

BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE

MAY 21, 2026

A meeting of the Budget Review Committee was held Thursday, May 21, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chamber and duly noticed in two places, including the City's website, in accordance with the requirements of RSA 91-A:2 II.

Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman, presided.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance.

Members of Committee present:

- Alderman Paula Johnson
- Alderswoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
- Alderman Derek Thibeault
- Alderman-at-Large Alicia Gregg
- Alderman Tim Sennott
- Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Vice-Chairman
- Alderman Richard A. Dowd, Chairman

Members not in Attendance:

Also in Attendance:

- Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
- Alderman James Ravan
- Dawn Enwright, CFO
- William Mansfield, Radio Systems Manager
- Kevin Rourke, Police Chief
- Karen Smith, NPD Business Manager
- Brian Kenney, Deputy Chief of Police
- Matt DiFava, Deputy Chief of Police
- Keith Trombly, Assistant Police Chief
- Steve Buxton, Fire Chief
- Adam Pouliot, Assistant Fire Chief
- Karen Conde, Fire Business Manager

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill Ferriero

My name is Bill Ferriero. My home is #35 Indian Rock Road. So I had some questions on the public safety budget. I understand that this is not question and answer time for me but I'm going to throw them out there anyway and maybe someone from public safety would choose to address them tonight or maybe one of the Aldermen might consider them worthy, and they might re-ask them, or not.

So the first question I had is - it's really to both Police and Fire. We oftentimes hear about when there's a major event in the City, a major fire, or shooting, or major crime. We get assistance from other officers from other surrounding cities and versa visa. If there's one of the other cities nearby needs help, we will send officers to them. How does that get paid for? How does that get planned? Do we pay for officers from other cities to come here? How do we plan for that? Is that in the budget? Is that burnt into the budget? How much is that in the budget?

Moving on, because I got 3 minutes. On page - excuse me - I'll talk about Police first. On Page 108, there's a list of calendar year 2026 goals and objectives. So three of those goals talk about - have the words "efficiency" in them. Three of them talk about efficiency. Three out of 5 talk about efficiency - that's a lot. So I wanted to talk about have you quantified those efficiencies? Are those efficiencies actually burnt into the - are they actually planned into the budget or are they opportunities beyond the budget that's in this book?

Also for Police on page 106, the line items for Social Security, Medicare, pension expenses, and benefits. Can you talk about how those lines are calculated? Is there some formula behind that? Is it a function of wages? Is it a function of FTEs? How exactly do you arrive at those numbers and do you do it the same way as all the other Departments in the City or do you use some different formula?

On page 107 - the line item called "Cell Phones". Can you talk about why - do you know why your cell phone budget pretty much doubled for 2027 as opposed to 2026? I can't do this in 3 minutes.

For Fire now on page 112, similarly, can you explain how you calculated the budgets for Social Security, Medicare, pension, and benefits?

Also on page 112 for Fire, can you talk about how you calculated the plan for electricity? Is it based on some specific rate times some number of kilowatt hours? Do you do the same calculation as other Departments within the City or do you do it differently?

I believe that Street Lighting is also part of Emergency Services. Can you talk about how you calculated the budget for electricity for Street Lighting, especially considering that your actuals for 2026 are far below your plan? Thank you - as fast as I could.

Chairman Dowd

Anyone else for Public Comment? Okay. Moving on.

COMMUNICATIONS

From: Emily Martuscello, Emergency Management Director
Re: FY26 budget

There being no objection, Chairman Dowd accepted the communication and placed it on file.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-26-034

Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Vengerflutta Smith
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman John Sullivan
Alderman-at-Large Amber Morgan
Alderman Thomas Lopez

APPROVING THE COST ITEMS OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NASHUA BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS AND TEAMSTERS LOCAL 633 FROM JULY 1, 2026 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2031

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Good evening. First is the Teamsters. This is a civilian union. One of our 5 unions. It has 28 employees. This union is our I would say our lowest paying union in the Police Department. I would refer to them as the "worker bees" in the Department. So if you - I'm sure you've read the contract. They came in through negotiations asking for a little bit more than what we gave them here and we settled on this. We settled on a 5 year deal, which was recommended to us by the City and we went on the recommendation of the Mayor increase of 3%. Other parts of this contract is some housekeeping. It's a pretty straightforward contract I would say and I'm here to answer any questions that you have.

Chairman Dowd

Any of the Aldermen have questions on this contract? Alderwoman Kelly.

Alderwoman Kelly

Just that I appreciate that you came in at 3% which is what, you know, is starting to align with what we're trying to give for budget. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions? Thanks, Chief.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

I think I'm here for the next one.

Chairman Dowd

You'll be up again in a second. All right, if there are no questions.

MOTION CARRIED

R-26-035

Endorsers: Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman-at-Large Ben Clemons
Alderman Vengerflutta Smith
Alderman Derek Thibeault
Alderman John Sullivan
Alderman-at-Large Amber Morgan
Alderman Thomas Lopez

APPROVING THE COST ITEMS OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NASHUA BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS AND UFPO LOCAL 645 PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES OF THE NASHUA POLICE DEPARTMENT FROM JULY 1, 2026 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2031

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE

ON THE QUESTION

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Yes. Again this is one of our civilian unions - our supervisor civilian union with many skilled positions in here that we refer to - our Attorneys, Radio Communications Manager, IT Director. So those are some of the positions in this contract. Again, it came to the table, the City recommended a 5 year contract, They agreed, and we recommended the 3% which this contract consists of. We did add a clothing allowance in there for business attire. We have lawyers that have to dress professionally, obviously, and go to court each day so we thought that was important to add in to here.

Chairman Dowd

Okay.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

And I'll take any questions.

Chairman Dowd

Any questions for the Chief? Alderman Thibeault.

Alderman Thibeault

Yeah, thank you. Chief, what's the percentage increase on this one?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

3%. Sorry. We took the Mayor's recommendation and settled at 3 percent.

Alderman Thibeault

Alright, okay.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah for Alderman Ravan - when we get the contracts there's a summary page in the front. It gives all the summaries of all the different areas in the contract from a cost standpoint. So a 3% for 5 years on both of these contracts.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

And just to add, there's 23 members in this union.

Alderman Johnson

Okay, 23 members.

Chairman Dowd

Alright. Any other questions? Thanks, Chief.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Okay.

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE

MOTION BY ALDERMAN _O'BRIEN TO REMOVE FROM THE TABLE R-26-028

MOTION CARRIED

R-26-028

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman Vengerflutta Smith
Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Alderman-at-Large Alicia Gregg
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

**RELATIVE TO THE ADOPTION OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA
GENERAL, ENTERPRISE, SPECIAL REVENUE AND GRANT FUNDS**

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS OF THE PROPOSED FY25 BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF NASHUA

<u>Dept. #</u>		<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Appropriations</u>
	<u>PUBLIC SAFETY</u>		
156	Emergency Management (see Memo)		117
157	Citywide Communications	122	122
150	Police	105	106
152	Fire	111	112

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Dowd

All right. This evening we are covering public safety. That's Emergency Management which was a memo. There's not a lot of changes in that area. Then we have Citywide Communications, Police, and Fire. So the first one we'll be addressing this evening is Department 157 Citywide Communication. Revenues on page 122. Appropriations on 122.

