about how costs associated with new officers are paid out if officer positions are not filled in the current year.
 - Provide information on attrition rate, including: calculations for attrition rates, percentage of classes filled, and what can be done to reduce attrition rates. In addition, please provide a detailed schedule demonstrating when vacancies are estimated to be filled.
 - How was overtime budgeted and expended in FY 2016-17, FY 2017-18, and year-to-date FY 2018-19? How does this calculation take into account the vacancy rate for the Department? Please provide overtime information in terms of reimbursed and non-reimbursed overtime.
 - How do promotional positions being added affect the police force?
 - Can Community Service Officers be utilized to more efficiently and affordably achieve some of APD's community policing goals?
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RESPONSE:

- Please provide more detail regarding APD's sworn vacancies. In addition, please provide detail about how costs associated with new officers are paid out if officer positions are not filled in the current year.

A growing city requires a growing police force to accomplish the goals of public safety and order in our community. In accordance with the Matrix study and Council Resolution 20180322-047, a five year staffing plan was approved to accommodate increases in patrol and investigative workloads. The FY 2019-20 budget includes partial funding for 30 new sworn positions including 20 Officers, 2 Corporals and 2 Sergeants to address patrol staffing, and 6 Detectives to address investigative workloads. These positions are necessary to address increased response times, increased violent crime and gun violence in our community and to increase case clearance rates with the aim of meeting public safety outcomes outlined in the Austin Strategic Direction 2023 plan.

As of the most recent pay period, APD has a sworn vacancy rate of 5.3% which includes 103 vacant sworn positions. APD is addressing sworn vacancies with the following changes:

- APD is hiring 5 additional temporary civilian background investigators in Recruiting to cut our processing time by 50%.

- Beginning in February 2020, APD will have an academy class starting every 16 weeks without break. APD is using creative scheduling to break down the classes into smaller groups to facilitate certain training blocks. These teaching blocks will require the classes to be divided into different teams and then rotated through the instructional blocks. An example is a four-week block of instruction that is broken down into sub-groups of topics such as firearms, criminal investigations, CPR, effective communication, advanced patrol tactics, driving training, etc. Each small group is rotated through the learning topics using a different area of the campus. Upon completion, the groups rotate to the next area and so on until all have received the courses needed. This plan requires a high degree of coordination between recruiting and cadet training.

Total vacancy savings of \$11,884,319 for both sworn and civilian positions related to FY 2018-19 vacant positions is budgeted as a credit in APD's budget. Any additional vacancy savings that the department incurs is used to fund sworn overtime to back-fill for vacant positions or overtime related to emergency activations. Vacancy savings may be used for other required unfunded projects, such as, the third-party comprehensive evaluation of how reported sexual assaults are investigated and processed per Council Resolution 20190131-077.

All of the vacant positions in APD's FY 2018-19 budget are funded; however, some were only partially funded during budget adoption. The budget includes a credit offset for vacancy savings, which is a projection of funds that will be saved by vacancies throughout the year as well as the offset funding for various new positions that didn't receive full year funding in the budget.

APD purchases officer-related equipment for both new positions and positions being replaced due to attrition. Due to equipment processing and delivery times, APD purchases approximately 75% of the necessary equipment beginning 5 months prior to the start of a cadet academy class. The remaining 25% of equipment is purchased one month prior to cadet graduation.

- Provide information on attrition rates, including: calculations for attrition rates, percentage of classes filled, and what can be done to reduce sworn and cadet attrition rates. In addition, please provide a detailed schedule demonstrating when vacancies are estimated to be filled.

APD's sworn average attrition rate is 5.7, calculated using the monthly average number of officers leaving the department beginning in January of 2018. This date is used because APD had near zero vacancies with the graduation of the 137th Cadet class on December 22, 2017, however, APD's Meet and Confer contract was rejected and 39 sworn separations occurred before the end of 2017. Prior to December of 2017, the average number of officers leaving the department was 2-3 per month. Since that time, the average has increased to 5-6 officers leaving the department per month. This is an approximately 100% increase in the number of sworn personnel separating from APD each month.

Cadet class attrition rate from 2010 (Cadet classes 118th to 139th) to 2018 shows an average attrition rate of 19%, which APD has used to forecast future attrition at the academy.

APD is taking the below measures to reduce attrition rates:

- A civilian Training Specialist has been hired to help with the total review of the curriculum to include teaching modalities. This review is projected to have a positive impact in assisting the training staff in how to be better instructors and looking specifically at the training curriculum for gains that can be produced in making sure the material is correctly ordered within the training calendar using a building block, adult learning approach.
- Resiliency training has been moved to the beginning of the Academy class. This training gives a “tool-box” approach to help cadets with specific learning techniques and strategies for improving their success throughout the 32-week academy.
- Professional psychological services are available onsite to help cadets who are experiencing an excessive amount of stress or other short-term issues. These professional counseling services have already been successfully employed by cadets.
- Mentorship for female recruits has been in place beginning with the 139th Cadet Class and continues today. This is done in an effort to give additional support to female cadets who are paired up with successful female officers to provide advice and support while attending the academy.
- Academic research is being conducted to identify specific issues regarding Academy non-completions, mentorship and female recruits. The results of the research should assist APD in further developing its mentorship program with the larger goal of increasing success rates for female recruits in the academy.
- Additional internal research is being conducted to identify specific root causes into the rate of attrition within the Academy. This review includes an in-depth analysis of why students are leaving the Academy and will include proactive solutions in an effort to positively impact this issue.
- APD has made wellness a high priority by reallocating resources internally to create the Wellness Bureau to engage in improving the health, wellness and quality of life of APD employees. This Bureau is comprised of 5 sworn and 4 civilian employees, including 2 Psychologists.

