LEGISLATIVE, FINANCE, AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Legislative, Finance, and Administration Committee meeting was held on January 12, 2015, at 6:01 p.m. with Chairman Slavin presiding. Members present were Mr. Anderson, Mr. Hare, Mr. Shevock, and Mr. Sudler (arrived at 6:05 p.m.). Members of Council present were Mr. Dixon, Mrs. Williams, Mr. Hutchison, and Council President Bonar. Mayor Christiansen was also present.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Shevock moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Hare and unanimously carried.

Dover Police Department - Permission to Increase Authorized Strength of Police Officers from 92 to 102

Mr. Slavin stated that, due to time constraints, this item had been placed on the City Council agenda for consideration during their meeting scheduled for later in the evening.

Chief Paul Bernat, Dover Police Department, read the following statement into the record:

> Good evening, I stand before you tonight as the Chief of Police and respectfully request your approval for ten additional police officers. I have been the Chief of Police for the past nine months. 2014 was a tumultuous year for the Dover Police Department as well as all law enforcement in general. There are several justifications for the additional police officers.
>
> First, in the past three years 14 officers have retired. Over the next year a total of 23 officers can retire. That is 25% of our current police force. I am very concerned with the potential to be "behind the eight ball". It takes at least 18 months to get an officer patrolling the streets of Dover. To include recruiting, hiring and training. In addition, accredited academies are traditionally run twice a year, once in March and once in September.
>
> Secondly, we have two officers in K-9 training, two officers on administrative leave, two officers out with shoulder injuries, two officers going to Florida for required Accident Reconstruction Training, the potential for another officer to be attending K-9 training for four months and an officer that puts at least eight weeks in at the Delaware State Police Academy as a TAC [tactical] officer. That does not include officers on FMLA [Family and Medical Leave Act] leave for having a new born, and we have been experiencing that a lot lately. When we have fourteen officers retire, obviously they are older, and you recruit and hire younger officers and they produce families, so now with FMLA, a lot of them are taking advantage of that and having up to twelve weeks for FMLA. In the past three years the Dover Police Department has accumulated the below amount of hours for police training:

2010	9,950 hours
2011	10,318 hours
2012	8,211 hours
2013	8,553 hours
2014	7,742 hours

There is a reason why the last three years did not have a lot of hours of training, and that is because of the manpower issues that we have been experiencing over the last three years. Also over the past three years we have lost a lot of experience in civilian positions:

- Chief's Assistant – retired after 26 years. We have hired three Chief's Assistants in the past three years.
- Records Administrator – retired after 20 years. This is a very important position that gets all of our data from the CAD information.
- 3 - Records Clerks – retired after 20 years
- CI Secretary – Job eliminated
- Evidence Tech – retired in December after 13 years.
- 5 – Dispatchers resigned.
- Special Services Supervisor will retire this month.

This is a whole lot of history and experience that we are losing. The reason I am mentioning civilians is because they play an important part as a support role to the Police Department. We have lost a lot of history and experience from our civilian workforce over the past three years.

Secondly, we have been juggling around officers for the past few years from different units to support the patrol unit. I have often said that the patrol unit is the backbone of the Police Department. They are the ones that are the first responders that are going to get there quick and solve the crimes. If they are not solving it, then our detectives are solving it through their investigative services. In 2014 we basically disbanded the community policing unit and removed three officers from the motorcycle unit in order to supplement the patrol unit and create the five officer "Street Crimes Unit". This was done in response to several violent months from the end of August to October. We believe that the Street Crimes Unit was very successful during the two month trial period and we feel that it should be a full-time unit.

An additional 10 officers appears accurate when you compare the City of Dover Police Department's authorized strength to comparable cities like Salisbury and Annapolis, Maryland. Salisbury has a population of approximately 30,000 citizens and an authorized strength of 102 officers. Annapolis has a population of approximately 36,000 citizens and an authorized strength of 119 officers. We are asking to be moved up to 102 officers.

The Dover Police Department is very good at catching criminals and solving crimes. We consistently boast of above average clearance rates. However, we need to be less reactive and more proactive. We need additional officers in order to be proactive, with such units as "Street Crimes". We also need to invest in a "Crime Analyst". This civilian position will help us to predict and therefore prevent crime.

