

City of Apopka Minutes

Minutes of the City Council Budget Workshop Meeting held on July 25, 2022 at 5:00 PM, in the City of Apopka Council Chambers.

Present:

- Mayor Bryan Nelson
- Commissioner Doug Bankson
- Commissioner Nick Nesta
- Commissioner Alexander Smith
- Commissioner Diane Velazquez
- City Administrator, Edward Bass

Absent:

City Attorney, Michael Rodriguez

Press Present

John Peery, The Apopka Chief

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance:

Commissioner Smith provided the Invocation and led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Information Technology and Public Safety Budget Review:

Information Technology:

Rob Hippler, Information Technology Director, said we're using a software from the Finance Department for the budget and said he's running solely off of their software so there won't be a ppt for this. He said we'll start off with the overall highlights of where our budget is today. He said he'll point out where money was transferred to different budget lines as these are some significant changes between FY22 and FY23 budget years. He stated that they are looking for two additional personnel: a GIS Coordinator and a Social Media/Graphic Designer. We went on to state that the bigger request that they have, for the second portion, will be from Multi-factor Authentication Maintenance; that is a cost that we did not have last year, it is a project that he implemented this past year. This is a necessity with malware and ransomware going on. The next portion will be the Motorola P25 System, that is the communications for public safety, that encompasses public service, as well. The maintenance through Motorola went up 4% this year, so that was another \$35,000 - \$40,000 increase in the 4600 line. Also, this year, Motorola will no longer be doing their manage detection response on the P25 system; the radio side of it. We either need to opt-out saying that we do not want to participate in it or we opt-in and there is a \$90,000 charge for it and we obtain everything on it. There is a firewall that separate our network from theirs, at one point, but it is one of those 'catch 22s'. Next year the maintenance will go down to about \$45,000. The next item will be the Harmon Rd Tower Maintenance Program: the tower needs to be inspected, as is, it was built back in 1998, so someone needs to come out and look at the tower and check everything. He does not have any records of that being done. The radio system was brought over to IT a little over four years ago, it was under the previous administration wanting us to maintain the system. This is a necessity that will cost a little over \$20,000. Another later of cyber security, that

was added last year, is cloud backup replication; that is about \$14,000 per year, and a cost we did not have last year. Security camera replacement: what we have is not normally what you would see at a City government, it is great for a homeowner or a small business. Inside of the building it works fine, but on the outside of the building, when you zoom to see anything, it washes the image out. We have had too many incidents with the police department needing to see cameras and not being able to get quality footage. This is also a police department incentive. We have about 133 cameras throughout the city that needs to be changed out, this is not an entire lift of that, this is about 33%, at best. We will figure out that creek key location that needs to be changed first and work from there.

Commissioner Nesta ask how many cameras, the ask is for this **Mr. Hippler** stated that, at best he will probably get about 40, if he can find a decent deal and get a bulk price on it. The cameras that we currently have deployed, at the time we could get them for about \$130, are going for \$300 and \$400 apiece. He is hoping to get a better-quality camera and get about 30, with what we are looking to do. **He** asked if the plan was to do the remainder of them next year and **Mr. Hippler** stated yes, that will be the continuous plan until they are all changed out.

Commissioner Nesta asked if all the other software will sync together to which **Mr. Hippler** stated that the police department is looking at a system called Fusic, it's for evidence, but it also allows you to have any type of camera that has a RFTP stream to it, to get that camera coming in. It does not care who the VNS is, it is just looking for that stream, so everything will go into that system, so that we have one place to look. Versus now we have an access camera system we look into, which is a good solution but we only have three of those cameras. That will be something that the Chief will present at coming meetings.

Rob Hippler went on to state FY23 will be a cyber security jump for the IT Department; some of the things we currently do for remote access, is that we have a firewall that we allow people to come in remote, through the firewall, and get to their desktop. He tries not to do that for everyone, due to the potential security risks. To stop this, his plan is to purchase laptops and docking stations, for those who need these so that they can have setup at their house.