Yes, Mr. Mansfield. Give us an overview and any additions and subtractions of staff or anything major that you want to talk to in the budget.

Citywide Communications

Bill Mansfield, Radio Systems Manager

Good evening. My name is Bill Mansfield. I'm the Radio Systems Manager for the City of Nashua. I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to the budget this evening. The Radio Communications that we have in the City is for all entities: Police, Fire, DPW, the schools, pretty much every entity out there. There are approximately 2,000 portable mobile radios in the system that can be operational at any point in time. The Radio Communications are maintained by 2 individuals, as well as we have a 3rd part-time individual who does a lot of his work over at the Fire Department dealing with some technology issues that they have over there.

For the most part there's no major changes, no personnel changes within the budget this year. There is an increase in there. The majority of the increase is basically due to maintenance contracts. That's the largest increase that's in there and then there's also a line item in there for contingency for the contracts that was just recommended to the full Board this evening. Other than that, there were some minor adjustments in there due to increases. Other than that, there's nothing major on this particular budget, so.

Chairman Dowd

Questions for Mr. Mansfield? I will mention one thing and Ms. Enwright would you explain how the FICA and the benefits are calculated because the Departments do not calculate that. It's done here in City Hall. Would you explain how that's done? There was a question earlier in Public Comment.

Dawn Enwright, CFO

Certainly. Dawn Enwright, CFO. Is my microphone on?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Dawn Enwright, CFO

Okay, thank you. So all of the salary projections and the FICA, Medi, and benefits are calculated in the Finance Department with conjunction with Director Cummings for his Department with the benefits. We calculate how much the salary is and then once we have the salary, we take the rate for both the FICA and the Medi, multiply it for the Department, and that's how we calculate each amount for the Department.

Chairman Dowd

And that's for every department?

Dawn Enwright, CFO

Every department is done the same, correct.

Chairman Dowd

Okay, thank you. No other questions for Mr. Mansfield? Alright, thank you.

Bill Mansfield, Radio Systems Manager

Thank you very much for your time.

Chairman Dowd

Yep. Next item is the Police Department and the Revenues on 105 and Appropriations on 106.

Police DepartmentKevin Rourke, Police Chief

This evening we have our FY27 budget before you, which includes the payroll and operational needs of the Nashua Police Department.

The proposed budget includes a 4.87% increase, excluding benefits and pension, made up of the increase to the payroll accounts per union contracts and our operational increases is less than .3% increase of the operational account. We decreased accounts and offset the difference for increases in other operational account increases leaving a net increase of \$8,384 in the NPD FY27 proposed budget.

I'll talk about sworn turnover. Obviously, we've had more turnover than we care for. However, we are pleased that we've been hiring pretty steadily the last couple of years. Recently, hiring 8 Officers and potentially 6 or 7 more after this fiscal year. So we are starting to see an increase in candidates applying. So right now, we're down, I believe, 8 officers. So if we hire 6, 7, 8 here in the fall, we'll be at full staff if we get those 8 officers in here. So it's starting to trend in the right direction, which we're happy with. With the hiring, we could potentially be back, you know, we're right now in the single digits in the 4 years that I've been Chief. This is the first time we've been in the single digits. Just a couple years ago, we were down 24 officers and as I've stated before, we're going to hire the right person. I'm not just going to fill vacancies to fill vacancies. That leads you to trouble down the road and liability. So we have kept that high standard of hiring as you all know. I speak about it often, so we will continue to do that as we move forward.

The turnover in the payroll. The turnover in payroll has allowed us to absorb some of the overtime using the payroll vacancies as an offset. Overtime is intentionally underfunded by \$1.5 million. The overtime is budgeted at \$28,843 per week, while the overtime expenses average \$62,000 per week during understaffing. So we have a minimum staffing out in the street. We have a certain amount of sectors that have to be out there to cover parts of the City. So we are going to put someone out there and being understaffed, we're paying a guy over time to be out there.

We're also understaffed in dispatch and call taking. So when we don't have a civilian to be in there - the people that are trained to - we have to put officers in there which cost a pretty penny. So those positions have to be filled every shift, every day. So that actually costs money as you know.

So there will always be overtime in police work. The overtime will come down as positions are filled and more manpower to cover shifts. However, overtime is required for investigations, parades, police training, court, and Communications Division coverage, like I stated earlier, and other civilian overtime.

Expendable Trust Fund:

Our Expendable Trust Fund Overtime Account established to reimburse NPD for significant events. For instance - just an example the Sky Meadow incident. And just to touch on the question that was answered earlier, when other officers that night came in from other towns, we are not paying them. So they just come in as mutual aid. We do the same thing for other towns where we send other officers out there. If they ask for help, we'll send them out there and we are footing the bill on that. So it's an agreement that through mutual aid, so.

ETF Account:

We have requested to replenish the ETF account by \$94,000 to bring the account back up to the starting balance of \$200,000 for FY27.

New Positions:

New Positions. We only have one new position at no additional cost. The Facilities Manager which we thought was an important part to add to our agency since we recently obtained the Riverside building as you all know. We're getting big over there so we thought it would be beneficial for to have a Facilities Manager to oversee everything. Someone that is trained in that. Me as a Police Officer running the project over at Riverside, I don't think I'm qualified for that. So we need to get someone in here that's qualified. This will be funded through the elimination of 2 positions: 1 Administrative Assistant and 1 Custodian that we cut out of our budget to use that money to fund this position.

Operational Accounts:

Operational Accounts. The budget includes reductions in the following accounts: Hardware Maintenance Account, the copier lease and maintenance due to the new Toshiba copier lease, telephone and Comcast Account reorganizations, print manageable consumables reduction due to the desktop printer, quantity reduction, automotive parts and supplies reduction due to the Ford hybrid efficiency. Those vehicles years ago, we went to the hybrid as you guys know and it's been efficient for us the last couple of years.

The funding reduction was reallocated to offset budget account increases in the following accounts: electricity, heat, gas, water, HVAC maintenance, vehicle repairs and maintenance due to price increases on major repairs, telephone/cellular program reorganization, software subscriptions, ammunition and supplies, increase for training as we're getting more officers in here. We have to up the ammo for training, tires and firearms. Thank you for your time and I'm open for discussion.

Chairman Dowd

Just for the new Aldermen, can you just briefly explain how long it takes to train a police officer and how much it costs?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

How long it takes to train them? So we start the process, they take a test, I'll run through it, they take a written test. If they pass, they get the physical test the same day. They then after the physical test if they pass that, they then go on to an oral board. At that point, we go on to a secondary oral board with a Supervisor. At that point, they get a conditional offer from one of the Deputy Chiefs, and then we start open up their background, get into their background, and then eventually hire them.

When we hire them, we bring them in, we like to start off new officers at least 2 weeks early before they go to the academy because we want to give them in-house training, make sure they're familiar using their tool belt, firearms, make sure they can qualify. We teach them our way before they go to the academy. We then bring them up to the academy, which is 16 weeks. After they get out of the academy, they come back to us and they go on a Field Training Officer Program. They ride with an Officer for 12 weeks. So you're looking - you're already at least 30 weeks before they're out on the street and I'll go to the expert on how much that costs.

Karen Smith, NPD Business Manager

I don't have an updated but roughly \$30,000, so.

Chairman Dowd

Just repeat that cause she wasn't on a mic.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

\$30,000.