Drugs continue to plague the City. Over the past four years heroin has infested our city.

- In 2011 we investigated 3 heroin incidents.
- In 2012 we investigated 8 heroin incidents.
- In 2013 we investigated 24 heroin incidents.
- In 2014 we investigated 129 heroin incidents.
- We are experiencing a Statewide heroin epidemic.

We need our community policing unit back. We need to implement a Police Athletic League (PAL). We need to be reaching out to our youth and build a strong rapport. It is imperative that we stay in constant contact with our community. We have built a large following of constituents on our social media platform. However, we need more officers to continue our community policing programs. We do not want civil unrest in our City like the nation has experienced in the past. I think it is imperative that we have a close relationships with our citizens, and the way we maintain that close relationship is through our community policing unit. Now I will read some of the programs that we offer but have not been able to fill due to our lack of manpower:

- Crime Free Multi-Housing Program - This is a huge program. The program's concept is to take a multi-faceted approach to crime prevention. A unique coalition of police, property managers and residents of rental properties, the program is to be an on-going program with a three-phase approach to address all of the opportunities of crime in rental property. The program was designed to include a certification process which includes a forty hour class for managers. The Crime Free Multi-Housing Program achieved almost instant success. In rental properties with the highest crime rates, the immediate results showed up to a 90% reduction in police calls for service. Even in the best properties reductions of 15% to 20% were not uncommon.

- Neighborhood Watch Program - The Neighborhood Watch Program is organized to enable the Dover Police Department and the community to work together in making a geographical area more resistant to crime. It is citizen involvement, neighborhood and community-based efforts, designed to help citizens and the police department in preventing crime. In harmony with the Community Policing philosophy, Neighborhood Watch encourages strong working relationships between police officers and the citizens they serve.

- Wesley College Freshmen Orientation - We do talks with Wesley College freshman.

- Are You Okay Program

- Community Outreach Talks - The Community Policing Units often gives presentations to several community organizations, groups, schools and businesses. The topics covered are as follows:

  - Personal Safety
  - Workplace Safety
  - Stranger Danger
  - Fraud/ID Theft Prevention
  - Crime Prevention
  - Meet a Police Officer (for small children)
  - Bicycle Safety
  - School Career Days
  - School Safety Patrol Talks

- Surveys - The Dover Police Department Community Policing Unit conducts surveys encompassing several different areas in Dover. These surveys are conducted to provide a guide to assist in improving safety and police services within the City. The goal is to provide continual enhancement of crime prevention and proactive policing strategies and initiatives. Topics covered in the survey include environmental issues, crimes and public services. You can now find on the Dover Police Department website a survey that can be filled out by all our citizens year round.

- Sex Offender Education

- Special Olympics - Where we are involved in:

  - Law Enforcement Torch Run
  - Summer Games in Newark
  - Basketball
  - Bowling
  - Swimming
  - Roller Skating
  - Truck Convoy
  - Advertising Campaign

- Special Events such as:

  - National Night Out
  - Heroes and Helpers
  - Bicycle Rodeos

We would like to hire five officers for the March 2015 Delaware State Police Academy and five additional officers for the September 2015 Delaware State Police Academy. We do believe that we can shave the cost by civilianizing the accreditation manager position. We believe that if we do not turn any police vehicles in for FY 2016 and we receive the requested amount of vehicles, which is nine, we will not need additional vehicles.

The cost of the five officers, starting March 15, 2015 will be as follows:

FY 15	$157,737
FY 16	$393,147
FY 17	$428,353
FY 18	$462,424
FY 19	$492,139

The cost for the total of ten officers will be as follows:

FY 15	$157,737	(would not include the additional five that would be hired in September)
FY 16	$710,484	
FY 17	$831,252	
FY 18	$901,585	
FY 19	$966,393	

If we were to civilianize accreditation, we would have a savings as follows:

FY 15	$11,730
FY 16	$18,850
FY 17	$24,566
FY 18	$30,022
FY 19	$34,572

That's a total savings over 4.5 years if accreditation is civilianized of $119,741.