Fire Department:

Chief Wylam, Fire Chief, said that there is a total of 17% increase in the Fire Department budget. They are asking for six new Firefighter positions, manning for stations two and three, a new computer dispatcher/CAD System, a replacement firetruck and two replacement ambulances, paramedic school reimbursement. Fire Chief Division – 2110 – went up 9% and com some of those increases included some of the software related things. Vector Solutions is a scheduling software that was implemented this year; this is a continuation of that system. PS Track Software is an asset management software that also tracks the narcotics and controlled substances. Lastly, the big one in this division is the CAD System. To give a year-end summary: our call volume is still increasing, 2020 was a slump because of COVID, but we are still turning g up with our call volumes: 82% of the calls are still EMS and 18% are fire related calls, for 2021. There were 3,319 calls for station one, 1,700 calls at station two, 1,300 calls at station three, and 1,272 at station four, and 1,043 at station five, and 406 at station six. With the call volume just discussed, calls per shift: station one is at 9.1, station two was 4.7, station three and four was around the same at 3.6 and 3.48, station five was at 3.13, and station six was a one call per shift. Again, showing the percentages of each station: station one was running 36% of our call volume. The average response time, for the first unit on the

scene is four minutes and forty-two seconds, this is an aggregate of EMS and Fire calls: travel and turnout time is what equals response times. ISO Class one, we are forty-four this year, in the State of Florida. Nationwide we are 459, which still puts us in the top .9% in the country. In the last five years, the average rate per 1,000 in population, for the nation, is 1.17 firefighters, per thousand, so there is not much change. When you look at our statistics, data, and population density, this is information that we get from Community Development each year, the City of Apopka population is 56,000 and growing with 35 square miles, so our population density is 1,595 per square mile. We have total personnel of 113 this year, which kept us at 1.99 per 1,000, so roughly one firefighter for every 502 in population. We are right in line with other departments, because we added those six people last year. Based on our population of 50,000 – 100,000 these are the average throughout the nation of numbers of pumpers, other suppression units, aerial apparatus.

As for revenue, we are implementing several different things, but the big thing we are trying to emphasize here is user-based fees and other user-based type things. When we changed to Change Healthcare, we had 4,000 of the 9,000 that were billable calls. Again, we are right at that nation average of 63% being ALS and 37% being ELS. In 2021, we collected \$1.2 million and because of the participation in the EMT programs, we were able to recuperate another \$144,000. Projected for the upcoming year is \$1.4 million with an additional \$200,000.

Commissioner Velazquez asked what is PMI and **Chief Wylam** stated that PMT is the Public Emergency Medical Transportation program. It is basically Medicaid beneficiaries and it is another way that we can go back and recuperate some of our costs for running calls on those patients; there are several steps we must go through and qualify for that. **Commissioner Velazquez** asked when we collect this revenue, where does it go and **Chief Wylam** responded that it goes into the general fund.

Commissioner Bankson asked if that meant it was not reserved funds for fire use only and **Chief Wylam** stated no.

Commissioner Velazquez asked does he keep something separate for this fund, for when he gets audited and **Chief Wylam** stated that there is a revenue line for anything collected, so it is captured or earmarked as a revenue for fire billing. He went on to state that another revenue is our Orange County contract, since 2019. This year we were collective for \$556,000, which is also captured and earmarked, but it still goes into the general fund. We were able to get 100% of the contract, whereas in the last three years, the original contract was for 75%. Our newly adopted fee schedule will be implemented in October, a conservative estimate is another \$300,000 that we will be able to generate. The highlights for Vector Solutions, is that is personnel tracking, it is fully automated now, the guys will get the text message and can respond via phone or if they get called for overtime, it captures out time trades. We implemented it this year, so this is just to continue. Again, the PS Tracks is for asset management system, it is \$43,000 to implement and maintenance is \$15,000 each year after. Next, the Computer Aided Dispatcher (CAD) has a \$258,000 implementation/setup fee, then a \$85,000 yearly maintenance fee and that's for ten years. CAD's these days cost anywhere from \$1.5 to the upper portion of \$2 million dollars.