Chairman Dowd

Okay. Questions for Police? Yes, Alderwoman Kelly.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you. Thank you Chief for coming in this evening. I had a couple of questions. One was around - we gave some extra money to give some extra time and police officers to downtown to help with being on the street. I know that's been doing well. Is that predicated in this budget or are you expecting to have to get more overtime to continue that work?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Well, I can't forecast what's going to happen right now. Our budget is good. We're able to put - we actually put 2 officers downtown on second shift, which is our busiest shift. We're able to obtain that right now. As the year comes on, we make adjustments all the time. We can't forecast what's going to happen. Obviously if some major events happen, we have the ETF account which is great to use for major events but when you have a couple of those, you know, this year we did not have any homicides. If we did have a couple like we had a couple years ago, that takes up a lot of the that can eat into the budget and eat into that ETF account. So right now, we're doing very well.

Alderman Kelly

Okay. I assume you'll share with us if you're starting to...

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Yes.

Alderman Kelly

...get nervous. Okay. If I could follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderman Kelly

So the other question I had was around parades. You mentioned special events. I didn't see a line item so I have 2 questions there. One - if it's a City event like this weekend there'll be a parade, where does that show up; and then 2) if you're charging a nonprofit to do a parade, where does that money come in?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

So Karen - so there's a bunch of parades like 4th of July. So they're broken up. Sometimes the City pays, sometimes it comes out of our budget so.

Alderman Kelly

Okay.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

I don't have a list in front of me. I apologize for that.

Alderman Kelly

That's okay.

Chairman Dowd

Karen, please introduce yourself.

Karen Smith, NPD Business Manager

Karen Smith, NPD Business Manager. So the first part of the question is where would the parades be. The 51300 Overtime Account is where we would pay for the overtime. It basically comes out of the 2 digit 51 Payroll Accounts and then depending on the type of parade, it would be on with different rates that we have. We have different circumstances, grants, funding and all of that. So it just depends on what the occasion is.

Alderman Kelly

Can I follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderman Kelly

Does that change your tier because I know sometimes we have political people in town. So do you end up having much

more special events over time some years to the next and do you account for that?

Karen Smith, NPD Business Manager

Yes, absolutely. If we have a political event, I would increase my budget every 4 years. I would put a little bit more in because I know I'm going to have more events for coverage for political events and that's routine.

Alderman Kelly

Okay. If I could get sort of the breakdown of the parades, I'd love to know.

Karen Smith, NPD Business Manager

Hmm mmm.

Alderman Kelly

Thank you.

Karen Smith, NPD Business Manager

It's very insignificant. I might put \$10,000 more. It's not a large amount that I put in.

Alderman Kelly

Okay, thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Kelly

I'm all set for now. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Sennott.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for coming in tonight, Chief. I had a question. It was a line item that just sort of jumped out at me. It was a bidding congruent between your proposal and the Mayor's proposal. It's the very last line in your budget - 81302 Police Body Cameras. It looks like with your proposal, you're flat funded from '26 to '27 \$295,061. The Mayor's proposal has you at \$1,195,061. I'm thinking that might be a typo. That could be a question for Miss Enwright but a \$900,000 jump from your proposal from to the Mayor's seems worth discussing.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Sure. So right now we're at - and I'll answer as best I can. I might need Karen back, but we are going - our cameras are on that last year of our budget.

Alderman Sennott

Okay.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

So we have Core Force cameras.

Alderman Sennott

Yeah.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

So we're looking to go to another camera. Obviously over the last 5 years, the prices have gone up so it's allowing us to go to a different company that we want to. So that's why the increase is.

Alderman Sennott

Okay. No, that makes sense to me. I just was wondering because most of the differences between the department proposal and the Mayor's proposal are actually cuts, so it was unusual to see it jumping that high.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Yeah.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Yep.

Chairman Dowd

Just a question. Was that always going to be a budget item? Was that in CIC?

Karen Smith, NPD Business Manager

I was gonna say ..

Chairman Dowd

So it was the CIC?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

It first started that way and then the Mayor put it ..

Chairman Dowd

Then ..

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

.. the Mayor put it in our budget.

Chairman Dowd

Then Mayor put it in the budget.

Alderman Sennott

It's a capital outlay ..

Chairman Dowd

It's a Capital ..

Alderman Sennott

.. category.

Chairman Dowd

Yeah. Any other questions?

Dawn Enwright, CFO

If I may?

Chairman Dowd

Ms. Enwright.

Dawn Enwright, CFO

Dawn Enwright, CFO. Just to clarify with the body cameras. They are a leased item, so they would not fall under the capital guidelines. When that was discussed at the meeting with the Chief and his staff, it was determined that that is why the Mayor added it to the budget because we recognize the need for the new contract.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Thibeault.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chair. So let me ask you a couple questions that you're going to hear at the hearing probably. First one, you got like 8 or 9 jobs open and a Facilities Manager open, I assume. Why don't we just get rid of them because then that would - they're jobs that we haven't filled so why don't we just cut them and then use that difference to get the budget down even more?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Because I think it's important to have a Facilities Manager in our Department of the size of the Department and the grounds.

Alderman Thibeault

What about the Police the 8 or 9 police officers that we haven't hired?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Well we just did a recent study. According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police and doing that study and the formula you use is officers that we have that are responding to call, the amount of calls that we have, how long do you spend on these calls, motor vehicle stops, that everything we respond to as a Police Department, and we're actually short 18 officers. And just in patrol for the size of our Department, the size of the City, that's not even calculative of what's going on in the City. We have right now 80 officers that are assigned to Patrol. Twenty-five on 1st shift, 30 on 2nd which is our busiest shift, and 25 on 3rd. Putting this formula together and using the data that we've had over the last couple - we do the study every 4 years. We're short 18 officers just in Patrol.

Alderman Thibeault

Follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up.

Alderman Thibeault

So I agree with you 100%. We need more officers not less, but we hear that question every time we go to the budget hearing. We hear why don't you just get rid of those - they call them "ghost jobs" even though that's not even really a term, but people use that term and say just cut those jobs that you haven't hired yet. But we know that we have to - you got to keep hiring. Like you can't just not hire for a while and hope that you're going to get police officers in at some point. So I'm with you 100% on that.

The other question you're going to get and it's going to be - it's someone always says it every year - I think police officers get paid too much. Do they get paid too much?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Absolutely not and I said it in the budget when I came down there for Patrolmen's contract. They don't get paid enough.

Alderman Thibeault

And can you explain why we think that? And I know the answer but I want you to say it for the crowd.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Well, it's obviously a very dangerous job. Not everybody signs up for it, right? Why is that? Why don't they sign up for it? It's a dangerous job out there and you'll hear my counterparts, the Fire Department, not everybody's signing up for these jobs. Why not? It's you put your life on the line every day. You say goodbye to your loved ones in the morning or at night and you don't know if you're coming home. You wear a camera on your chest and you wear a bulletproof vest. Tell me another job that has that. So everything you do for 8 hours at your work is being on camera. Everything you say is being criticized and you have a split second to make decisions that save someone's life, or yours, or your partners. So, I think that's why.

Alderman Thibeault

I can't be on camera 2 hours without saying something stupid.