Using the attrition and graduation assumptions described above, all sworn vacancies are estimated to be filled with the graduation of the 146th class on August 27, 2021 including the addition of 30 sworn positions in FY20 and FY21. Below is a detailed schedule:

Date	Vacancies	Attrition	Staffing Plan (new positions)	Graduated Cadets	Total Vacancies	Vacancy Rate
9/1/19	102.0	5.7			107.7	5.6%
10/1/19	107.7	5.7	30		143.4	7.3%
11/1/19	143.4	5.7			149.1	7.6%
12/1/19	149.1	5.7			154.8	7.9%
1/1/20	154.8	5.7		73	87.5	4.5%
2/1/20	87.5	5.7			93.2	4.8%
3/1/20	93.2	5.7			98.9	5.0%
4/1/20	98.9	5.7			104.6	5.3%
5/1/20	104.6	5.7			110.3	5.6%
6/1/20	110.3	5.7			116.0	5.9%
7/1/20	116.0	5.7			121.7	6.2%
8/1/20	121.7	5.7			127.4	6.5%
9/1/20	127.4	5.7		63	70.1	3.6%
10/1/20	70.1	5.7	30		105.8	5.3%
11/1/20	105.8	5.7			111.5	5.6%
12/1/20	111.5	5.7			117.2	5.9%
1/1/21	117.2	5.7		63	59.9	3.0%
2/1/21	59.9	5.7			65.6	3.3%
3/1/21	65.6	5.7			71.3	3.6%
4/1/21	71.3	5.7			77.0	3.9%
5/1/21	77.0	5.7		63	19.7	1.0%
6/1/21	19.7	5.7			25.4	1.3%
7/1/21	25.4	5.7			31.1	1.6%
8/1/21	31.1	5.7		63	(26.2)	-1.3%
9/1/21	-26.2	5.7			(20.5)	-1.0%

This schedule will be updated as actual attrition rates and graduation rates occur, and the department will manage the size and timing of the 146th class to ensure an over-hire situation does not occur.

- How is overtime was budgeted and expended budgeted in FY 2016-17, FY 2017-18, and YTD FY 2018-19? How does this calculation take into account the vacancy rate for the Department? Please provide overtime information in terms of reimbursed and non-reimbursed overtime.

Below is a table of Overtime expenditures for FY 2016-17, FY 2017-18 and year-to-date FY 2018-19:

	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	YTD FY2018-19
Non-Reimbursed Sworn Overtime & Call-Back	\$ 14,111,338	\$ 11,800,141	\$ 13,526,005
Reimbursed Sworn Overtime	\$ 5,738,759	\$ 5,254,002	\$ 5,530,102

APD's overtime is budgeted based on prior year budget plus or minus any funds added or removed based on special initiatives. The current sworn overtime budget of \$9.1M is for non-reimbursed overtime related to late calls, holdovers, court-time, staffing special initiatives (i.e. Downtown Area Violent Crime Initiative), special investigations, emergency events, and back-filling shifts due to officers on leave. There is also an additional \$0.4M budgeted for call-back which is also a type of overtime. Due to various special initiatives required of the department as well as the number of vacancies, any additional vacancy

savings that the department incurs (over the required credit) is used to back-fill for vacant positions and provide for other unplanned emergency services.

The above table provides details of expenditures related to reimbursed and non-reimbursed overtime. Reimbursed overtime expenditures are offset by a credit related to the reimbursement to APD. Reimbursed overtime is paid by outside contractors who hire police officers through the APD Special Events division for event security, as well as, reimbursements from Federal and State agencies related to grants and task forces. More specifically, reimbursed overtime paid through grants include the Texas Department of Transportation STEP grant, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Program grant totaling \$1.7M of reimbursed overtime in FY 2018-19.

- How do promotional positions being added effect the police force?

The 30 new positions in the budget include 6 Detective positions, 2 Corporal positions and 2 Sergeant positions. APD will add the new Detective positions to the following areas: Sex Crimes, Robbery, Digital Forensics, Aggravated Assault and Violent Crimes Task Force. Promotions will occur from the next lowest rank to these positions per the Meet and Confer promotional schedule thereby ultimately creating 10 vacancies in the Officer rank. These 10 vacancies are already accounted for in the overall 30 positions for FY 2019-20 and are represented in the vacancy table above.

- Can Community Service Officers be utilized to more efficiently and affordably achieve some of APD's community policing goals?

Community Service Officers cannot be used because many of the duties that the Police Department would need Community Service Officers to perform require specifically trained knowledge of police work. This training is received in the Austin Police academy and upon graduation certifies through state licensure that the individual has the ability to enforce city ordinance violation and state law. Texas Local Government Chapter 143.003(5) defines a police officer as "a member of a police department or other peace officer who was appointed in substantial compliance with this chapter or who is entitled to civil service status" under Chapter 143. The Texas Supreme Court has ruled that a position in a police department can only be *filled* by a peace officer if the position requires knowledge of police work and work in the police department. Therefore, those positions can only be occupied by a peace officer, unless the Association and the City negotiate a change to Chapter 143 through the Meet and Confer process, which requires an affirmative vote by a majority of the Association's membership and the City Council.

Based on the recommendations from the PERF study that Council authorized during the 2012 budget adoption process, the department reviewed sworn positions throughout the department to determine where officers were performing duties that did not require law enforcement action. As a result, a total of twenty-one (21) civilian positions were added in the FY2017 budget in order to free up the officers so they could be used to perform duties requiring law enforcement action.