The 'big ask' with what we need this year is the additional six firefighters; this again, comes from Community Development. Currently we have, either under construction or almost complete construction, 29,042 dwelling units and our persons per household is 2.79, so an 8,000 person increase, coming into this year is expected. Engine 1 is where we were able to add the manpower to and the District Chief; there is 36 people assigned to each shift with a minimum manning of 31.

This year we want to go up to 38 people per shift with minimum manning being 33, that allowing for additional personnel for Engine 2 and Engine 3. In 2024 you will see station 6 coming onboard and because of that we will have a new threshold of how many people we need to allow off, per shift, so that is an additional PTO person. Also, continuing with adding, next year, Engine 4 personnel. In 2025, it will be Engine 5 and 6, so having a stepped approach to adding the personnel where we need them. These personnel do not include the opening of station 7.

Commissioner Bankson asked if there's anything that will mount up to a point where we'll get behind in the future or is our plan replacement sufficient for the upcoming growth. **Chief Wylam** said this is something he looks at with regard to the depreciation and said he's made a change as fire trucks don't last as long as they used to due to their electronic components. **Commissioner Bankson** said we mentioned the PEMT funds and the contract revenue and said all of those are going back into the General Fund and aren't earmarked and inquired as to the reason for that.

Edward Bass said those dollars do go into the General Fund but are nowhere near enough money to cover the cost of public safety so we apply those as part of the revenues for fire and on top of that, we apply property tax and sales tax dollars. He said the bottom line is they get the benefit of these dollars.

Commissioner Smith asked about the 6 new fire fighters we're requesting and inquired if this is in keeping with the population or if this keeps up with the 1 extra person per truck as we discussed. **Chief Wylam** stated this will do both. **Commissioner Smith** asked if we currently own the land for station 7 to which **Chief Wylam** stated no.

Commissioner Nesta said his first question has to do with the Reedy Creek issue and asked if we're planning for this and does this mean we'll be taking on that much more to help out Orange County. **Chief Wylam** stated there is but there's a set threshold in place with the County and said if this does go over this threshold, we'll renegotiate. **Commissioner Nesta** then asked about the PS Track system and inquired as to what we're using currently. **Chief Wylam** stated right now, we keep track of this on spreadsheets and said that's why we need this to be implemented. **Commissioner Nesta** asked how often this is tracked. **Chief Wylam** stated we do daily inventory checks for all of this. **Commissioner Nesta** asked if we have a safety committee. **Chief Wylam** stated yes. **Commissioner Nesta** asked how often they meet and when was the last time they met. **Chief Wylam** stated they meet quarterly and they met last quarter. **Commissioner Nesta** said we just had a pretty significant accident and asked if they've met for that. **Chief Wylam** stated no. **Commissioner Nesta** asked if they have a date for this and **Chief Wylam** stated he doesn't believe so. **Commissioner Nesta** stated that's concerning and said this is a safety committee and said they should be meeting often and especially when there's an accident and said this puts our fire fighters at risk and said something needs to be implemented differently. He then asked what we can do to implement some type of additional safety committee that actually meets consistently, as it was designed to. **Chief Wylam** stated that currently, it's still under investigation by the State Fire Marshall's office so we can't even meet and said after this happened, he wanted to form a committee to look at trailers as a whole and said we did an outreach to neighboring departments for their policies and procedures and said no one had anything specific. **Chief Wylam** said we're going to invite the State Fire Marshall to come and do a safety assessment of our department and said obviously, no one expected anything like this to happen.

Commissioner Nesta said we're missing 2 points. He said we have a safety committee that doesn't meet regularly or update the department and no specific persons in charge of training. He said

we're not a small City anymore and need someone that is in charge of training. He said that's a huge miss and we need to budget for this. He asked about the overtime issue and whether it was common for someone to work two 24's back to back. **Chief Wylam** stated yes. **Commissioner Nesta** then asked about the fire stations and said there's nothing in this budget for upgrades. **Chief Wylam** stated that would be under the Facilities budget. **Commissioner Nesta** asked about the laundry room at station 2 and said he noticed that the vent in the laundry room goes into the room and said that's not up to code. **Chief Wylam** stated he believes there's a vent in the floor. **Commissioner Nesta** stated it's not doing that and is specifically in that room and said that's a problem and said he'll look at the facilities budget to make sure we have this budgeted. He said these are safety issues and as the Junior up here, he's thinking 10-20 years down the road and not just 5-10.