So and then the other thing is - why do we have officers that leave typically?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

We've had a high turnover over the last 5 years, and I think it's a bunch of factors involved in that, and you've heard me say it before. The retirement system definitely changed a lot of people's minds. Yes, the Governor did a great job over the last year and a half of changing the retirement system. It's got it back to somewhat reasonable, but it's still not back to when I started under my conditions. But, you know, you also have people that, you know, they get into this job and they realize, you know, they always want to be a cop and then they get in here and realize what you have to deal with. Someone spitting at you, something/someone hitting you, disrespecting you day in and day out. Working 4 days on, 2 days off, working every weekend, working every holiday, being out in the rain, in the weather elements. I guess you don't know till you get here.

So I think people leave because of that and they also leave because we've heard this, the story of higher paying jobs out there in the private sector and a lot of our people that have left have gone out into the private sector. You don't see a lot of people leaving Nashua PD to go to another agency, especially in New Hampshire. You might have some people - we always lose people to the federal agencies just because they want to work in the federal system but you don't see them going to another agency in New Hampshire.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you. Thank you for those answers and you say that and I don't know if I'm the one that asked it but you say it every year you're here and we still get the questions of or comments that we pay you guys too much and I don't think that at all. I don't think we pay you guys enough. So I appreciate the way you can keep your budget in a way where you're almost finally almost at that full capacity, at least the capacity that the 8 or 9 not the 18 obviously. So I appreciate that and thank you for that.

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Yeah, thank you for your support.

Karen Smith, NPD Business Manager

Karen Smith. If I could follow up to your first part of your question. When you ask about the ghost positions, technically we talked about - the Chief talked about being underfunded \$1.5 million. I underfunded on the overtime. I didn't underfund on the payroll positions. So technically, we are not funding but I didn't want to do it in the positions because if we find those officers, we want to fill them. So we are doing what they're asking in the fact that our budget has been reduced by 1.5 million. If we don't fill positions, we have to backfill. We have to pay for it and that costs money in overtime. So we should, again, back under Lozeau's administration, we would have money at the end of the year, and they didn't like that we're giving back \$600,000 or so, and that's how we ended up changing our budget, and we decreased our budget by the 1.5 and gradually grew. So the positions are funded. The overtime account is much lower than it should be and now we're not having that huge surplus, so we are reducing our budget.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

For those of us that follow your every arrest, and there's a number of them, you guys keep our city safe.

And the other thing I wanted to mention is many times, and I know you don't advertise it because you don't feel it's necessary, but many times our officers are out there, and they get injured, and are off for some period of time to recover, and that's filled by overtime. So it's not a job that you take lightly. It's very important and you definitely keep our city safe and that's, I think, critical to the people that we represent.

Other questions?

Kevin Rourke, Police Chief

Thank you very much. Thank you for your time.

Chairman Dowd

All right, moving on.

The next department we'll be covering is 152 Fire. The appropriations on 111, revenue on 112

152 Fire Department

Chairman Dowd

Go ahead, Chief.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Good evening. With me tonight is Business Manager Karen Conde and out back there, we have Assistant Chief Eric Trembly and Assistant Chief Adam Pouliot. Thanks for the opportunity to appear before you tonight to discuss the FY27 budget for Nashua Fire Rescue. I appreciate the work that you guys always do balancing the fiscal responsibility of the city. I know it's a very challenging job.

We fully understand the financial pressures facing the City of Nashua and the department has carefully evaluated our priorities, control costs, and continuing to deliver a high quality service in a fiscally responsible manner. We approach this budget process with that mindset. We have worked diligently to manage our expenses, identify our efficiencies where possible, and prioritize our operational needs. The reality, however, is that the work Nashua Fire Rescue continues to do evolves and becomes increasingly complex through the years.

Over the past year, our members have responded to thousands of calls for service involving fires, medical emergencies, hazardous incidents, and technical rescues, and significant emergencies requiring extensive coordination of resources. We have also experienced challenges within our own organization that tested our personnel in our Department in ways that cannot always be measured on a spreadsheet. This past year, we experienced serious on-duty injuries, supported our members through significant health challenges, and multiple cancer diagnoses, and worked through the heartbreaking

loss of one of our own active members. Throughout all those challenges, our members continued to report for duty every day, and continued providing exceptional services to the City of Nashua, and anyone who visited our community. Those experiences reinforce an important point tonight. Budgets are not simply numbers on a spreadsheet. Behind every line item is an operational purpose directly connecting to our readiness, firefighter safety, and the level of service that we provide our community.

I have a couple areas that I would like to review with you and ask the Committee to consider. In the Mayor's proposed budget, there was a removal of \$225,000 from our deferred maintenance line. We had increased this line by \$175,000. Our previous budget was funded at \$50,000. This funding is not discretionary spending. It directly supports maintenance, reliability, and the longevity of our facilities, and infrastructure that allow our Department to safely and effectively operate each day. As we know, deferred maintenance is one of those issues that doesn't disappear simply because the funding does. In many cases, delaying repairs simply shifts the manageable expense into a significantly larger expense tomorrow. We continue to manage aging facilities, and infrastructure, and continued deferral increases our operational risk, impacts reliability, and ultimately affects both firefighter and public safety. Proactive maintenance is fiscally responsible and it protects the city's investment while ensuring that our personnel have safe, dependable facilities and systems from which to serve the community.

I'd also like to briefly address the reductions in the Chief Officer and unaffiliated employee compensation. These positions carry substantial responsibility on behalf of both the city and this Department. Chief Officers are responsible for emergency command operations, firefighter accountability, labor management agreements, strategic decision making, regulatory compliance, and oversight of a 24 hour emergency response organization. During major emergencies and critical incidents, the experienced command staff directly influences operational effectiveness and firefighter safety. When complex incidents occur, there are immediate decisions made that affect personnel operating in dangerous environments. Maintaining appropriate and competitive compensation supports recruitment, retention but it also supports succession planning and long-term organizational stability.

I'd like to express my appreciation that the proposed budget continues to include the requested new positions. Even though they are funded at a six-month level as opposed to a full year, we appreciate the commitment and willingness to continue moving these positions forward and operationally, we can make that structure work. However, implementation during this Fiscal Year remains critically important. These positions are directly tied to firefighter safety, supervision, accountability, and emergency scene effectiveness. Expectations today are greater than they ever have been. Emergency incidents continue to increase in complexity. Span of control requirements are more demanding and accountability for personnel operating in hazardous environments remains one of our highest priorities. These requests are not intended to create growth for growth's sake. They are operational necessary investments designed to reduce our risk, and ensure safe, and effective emergency scene management throughout our city.

Additionally, the supporting details behind this budget reflect needs that extend beyond staffing alone. The funding supports operational readiness initiatives, recruit and specialty team physicals, recruitment and promotional processes, wellness initiatives, professional services, and other programs necessary to maintain a modern emergency response organization. These are not isolated expenditures. They are interconnected investments that support the people, the systems, and the operational readiness required to provide emergency services every day.

I'd also like to recognize the importance of continuing to invest in our long-term capital needs. The CERF Fund allows Nashua Fire Rescue to strategically plan for our major purchases and replacement schedules while avoiding significant impacts in future budget years. Our apparatus and support systems represent major investments by the city and planning for those needs allow us to maintain reliability, control long-term costs, and ensure our personnel have the equipment necessary to safely and effectively perform their duties.

