



City of Seattle

Seattle Police Department

July 23, 2021

MEMORANDUM

To: Greg Doss and Aly Pennucci
Council Central Staff

From: Angela Socci, Executive Director of Budget/Finance
Seattle Police Department

Subject: July Budget Update

I. Executive Summary

On January 25, 2021, I transmitted a memorandum describing the probable impacts of CB 119981, which would have reduced SPD's 2021 budget by \$5.4 million. At the time, I flagged several budget issues; however, it was too early in the year to fully assess the impact of the proposed budget actions and adopted provisos. This memorandum serves as an update to the January memo.

To summarize:

- Sworn salary underspend is accumulating due to late separations in 2020 and continued high attrition in 2021. This year, SPD has reallocated some of this salary underspend to unbudgeted costs that are necessary to mitigate against the staffing shortage or represent unavoidable consequences of the staff losses, including civilian hiring, technology costs, and separation payouts.
- SPD is still experiencing an extreme staffing shortage. Police separations continue to outpace police hires, requiring changes to the City's response protocols and expansion of web-based, self-service tools, such as online reporting.
- The department remains committed to discharge its public safety obligation in 2021. To achieve this, SPD is seeking authorization to use sworn salary underspend to offset overtime costs, including costs for special events (which have been reinitiated sooner than the original 2021 budget anticipated) in lieu of requesting an appropriation increase to cover these costs.
- Under Executive Order 2020-10, an interdepartmental team (IDT) developed recommendations for expanding alternative response options in Seattle and supporting other community safety investments, such as the creation of a new triage response model in the Seattle Fire Department (SFD) and the addition of a new dispatch protocol system for the new Community Safety and Communications Center (CSCC). Some of these new initiatives may be funded with sworn

vacancy underspend with the understanding that they may also help mitigate sworn staffing shortages.

II. Background

In January, the department provided a comprehensive overview of the 2021 budget to help inform Council discussions related to CB 119981. At that time, it was difficult to predict how and when the pandemic would end and nearly impossible to project sworn staffing levels. Since then, Seattle achieved a 70% vaccination rate and Washington State officially reopened all while SPD staffing levels declined even further from year-end 2020.¹

III. Staffing Update

As previously reported, in 2020, SPD lost more officers than any other year on record. Of the 186 separations, 46% had 7 years of service or less. With recruitment and hiring significantly constrained in the context of COVID, SPD realized a net loss of 135 officers. This year, SPD is continuing to separate officers at an alarming rate. Through June 30, SPD separated 100 officers, suggesting 2021 will soon be the department's second highest attrition year on record. The department is unable to precisely predict how many officers will leave this year and next. However, our current trajectory indicates SPD could separate as many as 160 officers in 2021. That would mean a loss of 321 officers in just two years.

Through June 30, the department hired 38 new officers. Recovery efforts are underway to allow for the return to normal hiring levels by year end. For example, SPD recently engaged a third-party backgrounding service to ensure the police staffing shortage does not impede hiring progress. For budget planning, the department is currently assuming roughly 90 new hires in 2021.

Table 1: Draft SPD Police Officers Hired, Funded, and Available

Year ¹	Funded FTE	New Hires	Separations	Net New Officers	All Sworn Officers ²	Fully Trained ³	Sworn in Service	% Funded in Service
2020 ⁴	1,497	51	(186)	(135)	1,276	1,231	1,094	73.08%
2021 - Forecast	1,343	87	(160)	(73)	1,186	1,165	1,086	80.86%
2021 - Actuals YTD	1,343	38	(100)	(62)	1,212	1,178	1,070	79.67%

¹Based on Q4 figures for 2012-2020.

²All Sworn Officers: total count of sworn personnel who have graduated from the Academy and earned sworn commission

³ Fully Trained Officers: total count of sworn personnel who have successfully completed Phase II-Field Training

⁴Includes new officer positions added in 2020.

Source: SPD Draft Sworn Hiring Projections with Actuals through June 2021, 7/14/21

█ = Budget Estimates as of 7/14/21

¹ <https://durkan.seattle.gov/2021/06/seattle-becomes-first-major-american-city-to-fully-vaccinate-70-percent-of-residents-12-and-older/>

The SPD staffing model is used for budgeting and planning purposes only. The calculated fields used to estimate staffing levels in current and future months are based on a series of assumptions that may result in slight deviations from actual staff counts.

IV. Budget Implications

SPD predicts approximately \$15M in sworn salary savings will be available for reinvestment or reallocation to unanticipated or unbudgeted department needs by year end. Much of this funding can be reallocated administratively, and a portion has been directed to the critical civilian staffing needs and essential IT investments identified in our January memo. For the remainder we will seek Council action to lift existing restrictions on portions of SPD's budget.