Commissioner Velazquez said you were the previous safety officer and asked when you became Chief, was the safety officer filled. **Chief Wylam** stated yes, those duties are done by Chief Howell now and the EMS falls under Wil Sanchez so we've split this role in two. **Commissioner Velazquez** asked about the promotions back in May and asked about the training for all of those who were promoted. **Chief Wylam** said he's trying to put in place an officer development program and said he'll have a lieutenant head up and form a committee for each level. **Commissioner Velazquez** stated we do need a training officer and said we need one that's specifically working to train all of the members of your department to train them where they need to be trained. She said the incident that happened with one of your fire fighters should get everyone on board to say we need to change now and not tomorrow.

Commissioner Bankson asked if there are things you need, please ask so we can help you. He asked about the vent and whether this is something that got kicked out of place and asked if there were any fumes that would come off of this. **Chief Wylam** said he'll go by and check on this tomorrow morning.

Commissioner Smith asked about Station 7 and asked if we annex property in South Apopka, will we need an additional station or will Station 6 will be able to handle this. **Chief Wylam** stated that Station 6 will absolutely not be able to handle this.

Police Department:

Jerome Miller, Deputy Police Chief, said for the 5 years, the Apopka Police Department has looked at how to best police the City and tweak our budget. He said we've looked at technology to help us work smarter with the resources we have and have also reorganized the agency to try and move efficiently in the services we provide to the community. He said based on the changes and measurements we monitor, we've prepared our budget to document our accomplishments and provide our needs and concerns as we move forward. He said as the City prepares for the rapid increase in growth, the safety of our community will always be a top concern of our residents. He stated that an investment in public safety fosters trust, engages people in their communities and supports economic activity. He said public safety is a location factor for individuals who are moving into a community as well as companies looking to invest in the community. He highlighted some of their accomplishments and challenges for the past year. He said COVID-19 changed the way we operate as did the events that continue to occur around the country. He said COVID-19 has changed the employment landscape and made it challenging to find applicants and hire new personnel. He said although this is not unique to Apopka, finding qualified applicants for Police Officers and Communication Technicians has become very challenging. He said the two words that

come to mind here which are retention and recruitment. He said we've changed the way we've done things through the years but said he's been with the Apopka Police Department for 26 years and said he's never seen a more challenging time than the times we're in today as far as filling positions. He said we currently have 18 positions open at the Apopka Police Department. He said we've tried social media, we've gone to the 4 local Police Academies, which are in Osceola County, Lake County, & Seminole County as well as Valencia. He said we've recently expanded our search to Polk County and Marion County. He said we just tested 6 individuals on Friday and 2 of the 6 made it through and said we're struggling and said we may have 2 more vacancies by the end of next week. He said we have a recruiter who goes to these academies and said we had 3 persons lined up from Seminole State College and said after we processed them, they said we're going to take our talents to another agency in Seminole County. He said the reason is those individuals were reimbursed for the money they spent for the academy and said the City doesn't have a program for this and it was a game changer. He said in this budget, we've requested funding for 3 individuals to attend the academy.