Similarly, our capital improvements plans continue to focus projects that are essential to the future of this organization and the safety of our community. One of the priorities remains to the relocation of the training facility on the landfill property. Training is one of the most important investments that we make in our organization. Every skill developed, every scenario practiced, and every lesson directly impacts firefighter safety and emergency operations throughout our city. In addition, the training conducted at this facility directly impacts our ISO rating as a city.

We must also continue to move forward the proposed new fire station on Pine Hill Road. As our city continues to grow, we need to continue evaluating how we position resources to provide effective services to our residents. Strategic placement of emergency resources is critical to maintaining response times and ensuring that our community receives the level of emergency services it expects and deserves. These are not simply construction projects or capital expenditures. They represent a long-term investment in firefighter safety, operational readiness, and the future of Nashua Fire Rescue to meet the needs of a growing and evolving community.

In closing, Nashua Fire Rescue remains committed to being fiscally responsible while continuing to provide exceptional

services to the residents and visitors of the city. I appreciate your time and consideration, and your continued support, and we are more than willing to answer any of your questions.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chief, thank you for your presentation and thank you for really opening right up on your deferred maintenance line for the building and ground maintenance. That's the first thing I was going to ask you about.

So you went from \$50,000, to 225, to zero. Could you just maybe in a little bit of detail because we're always hearing about the different buildings under NFR, and what they need, and the shortcomings that they have? With that all in mind, what does Fiscal '27 look like with zero dollars in that account?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

I'm going to defer to Assistant Chief Pouliot. He's the one that handles our facilities, so he can give you a laundry list of deficiencies if you would like.

Alderman Sennott

I'd love that.

Chairman Dowd

Welcome, Chief.

Adam Pouliot, Assistant Fire Chief

Hi. I'm Adam Pouliot, Assistant Fire Chief. So I put together a five year plan of what we need for deferred maintenance and it is basically anything other than HVAC work. So that includes things like broken doors, broken windows, peeling paint, kitchen cabinets that are 30 years old that are de-laminating, showers that haven't had tile replaced or repaired in decades, carpeting, things of that nature, and there isn't much money in the budget every year to even put a dent on these things. We fix things that are immediately broken that are like a safety/security need, other things just wait. So zero in the budget doesn't get us anything.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Mr. Chair, could I follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Yes, follow up.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

I'd like to point out that it is a drastic cut down to zero. This has been a line in our budget that we've always discussed at the capital improvements level and we have received money in that plan in the past. I do believe there is some thoughts or ideas how to fund these projects moving forward. However, it has been removed from our budget at this point in time. I bring it up to draw your attention to it because as you point out, a zero in that line or no money being available for deferred maintenance for the Fire Department is not sustainable.

Alderman Sennott

Follow up.

Chairman Dowd

Yes. I think she would - go ahead.

Karen Conde, Business Manager

Business Manager Karen Conde. Just so you're aware, the \$50,000 that we have in the current budget, we are already in the negative by \$7,700 and that is with what Assistant Chief Pouliot said just the bare minimum that we're doing.

Chairman Dowd

Just out of curious, I thought I saw in another part of the budget that they had your deferred maintenance – I'd have to look it up but I thought it was in a different place in the budget. Not in your budget but in capital. Maybe CFO can look that up and then go back to Alderman Sennott.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you. Just a statement more than anything. Seeing this and then hearing this really sticks out to me. I mean we've gone through - I've lost count of how many conversations about the conditions that we ask our Public Works employees to work in the current garage facility and, you know, this isn't to pit one department employees against another but really, it's striking to me that we have those conversations but now we're almost, you know, with this budget willing to accept that at least for a year we'll let our firefighters work in those conditions given the work that they do for the city. Having been into a couple of the fire houses, you know, I wouldn't let those things fly in my house and this is where our fire crew spends a good portion of their time is in these facilities. You know, somebody will say once a year at least during this budget review process that, you know, and Chief alluded to it here that a budget is more than just numbers on a page and that is true. You know from a city standpoint, it is a statement of our ideals and I just want to say that seeing that zeroed out and knowing the state that some of those firehouses are in, those are pretty lousy ideals.

Dawn Enwright, CFO

Dawn Enwright, CFO. So under the capital improvements budget, there is an amount for the Fire Department for deferred maintenance of \$150,000.

Chairman Dowd

Are you aware that of that Chief?

Dawn Enwright, CFO

Page 223 capital improvements.

Chairman Dowd

Were you all said Alderman Sennott?

Alderman Sennott

I am, thank you.

Alderwoman Kelly

Thank you and thank you for being here, Chief. I wanted to touch on one of the first things you were talking about which was the unaffiliated salary increases. I know that was something that we worked on in this chamber for a number of years to help offset, you know, when you step into a role as a higher up in your organization, people are actually making less money. So I just statement is that I think that we have talked about this ad nauseum and you should get that money. The question is, is the difference in that reflected is that the total 51 is that that like 100,000 or something like that? Can you tell me what the exact difference is?

Karen Conde, Business Manager

The difference in the salaries is the three positions that were done at six months and then also the unaffiliated and chief officers, the combined.

Chairwoman Kelly

And I know what the unaffiliated that was cut.

Karen Conde, Business Manager

If you can just give me a minute, I can do it.

Alderman Kelly

I could also follow up. Just want...

Karen Conde, Business Manager

I think it was around 13.5 - \$13,500.

Alderman Kelly

Okay.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Kelly

Feels like we should be able to find that.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions?

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I mean, I certainly wasn't going to take it any more than DPW conditions. I think it's the same as well. I mean deferred maintenance is just what it's a continue to defer it, right, and then never do it. I complain about all the time that there was a set of aldermen many years ago that just stopped doing anything, and then we all of a sudden there's no paving, there's no infrastructure, and now we're trying to backtrack on everything that was let go for many, many years. We're getting there but it's still a lot of things that we got to continue to watch. So I don't know if what we just talked about that 100 and I think you said 50,000 is, you know, minus the 225, and then the delta there makes up the rest of it, and that's all we need to do to get you to where you need to be, or if we need to fund more than that. I don't know. You know, if someone can let us know at some point because if someone wants to make a, you know, a motion, we want to make sure we put out the right money there for it. That would be good.

I thought I had a question in there somewhere. I mean what you guys do in the city, and along with the police, and our emergency management team is, you know, unbelievable. It's top notch. I think someone said it to me. I don't know who I was talking to last night or maybe last week. I don't know. You guys and the police never end up in the paper in any kind of bad way, which means you guys are doing an amazing job because you can't say that about every place. You do it with keeping injuries down, even though we had some this year, and keeping injuries of citizens down as well because you guys react so quickly. So I appreciate that. The pay for the officers that we talk - it seems like we talk about every year. I think last year I know Alderman O'Brien put something forward, we approved it, and seems like it still doesn't get to where it needs to go for some reason. So I certainly want to make sure I continue to support that.