Overtime

The department's overtime budget for 2021 was reduced by \$7.9M compared to the 2020 adopted overtime budget. As a result, SPD must prioritize overtime needs and expenditures and plan for contingencies in order to operate within the overall budget parameters set for this year. Since January, the department produced quarterly overtime allocations to allow for adjustments during uncertain times. Based on year-to-date actuals and the expectation that the end of COVID restrictions will allow for large-scale public gatherings, it is all but certain department will need additional overtime budget for special events and sporting events. Through June 30, the department has incurred \$1M in event-related overtime. This total excludes overtime related to planned/unplanned demonstrations.

Event overtime is being closely tracked and reported to the Council on a recurring basis with the expectation that unbudgeted event overtime may require a future appropriation increase or use of vacancy savings. Preliminary estimates indicate an additional \$3M may be needed to cover unbudgeted event activities, many of which are revenue backed (e.g., scheduled regular season Seahawks games (9 remaining), Sounders games (10 remaining), Mariners games (32 remaining) and Kraken games (20 remaining)). SPD may be able to use the budget authority provided by sworn vacancy savings to address these costs, if Council lifts the restrictions now imposed on a portion of SPD's spending authority.

Civilian Support

SPD resumed civilian hiring in the second quarter of 2021. Sworn salary savings is currently being used to support civilian positions that were unfunded in the 2021 budget process. Based on current hiring timelines, the department expects \$1.3M in sworn vacancy savings will be used to fund the positions identified below. In January, the department projected \$1.4M would be needed for this purpose. Additional positions have been approved for hire in the second half of 2021 in response to critical needs. New positions that were not included in the January memo are marked with an asterisk.

- *Crime Prevention Coordinator (CPC) – North Seattle (2.0 FTE) - \$98k*
- *Community Service Officers (CSOs) – citywide (5.0 FTE) - \$244k*
- *Community Service Officer Supervisor – citywide (1.0 FTE) - \$54k*
- *Management Systems Analyst Supervisor – citywide (1.0 FTE) - \$66k*
- *Admin Staff Analyst – citywide (5.0 FTE) - \$263k**
Previously reported, increased from 2.0 FTE to 5.0 FTE in response to public disclosure recommendations
- *Admin Staff Assistant – citywide (2.0 FTE) - \$105k**
Added in response to public disclosure recommendations
- *Video Specialist II – citywide (1.0 FTE) - \$53k**

Added in response to public disclosure recommendations

- *Sr. Management Systems Analyst – citywide (1.0 FTE) - \$62k*
- *CID Public Safety Liaison – West Precinct (1.0 FTE) - \$73k**

Not included in January memo; flagged in subsequent correspondence regarding CB 119981

- *Bias Crimes Coordinator – citywide (1.0 FTE) - \$68k**

Not included in January memo; flagged in subsequent correspondence regarding CB 119981

- *Pre-BLEA Training Coordinator – citywide (1.0 FTE) - \$68k**

This position will develop relational policing curriculum for new police recruits and laterals to equip new officers with skills necessary to engage community and promote equitable and just police services.

The department is currently planning for the expansion of the CSO program to address the increased demand for alternative response services. SPD is prioritizing the filling of vacant CSO pockets and will initiate expansion efforts in the fourth quarter of 2021. The estimated cost to add a new CSO squad in 2021 is \$120k.

Technology Needs

SPD has initiated the critical technology upgrades and improvements necessary to implement community safety reforms and deliver fair and equitable police services. The Data Analytics Platform, Early Intervention System and Capacity Planning Tool projects are scheduled for completion in 2021. The department plans to use sworn vacancy savings to cover the associated contract costs (est. \$2.25M).

In addition to the technology needs identified in the January memo, SPD has also reserved a portion of its sworn salary savings to finance the continuation of the Work, Scheduling and Timekeeping project in 2021 (est. \$500k) as well as consultant services provided by the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR), who was engaged to review and analyze calls-for-service data in connection with the reimagining policing work for \$50k.

Hiring, Retention and Wellness

To address the sworn staff shortage, SPD is contemplating various initiatives to attract and retain qualified police employees. The department is evaluating near and long-term solutions to address the root causes of increased attrition. Investments in officer wellness efforts will not only serve staffing objectives; they also advance the City's vision for reimagining policing and improving community safety. SPD's Wellness Unit contracted with a mental health professional (MHP) and is in the process of expanding access to mental health resources for police employees (est. \$300k through 12/2022). Providing embedded MHP services represents best practices for any police wellness program by reducing barriers to support and promoting a necessary culture of care. SPD will be joining the ranks of many nationwide police departments incorporating wellness into established departmental expectations. Research connects law enforcement wellness support to decreased officer injuries and use of force and community complaints. Similar investments are currently being made at SFD.