Deputy Chief Miller said due to events that continue happening around the country, law enforcement is still facing many challenges. He said law enforcement officers are being attacked and killed in record numbers and said violence around the country is increasing and Apopka is not immune from that violence. He said law enforcement continues to adjust to these changes and address mandates from the government. He said these mandates are needed and to date, all of the mandated requirements have been implemented by our agency. He said we continue to conduct RITE Training; De-escalation training; and Fair and Impartial Policing training to ensure our personnel are fully trained and aware of the issues facing the police profession. He said we've been awarded over \$143,000 in grants from State and Federal agencies. He said our budget has increased tremendously and said most of this is due to personnel and salary study increases. He said we're asking for 2 new crossing guards for the new schools off of Jason Dwelley Parkway but said we currently have 5 vacancies in crossing guards and said if anyone is listening and you can help, please go on line and submit your application. He said we've discussed increasing the wages for that position to \$15 per hour and said Orange County is already at \$15 so we need to increase that. He said there's been an increase in vehicle maintenance costs and said we're asking for 17 total vehicle replacements. He said one of them is the one I drive, the "Blue Bomber" has 137,000 miles on it and is a 2010 and said we try keep them up and make them last at least 7-8 years. He said the carryover funding from FY21-22 to cover the equipment for 20 sworn vacancies; the increase in fuel costs; continuing contractual costs for body cameras; tasers; the replacement of funding for intersection and traffic cameras and server; and priority dispatch contract for quality assurance for emergency medical dispatching are the big increases you see in our budget, across all 5 of our divisions.

Chief's Office

Deputy Chief Miller said under the Chief's budget, we're requesting personnel salary study increases; 3 law enforcement academy sponsorships, as well as one new vehicle replacement (the blue bomber).

Field Services

Deputy Chief Miller said under this budget, we're requesting personnel salary study increases; increase in funding for patrol vehicle maintenance; purchase of new hire ballistic vest; purchase of 88 expiring Kevlar helmets; carryover funding from FY21-22 equipment to outfit the 21 sworn

officers; increase in funding for fuel; body cameras; tasers; continuing contact and intersection traffic cameras and servers.

Support Services

Deputy Chief Miller said under this division, we're requesting personnel salary study increases; 6 vehicles in support services. He said support services make up all of our school resource officers; criminal investigators; our tac team; crime scene tech's; as well as personnel attached to federal agencies. He said we're asking for 2 new positions in the crossing guards to help cover the new school up on Jason Dwelley Parkway.

Communications

Deputy Chief Miller said under communications budget, we're requesting personnel salary study increases; dispatch and contractual services; quality assurance on EMS dispatching.

Deputy Chief Miller said as you are aware, the City is growing exponentially and said our population shows there are 10,000 DU's planned or under construction and growth in the City is going to continue at a fast pace. He said from 2020-2021, the City grew by approximately 1,800 residents and said in 2010 there were 15,707 households in Apopka and in 2021, this number had increased to 20,311, which represents a 29.3% increase in households and said in April of 2021, the estimated population was 56,727 residents and said this represents a 36.6% increase in the past 11 years and does not include the commercial or industrial growth we're experiencing. Currently we have 9,900 dwelling units planned or under construction. He said this residential growth will add an estimated 27,621 residents to the City of Apopka over the next few years. He said in addition, there's 14,068,922 square foot of industrial and commercial growth planned or under construction. He said the City continues to modify the future land use within the City and allow for rezoning and denser growth. He said all of this growth will continue to tax the already limited resources of the APD. He said due to the City's growth, in 2021, the Apopka Police Department fell from a per-capita of 2.09 in 2021 to 2.08 in 2022. He said we continue to be below the state and local average for officers, per 1,000 residents. He said we have 122 authorized positions at the Apopka Police Department, however, in comparison to the City's growth, we should've added an additional 15 positions in order to achieve the state average of 2.33 officers per 1,000 residents. He said due to our emphasis on crime in the CRA, violent crime was down by 6% in 2021 and marks the 3rd year in a row that violent crime has been down in the CRA. He said the CRA is approximately 1 square mile or 633 acres and houses less than 5% of the City's residents. He said although the CRA amounts for a very small portion of the City, it accounted for 22% of our violent crime and 18% of the property crimes that occurred across the City. He said overall crime in the City of Apopka was down 8% in 2021.