I think you know when we look at stuff like this maintenance, I mean, there's so much stuff that we could - that I would want to give you to do all the stuff you need to do whether it's putting up a new fire station, but then when we have these meetings, we constantly have people coming up saying don't pay them, don't give them that, don't give police that, don't give teachers that because they don't want their tax rate to go up 1 or 2%, you know. So I mean what do you say to the people who are living here that have to pay taxes and, you know, do we give you the extra money for the things you need? How do we balance that? How do you think we should balance that I guess?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

I think you have a very challenging job Alderman. Every department comes, they want their piece of the pie, and they're trying to move their organization forward as best they can. As Fire Chief, my job is to tell you what my needs are to run the Fire Department and your job is to tell me what I need to make it work on. I recognize that there's a delicate balance, and there's a prioritization that goes on with lists of projects, and things that we can undertake within the city. I do think that the Fire Department has done a very good job of waiting their turn in line and standing by while the projects are moved forward. I think some of the projects that we're faced with at this point in time, it's our time to have a seat at the table.

Chairman Dowd

Follow up?

Alderman Thibeault

Yeah, I would agree with that and I'll tell you right now, there's some people in the city that would be not so happy if we had a weak Fire Department or weak Police Department. They don't understand how good they have it right now. We have good departments that do good work out there and you're right, you do make it work with what you have and at some point, we have to make sure you start getting what you need to make sure that you keep people too. I talked about it with the Chief, Chief Rourke. You know working - for you guys, it's living too. It's not just working, you're living in those stations and no - I mean we took a tour of the Pine Hill Station. It's not good. It's not good living conditions for anybody. So why would somebody want to work there, right, and then you get people leaving, or wanting to leave, and we don't want that. We want to make sure we have full capacity of our Fire Department so thank you.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Could I follow up real quick please?

Chairman Dowd

Yes, go ahead Chief.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

I just like to remind you of a visit I made here to the chamber back in February after the explosion out on Amherst Street. I'll rewind a little further to that back in October, I believe it was, we had an incident down at Sky Meadow where our counterparts on the Police Department had the lead. At that point in time, that was an incident in October that I went through that had never experienced here in the City of Nashua, and I didn't expect that within the next three months, I've experienced two more incidents of the magnitude that I had now experienced in my 34 year career on the Fire Department. I came here that night in February to thank you because the decisions you make at this Board, and the investments that you make in public safety have significant impact, and are the reason that all those incidents that we experienced in the past six month months went the way they did. If this Board did not support public safety the way they do in the City of Nashua, those incidents go very differently and our organizations would have been very overwhelmed. So I thank you for your support.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you.

Alderman Kelly

I'm sorry Chief if I missed but did you tell us what the budget was up percentage wise?

Karen Conde, Business Manager

Prior to the cuts?

Alderman Kelly

Yeah.

Karen Conde, Business Manager

6.1.

Alderman Kelly

So you're close to 6.1% and Dawn do you know what it is with the mayoral cuts?

Karen Conde, Business Manager

I think I have it. Hold on. One moment.

Alderman Kelly

You can get that better.

Karen Conde, Business Manager

4.36.

Alderman Kelly

4.3 with the Mayor's...

Karen Conde, Business Manager

4.36. That's without benefits.

Alderman Kelly

Could you say it one more time?

Karen Conde, Business Manager

4.365.

Alderman Kelly

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

All set?

Alderman Kelly

Thank you, yup.

Alderman O'Brien

Thank you. Discussing the deferred maintenance thing and everything. As you know, I was on the Department. I remember one of our great fights in the past was we were getting mattresses from the hospital already well used, which caused injuries. I wonder how much money the city saved on that? I don't think anything.

And then I had the pleasure of being one of the last Captains at the Crown Hill Station. It was like working in the ghetto, you know. When it rained out, water came down the walls. It was pitiful. I used to kneel in front of the furnace and work the steam system. Learned - thank God I was, you know, graduate - well went to Mass Maritime Academy that I could run a steam engine. But if you don't spend money in the deferred maintenance, you have six fire stations with leaky roofs, or need of roof repairs, and that's six at a time, and that's a big cost. It would be nice to have it laid out in the future. I say that as being Chairman of the Infrastructure Committee. So it's very important.

I know this looked like this came as a surprise to you, you know, page 223 of the \$150,000. So I would like to hear back from you that that is adequate, you know, to do the needs and, you know, everything else in deferred maintenance. Like replacing the mattresses is kind of a deferred maintenance thing to me, too, you know, and cutting back. So I would just like to know as you look at that, you know, because it seemed to have been, unfortunately, hidden, you know, but thank God it's there. So see if that works out for you. Like to hear back. Thank you.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Yep, thank you Alderman.

So our original request was in \$175,000 increase on top of the 50, which brought it up to 225. I am glad we have \$150,000 in capital improvements. Like I said, it has bounced back and forth where that line has gone. We have had the

support of the Mayor's office and this Board. We are doing roof projects currently on many of the fire houses and we are in line to do a lot of HVAC work over the next five years as part of the capital improvements programs as well. So does that answer your question, Sir?

Alderman O'Brien

Kind of, yes. So are you still deficient, though?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

The 150 is certainly less than the 225 we're looking for, correct?

Alderman O'Brien

Okay. So it's 100 versus - 225 minus 150 is what you're looking for. Yeah.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to follow up on that a little bit because I'm just trying to wrap my head around shifting it out of the Fire Department's budget into the capital improvements budget because obviously, that came as a surprise to me. It clearly came as a bit of a surprise to the Chief here, which still to me feels a little bit problematic. Where is the line drawn? Because clearly they had monies in their budget in the prior Fiscal Year that they were utilizing for the maintenance of their facilities. Now it's in capital improvements. Is there some sort of shifted line that would, I guess, dictate what they can and can't utilize that money for now that it's under capital improvements versus I think it was categorized within their budget as building and grounds maintenance, which seems more accessible and useful to them.

Chairman Dowd

The only thing I can tell you is the School Department's always been in the deferred maintenance area because then it can't be touched for anything but deferred maintenance. Dawn do you have anything you want to add to - I think that's the way we're moving, right?

Dawn Enwright, CFO

It can be used for any maintenance function in the Fire Department. So I do not see that there would be any restriction whether it be in the capital or in their line item.

Alderman Sennott

Are there any additional steps that they have to go through in order to access those funds?

Dawn Enwright, CFO

No.

Chairman Dowd

No.

Alderman Johnson

Thank you very much. A question to Miss Enwright through the Chair, please.

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Johnson

Was that removed to bring their budget down from that - what was it 6.6...

Karen Conde, Business Manager

6.06.

Alderman Johnson

Yeah, to where they are now for the 4.63

Karen Conde, Business Manager

4.365.

Alderman Johnson

Yeah, thanks. Yeah, 6.1. Would you move down just to bring the budget down?

Dawn Enwright, CFO

The removing of it was to try to bring the Department down to a more appropriate level within each of the departments, but recognizing the need was looking at the capital budget where we were keeping that consistent. As you can see, the capital budget is not increasing at a significant amount so we were able to utilize the space in the capital budget to help additional funding.

Chairman Dowd

Follow-up?

Alderman Johnson

So it doesn't matter if coming out of the right hand or left hand. It's still that money for them to be able to use for maintenance.

Dawn Enwright, CFO

Yes.

Alderman Johnson

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions?

Alderman Thibeault

Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. So the education - deferred educational school budget is that always been under the capital? So are we trying to align more with deferred maintenance of anything to go into that capital line item generally?

Chairman Dowd

I don't want to speak for him, but I think Director Cummings has been trying to establish a citywide organization for maintenance. Much like the School Departments, this may be one step in that direction and to isolate the deferred maintenance so that we take care of our buildings better than we have. I have a concern this year is deferred maintenance for the School Department of \$300,000. They have over a billion dollars in buildings. Those numbers don't add up. So we'll see where that goes. We have a way of taking care of some of that. You'll hear about later but.