The department has also contracted with a third-party backgrounding service (est. \$328k through 12/2022) to prevent the sworn staffing shortage in the SPD Background Unit from further impeding the hiring process.

Lastly, the department is also considering, with Executive support, the reinstatement of a hiring incentive program to help attract police candidates. Most agencies in the region offer incentives, ranging from \$5k to \$20k.

Separation Pay

CB 119981 was proposed to reduce SPD’s budget in 2021 for general fund reimbursement for separation pay in 2020. Due to the high number of separations in 2020 and a combined mid-year budget cut of \$19.5M, SPD was unable to absorb the increased cost of separation pay last year without additional appropriation. Similarly, SPD will be unable to absorb the separation pay overage in 2021 due to the budget cuts already imposed during the 2021 budget process. Historically, SPD used salary savings to cover this expense.

In January, SPD estimated the budget shortfall for separation pay could be as much as \$1.8M. Factoring in the year-to-date separations, the updated projected shortfall has increased. Through June 30, the department expended \$2.5M on separation payouts. The department plans to use sworn vacancy savings to cover the full budget shortfall (est. \$2.6M) unless another funding source is identified.

Deferred Compensation

Like separation payouts, the budget for deferred compensation benefits for sworn personnel does not fully support annual expenditures. Historically, the budget shortfall has been offset by sworn salary savings. In 2019, the budget shortfall was \$880k and nearly \$400k in 2020. In 2021, the estimated shortfall is \$600k. The department will need an appropriation increase to cover the budget shortfall (est. \$602k) for the deferred compensation benefit in 2021. Sworn vacancy savings cannot be used to cover this expense without Council action to lift existing restrictions on portions of SPD’s budget.

Table 2. Deferred Compensation, 2018-2021, as of 7/8/21

Year	Revised Budget	Expenses	Available Balance
2018	\$3,448,059	\$3,911,264	(\$463,205)
2019	\$4,232,707	\$5,112,592	(\$879,885)
2020	\$4,277,502	\$4,665,312	(\$387,810)
2021 Forecast	\$4,277,502	~\$4,879,522	~(\$602,020)

Paid Parental Leave

The City Budget Office (CBO) has historically recommended against providing City departments with an adopted budget appropriation for paid parental leave (PPL). As a relatively new benefit, CBO did not have a methodology to predict PPL needs by department. Because of this, all appropriation for PPL is kept in Finance General and distributed based on actual utilization within the departments. Because of this, SPD does not use salary savings to cover PPL costs and will continue to ask for a supplemental budget appropriation for these costs. In 2021, the department estimates backfill cost for PPL will be around \$1.8M. Through July 6, the department expended an estimated \$1M on PPL backfill. The department will need an appropriation increase from the City’s Finance General reserve to cover the full unbudgeted cost of PPL backfill. Alternatively, sworn vacancy savings described above may be used to cover a portion of this expense.

Potential COVID-Related Compensation Adjustments

The City is currently evaluating options to provide additional compensation for City employees who have been required to report to a workplace during the current pandemic. This work is ongoing and final costs have not been determined, but we recommend establishing a reserve of \$2.5 million.

V. Community Safety Reinvestments

Following a global pandemic, a summer of protests against police brutality, and a civil rights reckoning that demanded leadership from across the country to confront our nation's history of systemic racism and oppression of BIPOC communities, the City of Seattle and SPD committed to re-envision and reimagine what public safety could look like in our City. But we are also facing enormous public safety challenges. Our region has experienced a significant increase in gun violence and firearm-related homicide over the past several years. Homicide is up 42% across the nation since the onset of COVID, and here at home, by August 2020, we had already surpassed the number of homicides recorded throughout all of 2019. At the same time, losses at SPD have resulted in increasing call times, an urgent need to shift non-emergency call responses elsewhere, and historic levels of attrition among sworn officers, as outlined above. The need to stand up alternate response models and increase administrative support and alternatives is urgent.

Specialized Triage Response

The City of Seattle proposes to field a new specialized triage response, housed within the SFD Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) program, that will respond directly to non-criminal and non-medical calls, such as wellness checks, identified by 9-1-1 at the CSCC. Utilizing a new 9-1-1 call-taking protocol system (outlined below), dispatchers will be furnished with a new specialized triage response that will not include sworn police officer.