Deputy Chief Miller said at this time, we're not requesting any additional sworn positions and said when the vacancies are filled during the 22-23 Fiscal Year, we're requesting to come back to Council to add an additional 5 positions. He said these additional 5 officers with salary, equipment and vehicle will cost approximately \$750,000. He said we're currently authorized at 122 sworn positions however if we intend to improve our per capita in officers per square mile, our authorized sworn positions should be approximately 136 officers. He said starting pay; longevity; PTO accrual rate; shift differential pay; educational assistance; assignment pay; and specialty pay are becoming non-competitive or not currently provided to our personnel. He said local agencies are surpassing the APD in salary and benefits and said the young recruits coming out of the academies are looking at this as the Apopka Police Department used to be at the top, when it came to an officers pay. He

said our starting pay have dropped compared to other agencies over the past several years. He said everyone is hiring and competing for the limited number of academy applicants and said we're competing locally and regionally for qualified applicants. He said it has always been a dangerous and difficult job however, over the past couple of years, violence toward law enforcement has dramatically increased. He said recruits in the hiring process are being picked up by other agencies offering higher pay. He said if we're in the ball game, we can keep the officers we have and said we have some of the best of the best here. He said other agencies also offer off duty opportunities that we don't have here but we do assist the City of Orlando with off duty. He said the law enforcement profession has changed with less applicants and less police academy graduates. He said our current salary here is \$46,600 and said police officer starting pay has not been adjusted since 2019, and said the current pay is not within the market and is making recruiting difficult. He said current salaries, if not addressed, will make retention and recruiting even more difficult in the future. He provided the statistics of the Orange County Sheriff's Office; Orlando Police Department as well as others and said the Apopka Police Department is ranked 11th in the market. He said in order to remain competitive in this market, we're requesting that we increase the starting salary for police officers to \$51,027, which represents a 9.5 % increase over the current salary of \$46,600. He said currently, 51% of our police officers, have less than five years of experience and said 20% have between five and ten years. He reviewed the pay grades for Corporal as well as Sergeant as well as Lieutenant and said it is recommended that increases be implemented across the board to bring them up to where the market is.

Deputy Chief Miller said Communication Technician's are trained in every facet related to the 911 center and said they must be able to answer emergency and non-emergency calls for service, dispatch calls for service, handle teletype, dispatch for other agencies as well as our fire department. He said this is unique from surrounding dispatch centers as the majority of communications centers specialize in police or fire but not both. He said we currently have 9 vacancies within our communications center out of 28 authorized positions and said many other agencies are experiencing shortages as well and are increasing salaries to fill these positions. In order to be competitive, we're requesting an increase in the communication technician starting salary to \$41,299. He said we're also requesting an increase in salary for our Records Clerk position to \$34,131 and said we currently have 3 records clerks. He said our clerks are well trained and their duties and responsibilities require specific training and knowledge.

Deputy Chief Miller said the proposed funding source will be from carryover of personnel savings in this year's budget from various vacancies within the agency. He said it is estimated that there will be over one million dollars remaining in the Police Departments FY21/22 Personnel budgets that can be utilized to fund the proposed salary increases.

Commissioner Nesta said he appreciates the thorough presentation with a lot of detailed information. He said the salaries are one component of the recruitment and asked if the 3 academy reimbursement are in this budget and asked if we can increase that number to sponsor additional academy reimbursements.

Commissioner Smith asked what the cost is to go to the academy to which Deputy Chief Miller stated approximately \$3,500. He asked if there are any other recruiting mechanisms that we can use to encourage individuals to come to Apopka. He said it'll be incumbent on all of us to try and recruit.

Commissioner Bankson said thank you for helping us, help you. He said this presentation was very clear to us and we absolutely need to make these changes or we're going to be in a very difficult position. He said this has been a concern this has been his concern with our police department and has no problem with these numbers and asked if it's enough. He said the level of danger involved because what's going on nationally has increased and said he believes that plays a part as well. He asked why the education reimbursement went away and when did it happen.

Deputy Chief Miller said he believes it's been about 2 years.

Commissioner Bankson said you're asking us to fund this with funds that are already there but said we're going to need to add officers so at a minimum, we need to find \$750,000 and asked where that funding is coming from as this is an absolute need.