Alderman Thibeault

Okay. Thank you.

Alderman Sennott

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm still trying to wrap my head around this and I apologize. This may actually be a question to

you. I believe you still sit on the Capital Improvements Committee?

Chairman Dowd

Yes, I do.

Alderman Sennott

Reading through the summary here under capital improvements, it seems like any projects funded out of capital improvements would need to come to that Committee. Is that correct?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Alderman Sennott

So even the doors that the Fire Department wants to fix?

Chairman Dowd

Chief, we have a lot of projects to consider but was deferred maintenance one of your CIC programs?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Yes.

Chairman Dowd

That's why it ended up there then. Probably. I mean I didn't make that decision but yes, it was covered under CIC.

Alderman Sennott

Okay.

Chairman Dowd

All right. Anyone else?

Just want to cover a couple things relative to the mutual aid. Several years ago, we were sitting in a budget meeting much like we are tonight and one of our aldermen wanted to do away with mutual aid. As we were sitting here looking out that window, huge amount of smoke. There was a fire right down the street. So we all went down to the fire and there was mutual aid from several communities, including a ladder truck from Lowell, which I didn't think we ever went that far, but evidently we do, and that changed his mind forever. That we definitely need mutual aid.

The other thing is, like when we had the fire on Amherst Street, every one of our fire trucks were there. We can't leave stations unaccounted for because if somebody has a fire in their house, they can't wait somebody to leave a fire scene like we had on Amherst Street to get there. So we have mutual aid that covers all those stations. If Merrimack has a big fire and they all their stations are empty, we might be one of the ones that go cover their stations. So it works out to everybody's mutual benefit, but there's no money exchanged. It's a shared interest in safety. Correct?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

That is correct. We have mutual aid agreements from the beginning of time. Even before Alderman O'Brien was a firefighter. They go that far back, yes.

Alderman O'Brien

As far as the horses could run.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Yeah, and no money exchanges hands. The Nashua Fire Department is unique in that we are host to the hazmat team for the Souhegan Valley. There is some financial obligation of the communities that subscribe to that but it is very minor.

Chairman Dowd

All right. Any additional questions for Fire?

Alderman Johnson

Thank you. Through you to Chief Buxton. Did you ever get a price for Teak Drive on how much it's going to cost for Teak Drive and to move your fire training facility?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

For the water line or for the overall project?

Alderman Johnson

Everything.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

For the overall project, it's in the Capital Improvement Plan for \$1.9 million for the overall project over many years. Currently, the price that we're looking to have funded is \$900,000, I believe, to move the structure and get us established at the new location.

Alderman Johnson

Okay. Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

And Chief, other departments use that as well. Again part of the mutual aid, we really - it helps some of our residents from surrounding towns as well.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

That is correct. A small number of communities do use it and it's all scheduled during business hours and such.

Chairman Dowd

And if we didn't have that facility here in Nashua isn't the closest one we could go train in, in Concord?

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

That is correct. There is one in Concord. Could I just follow up with Alderman Johnson quickly?

Chairman Dowd

Yes.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

To move the building that we currently have is \$900,000. The project overall currently, we're still working on numbers but I believe is going to come in about \$1.5 million.

Alderman Johnson

May I follow-up on it?

Chairman Dowd

Follow up?

Alderman Johnson

Yes. I don't want anybody to think that nobody wants to fire training facility. That had to do with the fact that there was going to be a road going through the wooded area in the neighborhood. Everybody compromised on just the water line going through.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Correct.

Alderman Johnson

And I think other than the fact that they've had some four wheelers up in that area, which the Police Chief, you know, everybody's aware of, and DPW with the gate open, I think it was a pretty good compromise as long as every - there's no big issues in that neighborhood. So, thank you, Chief.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

I agree. Thank you for your help on that.

Alderman Johnson

You're welcome.

Chairman Dowd

Any other questions for the Fire Department? Thank you very much, Chief.

Steve Buxton, Fire Chief

Thank you.

Chairman Dowd

Appreciate it. Okay. That concludes our budget review for this evening?

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO TABLE R-26-028
MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bill Ferriero

My name is Bill Ferriero. My home is #35 Indian Rock Road. I am flattered and amused that you would call the ghost job thing from last year. I was at the public hearing last year. Yes, I was the one that came up with that but you totally misunderstand. Why are you so triggered when someone from the public gets up and asks a question to try and solve a problem. Why does that bother you so much? When you attack a member of the public for asking a question, you're speaking for 15 Aldermen in the City of Nashua. What you're saying is you're saying is we don't give a shit what you got to say. Sit down.

Chairman Dowd

Careful what you...

Bill Ferriero

Thank you, Sir.

Chairman Dowd

Any other Public Comment? Seeing none.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Alderman Thibeault

Yeah, I mean when the question comes up, I want to make sure that, you know, people answer it for you. You brought that up many, many, many times and I just want to make sure that the people that are there are answering the question. It's not an attack. You can't come up again.

Chairman Dowd

You can't come back.

Alderman Thibeault

You can't come up again.

Chairman Dowd

You can't come up.

Bill Ferriero

I'm going to stand here and listen. Go ahead. Continue, Sir.

Alderman Thibeault

You're not even supposed to be talking. We can have you thrown out. We actually have police here tonight. We can have you thrown out.

President Wilshire

Come on. Enough.

Alderman Thibeault

Do you want them to happen?

Alderwoman Kelly

Enough.

Chairman Dowd

Police?

Alderman Thibeault

Do you want that to happen? Do you want that to happen? Yeah, see ya pal. We could still have you thrown out. You can stand there all you want.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Thibeault, let's just...

Alderman Thibeault

When you come up and you say things that aren't true...

Bill Ferriero

I didn't say...

Alderman Thibeault

I want to make sure things are corrected.

Chairman Dowd

Alderman Thibeault, let's not have a running discussion.

Alderman Thibeault

I want to make sure things are corrected when someone comes up and says the wrong thing. So I asked those questions. Ghost jobs – we always get somebody that says, you know, oh – police make too much or we hire too many police. So I always want to make sure that our people that work here explain exactly what value they bring to the city, which is a TON of value. People like himself, all they want is a reduced tax rate. They don't care about what these people do and its important that the people in the city know what they do. So I asked those questions so they can tell us. I knew the answer to all those questions that I asked because I listen and I want to make sure that other people ask them. He will come to the public hearing, and he will ask the ghost job question again. You will ask all the other questions again. He will ask about the car permits, and all the registration fees, and all that stuff.

Chairman Dowd

All right, lets...

Alderman Thibeault

Can we have him pulled out of here instead of standing there?

Chairman Dowd

I have no problem with you having comments.

Alderman Thibeault

But can we have him removed.

Chairman Dowd

But don't have a running discourse with a member of the public and he's not allowed to...

Alderman Thibeault

Remember, he came and attacked me, and he was swearing, and he attacked me first. Just remember that.

Chairman Dowd

All right.

Alderman Thibeault

Good bye. Have a good night.

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

Chairman Dowd

Any other remarks from Aldermen?

Alderman Sennott

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I actually just wanted to – I know I kind of treaded down the same road a lot tonight. So I just wanted to appreciate the patience of CFO Enwright and the heads of the Departments here tonight. I know I asked a lot

of the same questions a couple of different ways. I appreciate them helping me understand what's going on.