The specialized response model will operate out of SFD in close connection with the CSCC. SFD already operates an alternative response program – Health One – out of its Mobile Integrated Health program; location of the new team within MIH will avoid creating new silos or program gaps. The specialized triage response will be dispatched after SFD and SPD 911 determines the call is a wellness check for individuals who do not need an urgent medical or safety intervention.

Key to these efforts is removing the burden from 9-1-1 dispatchers to make an immediate determination, sight-unseen, on what the most appropriate response is for these non-emergent calls that do not require urgent medical or safety intervention. Staffing will include professionals that are experts in outreach, system navigation, behavioral health, and have tangible connections to the communities they will serve. SFD will be able to provide a warm handoff to community-based organizations and follow-up to help ensure that individuals' needs are met and to reduce the likelihood that they are called for assistance in the future. The specialized triage response startup costs for staffing and related items are estimated at \$700k for 2021.

CSCC Dispatch Protocol System

Part of the recommendations for expanding alternative response include a new 9-1-1 protocol dispatch system now housed in the new CSCC. A protocol dispatch system allows call takers to gather essential information about incident (i.e., vehicles involved, individuals at the scene, threats to life) in a consistent and replicable manner. This ensures the call taker dispatches the correct response to the

incident. Additionally, the system can increase situational awareness by ensuring dispatched resources have the information they need and that callers are given clear instructions.

This proposal will help improve 9-1-1 operations by streamlining response, reducing bias among call takers, and ensuring crucial decision-making information is recorded. Additionally, this system could be built out further to also accommodate non-uniformed police response to incidents. The new system will cost \$340k in 2021.

Peacekeepers Collective

The Regional Peacekeepers Collective is a violence prevention program that uses a public health approach to provide high-intensity engagement to young people likely to be victims or perpetrators of gun violence. The Collective connects at-risk young people to violence-prevention services by using referrals from Harborview Medical Center (HMC), the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, community-based outreach workers, and partner organizations to Regional Peacekeepers Collective partners.

Collective partners provide intervention, restoration, and prevention services including outreach, mentoring, wrap-around case management, and connection to family support services. Partners complete a comprehensive training on delivering these services as well as using data analysis to ensure strategic data-driven referrals and engagement with at-risk youth. The program will also implement a community engagement strategy to build awareness for public health solutions to violence.

Regional Peacekeepers launched a year-long pilot beginning on June 4, 2021, to build capacity and ramp up to full scale services with a goal to serve approximately 200 youth and their families directly impacted by gun violence. The program will require additional resources to build and maintain quality service delivery. Funding for the program will go towards staffing of project managers, family support specialists, a restoration services and administrative coordinator, in addition to local assistance for youth and family support services, training, and technical assistance. Total investment for the program through July 2023 is \$2M.

VI. Conclusion

SPD’s spending plan for the salary underspend, outlined in Table 3, addresses critical needs in the department and public safety arena.

Table 3. Spending Plan *(Items listed in same order as above)*

SPD Budget Adjustments	(\$13,749,646)
Event Overtime - est.	(\$3,000,000)
Civilian Support	(\$1,154,000)
Additional CSO Unit	(\$120,000)
Technology Investments (Accenture)	(\$2,250,000)
Work Scheduling Timekeeping Project	(\$500,000)
NICJR Contract	(\$50,000)
SPD MHP Program	(\$150,000)
Contract Background Services	(\$110,000)
Hiring and Retention Incentives	(\$520,000)

Separation Pay Shortfall - est.	(\$2,593,626)
Deferred Compensation Shortfall - est.	(\$602,020)
Paid Parental Leave (partial; see above for full estimate)	(\$200,000)
Potential COVID-Related Compensation - est.	(\$2,500,000)
Community Safety Reinvestments	(\$1,540,000)
Triage One (SFD)	(\$700,000)
CSCC Dispatch Protocol System	(\$340,000)
Regional Community Safety Plan/Peacekeepers Collective	(\$500,000)

Total (SPD Adjustments + CS Reinvestments)	(\$15,289,646)
Salary underspend - gross est. as of 6/30/21	\$15,353,750
Remaining Balance	\$64,104

The above underspend is an estimate based on the attached staffing model. This amount is subject to change as actual hires and separations are realized over the course of the entire year. Please refer to the sections above for actual costs incurred year-to-date.

Although there is salary underspend given the high attrition at SPD over the past year, the resulting staffing crises created by officers leaving makes it critical to redirect this money towards mitigating public safety investments that will provide real relief in the near-term as proposed above.

Attachments:

- Overtime Report – June
- Staffing Model – June