Mayor Nelson stated that we balanced the budget last year and said that money is still set aside but the budget you're looking at is based upon the revenue we have coming in.

Commissioner Bankson asked if we were facing a police tragedy, such as what we just went through with our Fire department, would there be anything you can think of that we need to fund in order to get ahead of this.

Deputy Chief Miller said that's a great question but said that's not something we plan for however, we do need to fund this request as these officers you see every day are coming in early and staying late and said if we don't get ahead of this, he said we'll be in trouble.

Commissioner Velazquez said she's been following this issue not just statewide but outside of the state and said part of the challenges we have, regardless of all of the increases is recruitment. She said if we bring salaries up, we will be more competitive.

Public Comment

Alex Klepper said he's the President of the Apopka Professional Fire Fighters Association and said we just put our brother in the ground and said he doesn't have the power to put anything in our budget, however, the City and this Department cannot continue to operate like this. He said it's been a month since Austin's accident and absolutely nothing has been done to fix the environment and operational weaknesses that led to it. He said we've heard it said that these were safety issues and that someone would be up here tonight jumping and screaming but not one person screamed tonight. He said we have to recognize that systems can fail and at the very least, when they become stagnant, they need to be reviewed. He said we scrambled to pull off an honorable ceremony for Austin and his family, organizing that procession you saw out there and said we did it for free as that's the right thing to do to honor him. He said prior to that he sent emails to everyone looking for help or an emergency meeting of the Safety Committee to address and reevaluate and was met with inaction. He said the youth in our department was brought up tonight and said over 50% of our department is 5 years or less on this job. He said 75% of our special operations team has less than 5%. He said the people we're hiring are right out of high school with no prior job experience and are being trained by a person with 1 year experience. He said we need someone at the top to train these people, who has the experience and is accountable. He said we need to reconsider our budget proposal and said we need a sole training officer and a sole health and safety officer. He said there was a EMS Compliance Officer position approved in

last year's budget. He said we can't afford to sit idly and to not reevaluate our plans to figure out what needs to be adjusted now. He said what's the cost of losing another one of our guys.

Kyle Lamp, Vice President of the Apopka Professional Fire Fighters Association said he won't rehash what Alex just said but will provide a different insight to this. He said it was repeatedly brought to light that we operate our squad system the same way as the Houston model. He said this model is based on the notion that we send a squad to supplement our manning on a fire. He said he's personally spoken to Marty Lantin, the President of the Houston Professional Fire Fighters Association, local 341 and he explained that they only use their squads for EMS and not fires. He said the notion that we model our squad system after Houston is far from the truth. He stated that during the period between July 24, 2021 and July 24, 2022, Squad 1 was not available for 1,616 calls and Squad 5 was not available for 550 calls. He said out of 18 fire calls last year, 39% of the time, Squad 1 was on the call and said 51% of the time, Squad 5 was on the call and 10% of the time, neither squad was available. He said overtime is another concern with the toll it takes on the body and said over the last year, we've had approximately 16,635 hours of over time worked by our personnel and said that equates to about \$500,000 paid out in overtime. He said we must do better as a department and as a City to give the residents and the fire fighters the safety and protection they need. He said 3 people should be the minimum on every fire truck with 4 people being the optimum. He said we can't risk losing another citizen or heaven forbid, another employee.

Commissioner Velazquez asked if she could have a copy of the presentation.

Commissioner Bankson said to Alex that he has not received any communication and said please send to him as well as this is very helpful information and we appreciate it.

Commissioner Velazquez asked where we're at with the union and asked where we're at with this.

Alex Klepper said our plan is to have that communication to the City by the end of July but unfortunately, the events have delayed this.

Mayor Nelson thanked Jessica and Gladymir for all of their hard work with putting these budgets together. He also thanked Edward Bass and said it's great to have him back.

Adjournment

The being no further business the meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM .

Bryan Nelson, Mayor

CITY OF APOPKA

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Attest: _____

Susan M. Bone, City Clerk