Chairman Dowd

Any other comments?

Alderwoman Kelly

Yes. So I just wanted to comment. Thank you for everyone who came in. It's always interesting to go through the budget each year with our public safety officials. Really appreciate it.

I did want to comment around deferred maintenance. It comes up every single year. I'd be really interested to have a little bit of a deeper conversation at maybe one of the wrap up sessions around what are all the maintenance issues, how much are we deferring, what is a proper percentage that we should be re-investing in our buildings that are billions of dollars so that we can maintain them and not continue to build them, then fix them, then build them. It actually creates this problem with the rates to our taxpayers. So I really think that is a place that we should look, and talk about, and explain how investing evenly is actually going to be a better return for the people of Nashua.

Alderman Johnson

Thank you very much. You know, we talk about deferred maintenance, and we talk about the DPW garage, and I did a tour there. I want to – I did leave. I didn't feel good but I guess my questions been the city's known about that garage being a sick building for so long. Why didn't they do anything back when to ventilate the building, especially with all the big equipment in there? You know. So you talk about it, and then it doesn't get done but meanwhile we talk about our workers getting ill from it. I get it with deferred maintenance because I saw it with the School District.

You know, then we go back and we blame everything on the spending cap, but the spending cap has not been in existence for what four – how long has the Mayor been in office? Is this his second term or third term?

Alderwoman Kelly

Hmm, hmm.

Alderman Johnson

Hmm, mmm what? Second or third?

Alderman Thibeault

Third.

Alderman Johnson

Third term. Okay. That's what I thought. Okay. So 8 – so it went to 9, 10 years almost with it. The spending cap hasn't been around so how much more can you blame on the spending cap that things didn't get done? You know. So that's all we talk, it's always the blaming on the spending cap. I'm sorry. You know, things could have been done years ago and it wasn't done. So now it keeps piling up and we're saying that it has to be done. I'm looking at this budget and nobody came in at 3 percent here. Nobody. I understand the value – the School District didn't come in at 3 percent. Community Development didn't come in at 3 percent. Nobody has come in at 3 percent. That's what the Mayor said – 3 percent – and then he gave us the budget and it's like fix it. Where do you start beginning when you know what needs to be done but when we talk about the people about the tax dollars, I hear from a lot of people. Whether people believe or not, I see a lot of people in this city because of my job, and going grocery shopping, and people – and they call me from different Wards. They keep saying we can't afford any more tax increases. We can't afford a six percent.

So we have to be cognizant of the people who pay for all of this and if we can't, then are we really doing our jobs right because this building belongs to the taxpayers of the city. We work for them. So I'm just saying this tonight, you know, because I'm out there. Conservation land. I'm seen everywhere with my constituents. So I'm just letting you know what I'm hearing out there on the streets. Thank you very much.

Alderwoman Kelly

I just wanted to see if through you to Director Enwright we could talk about the spending cap and it has not been

completely lifted for nine years.

Dawn Enwright, CFO

Lifted?

Alderwoman Kelly

Correct.

Dawn Enwright, CFO

Excuse me, Dawn Enwright, CFO.

Alderwoman Kelly

Has it been in effect?

Dawn Enwright, CFO

The tax cap has been in effect. Actually, the history of the tax cap I was not here for the complete history but I do know that it has been in effect for many years. It started – I don't have the exact date. I would like to follow up with this if you don't mind.

Alderwoman Kelly

Sure. Yeah, if I could just follow up?

Chairman Dowd

Quickly. Yeah, go ahead.

Alderwoman Kelly

Yeah, maybe we can talk about it at the wrap up. But it was in effective for a couple of years, and then it got back from the State House, and then we were told we did have to be abiding by it in the last couple of years. So if we could get the facts straight on that, I think that would be really important. So if could do that at wrap up that would be great.

Alderman Johnson

Yes, could we also with – it's a spending cap. It's not a tax cap. With the spending cap, it was changed many years ago. It was originally with the CPI index, and then Mr. Hoffman put a referendum on the ballot, and it passed so it became a different procedure on how you calculate it. It was allowing to give more money versus the CPI index. So it's by a different index now. So if you go back and look at it because the spending cap came into existence in about 1993, 4, something like that. Then there was a referendum on the ballot and that did pass. So the calculations were changed. So, thank you very much.

Alderman Thibeault

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm sorry about the outbursts earlier. When I was speaking, he was making noises out there and then he came very aggressive at me at the podium.

As far as deferred maintenance, I mean I'm all in favor of restoring the fire deferred maintenance to where ever it was originally. That, I think, is the right thing to do most likely based on this. I think if we truly tried to fund every single thing that needed deferred maintenance, I think we would be like we wouldn't have money to put – we wouldn't be able to put it all in the budget. So we need to have some kind of plan over time. I think if we went to being very adherent to the spending cap, we wouldn't be paying for any of this deferred maintenance. That's the whole reason why I think we got into this position in the first place. I think it was let go and when we ask the question of why wasn't it done before, well most if not all of us weren't part of those boards before.

I know Alderman Clemons has talked about it a lot, especially on the educational front. School deferred maintenance. He's talked about it a lot making sure we can, you know, keep up the maintenance that we need at the schools. So we have to find a plan to do this every year and, you know, if Fire has a billion dollars of deferred maintenance and we're only

putting \$100,000 every year, in our lifetime, we're never going to get to a point where it's even close to being on some kind of schedule. If it's \$500,000, we put \$300,000. Maybe we can get closer to catching it up, right.

So I think we need a better plan for deferred maintenance but I don't think we can go and add all of it into this budget. I mean – even though every other town and city in this State is getting a budget increase and getting a large, unfortunately tax increase, we are being held to the standard that we got to have 3 percent. The Mayor put the 3 percent out there, I believe, to try to get the low – I don't think in his mind he knew that anybody was going to be able to hit 3 percent. I think Alderman Sennott said the other day, it was like 17, or 16 departments that actually hit the 3 percent and I know he said that and there was another, I think, 30 or 40 that didn't I think you said. So someone did it but obviously, it's very tough on some of these bigger departments – Education, Fire, Police. It's tough.

So I think the Mayor was just trying to get it down as much as he could possibly get it down. So when we hear that 3 percent, I don't ever think that it was – I hate to say it, I don't think it was a realistic goal to get a whole budget down to 3 percent in a situation where everything is are rising, including salaries. So that's – I mean that's my take on it but I agree with Alderwoman Kelly. We do have to do something about deferred maintenance. We say it all the time. We just never get there.

President Wilshire

Thank you. I just want to address what happened. It think it's unfair for us to put our guests, our employees in a position of taking someone out of the room that's being unruly. I think it's really unfair to our Police Department to do that. Anybody to do that. So I just wanted to put that out there.

Chairman Dowd

I'd like to thank the two business coordinators for the Police and Fire Departments. I know all too well that they rely on them a tremendous amount. They do a lot of work and they keep everything honest and above board. So thank you Karen and Karen. It must be part of the criteria for hiring. Anyway, thank you very much for all you do, and thank you for everyone that came in tonight and explained their budgets, and appreciate it.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN O'BRIEN TO ADJOURN MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared closed at 8:24 p.m.

Alderman Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
Committee Clerk