

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED FY '26 PD BUDGET

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 12th, 2025 PRESENTATION

5:30 p.m. Public Session – Conference Room A, City Hall

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The February 12th, 2025, Public Hearing on the Police Department's proposed FY26 budget was called to order at 5:30 p.m. in Conference Room A in City Hall. (A recording of this meeting is available on the City's website & City's Youtube Channel)

Present: Commissioners Coyle, Scherr and Fernald, Chief Mark Newport, Deputy Chief Michael Maloney and Business Ops. Manager Karen Senecal.
Members of the Public: Petra Huda, Esther Kennedy

II. **PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSED FY '26 BUDGET:**

Chief Newport presented two budget scenarios for the police department at the request of the City Council: one with a 2.9% cap and another with a 0% increase.

Chief Newport shared a preliminary FY26 budget proposal highlighting key priorities, including recruitment efforts, a new police facility, reaccreditation, and the implementation of new technology such as Taser 10 units and body-worn cameras. The budget also addresses updated to recording systems, securing the back parking lot, and strategies to keep up with the demands of a rapidly growing community. A major budget impact is the financial cost of implementing a new CAD/RMS system, as well as price increases for necessities like gasoline, phones, and recruiting

If the department complies with the 2.9% budget cap, it will need to reduce positions, leaving current vacancies unfilled. This will likely lead to increased overtime costs and a higher risk of staff burnout, as there will be little to no shift relief.

If the department complies with a 0% budget cap, it will result in a \$850,073 reduction, requiring the elimination of 8 positions. This would negatively

impact public service and officer morale, severely hindering the department's ability to effectively serve the Portsmouth community.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT: (The entire meeting can be viewed online by going to the city's website and the city's YouTube channel.)

Ester Kennedy, 41 Pickering Ave: commented on the line-item budget and potential for billing outside agencies for Portsmouth Police resources.

Petra Huda, 280 South Street: commented on required reductions to meet the proposed 2.9% cap and shared her budget analysis.

Chief Newport invites the public to attend the February Police Commission meeting to provide input on the proposed FY26 budget. Citizens can also call, email, or schedule an appointment to share their feedback.

Commissioner Scherr moved to close the public meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Fernald. Roll Call Vote: Unanimous, 3-0.

END OF MEETING

Respectfully Submitted by Jacqueline Burnett, Executive Assistant