Mr. Hare stressed the importance of community policing and having motor units back on a regular basis. He stated that Wilmington was per capita one (1) of the largest crime cities in the country and federal funds were being given to Wilmington to fight this. He feared that once crime was brought under control in Wilmington, it may head south and he did not wish it to come to Dover. Based upon his experience riding along with police officers for 55 hours during his previous service on City Council and on a recent 6:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. weekend shift, he felt that additional officers were needed. Mr. Hare indicated that the City should be proactive and get the help needed in anticipation of officers retiring rather than being down more when they leave. He stated that this might not raise the numbers to the required level of 102 but would be the first step. Mr. Hare noted that this could result in a tax increase; however, he felt that the safety of citizens was the most important thing.

Chief Bernat stated that within the next five (5) years, there would be mandatory retirement for nine (9) officers (after 30 years of service or age 55).

Mr. Hare expressed his support for the request.

Mr. Anderson stated that he had no doubt that additional officers were needed and supported additional officers for the Police Department. He indicated that he also likes the budgetary process and indicated that he could not support adding officers beyond what had been discussed and planned within the current budget year. Unless there were cost savings somewhere in the budget or additional revenue that he did not know about, he was concerned about reopening the budget in the middle of the fiscal year.

Chief Bernat stated that he respected Mr. Anderson's concerns; however, as Chief of Police, he was expressing the opinion of himself and his staff regarding what was needed for public safety and reiterated that 25% of the force could leave at anytime.

Responding to Mr. Anderson regarding the March 2015 and September 2015 timeframe for the request, rather than September 2015 and March 2016, Chief Bernat explained that the Delaware State Police Academy would begin March 9th and a second Academy would be held in September. Chief Bernat stated that the main focus was to get the community policing unit back, noting that the City did not have such a unit currently because the Department had made sure that patrol officers were fully manned and safe. As the first responders, Chief Bernat stated that he must make sure that at least 12 officers would be there. He felt that community policing was extremely important; however, public safety is more important than community policing. Chief Bernat stated this is why crime rates were staying even in Dover, except when there are sprees such as the two (2) recent murders and four (4) shootings that put people in the hospital. He explained that a Street Crime Unit had been created, and within two (2) weeks, the officers were able to "cool things down." Chief Bernat stated that his main concern was to ensure that Dover's officers were safe, noting that if they are not safe they cannot help others. Chief Bernat indicated that, as Chief of Police, he is concerned with police safety and public safety, not the budget. He assured members that since 2008, when the economy crashed, the Police Department had done everything it could to help shave the budget. Chief Bernat stated that the rest of the City had felt the same problems, and departments such as Human Resources and Electric were in need of more staff as well.

Responding to Mr. Shevock regarding how the additional officers would be paid for, Chief Bernat stated that he had not discussed the finances with Mr. Scott Koenig, City Manager, or Mrs. Donna Mitchell, Controller/Treasurer, noting that he had been on vacation for the past 10 days.

In response to Mr. Shevock regarding the budget ramifications if the request were approved, Mr. Koenig stated that he did not feel that the issue was the FY15 budget but rather how the budget would move forward after this. Mr. Koenig stated, in his opinion, that the Chief had identified the minimum costs, explaining that, at some point, there would be a need to replace cars, add cars, and support these officers if hired. During the remainder of the fiscal year, from March through June 2015, the costs associated with the proposed request would be relatively small in the $130M budget; however, the request would represent a baseline of approximately $1M to the General Fund budget.

Responding to Mr. Shevock regarding how many officers would leave the Department by the time the new officers were fully incorporated, Chief Bernat stated that the only exact number he could provide were the nine (9) officers who would leave in the next five (5) years due to mandatory retirement. He expressed his belief that sergeants, lieutenants or captains in the Police Department would not indicate their retirement plans because, in doing so, they would not be considered for promotion. Chief Bernat stated that he could "guarantee" that more than nine (9) officers would retire within the next five (5) years.

Mayor Christiansen stated his support of the Chief and this request. Mayor Christiansen advised members that he and Chief Bernat met several times to discuss the staffing of the Police Department. Mayor Christiansen stated that 25% of the police force would soon be eligible to retire, some of whom were senior management. He stated that he was aware that this was an ambitious request; however, he and the Chief were charged with the public safety of the City and he felt that the request was reasonable. Mayor Christiansen indicated that he respected the concerns of Mr. Anderson and the costs involved; however, he felt the request would raise awareness of the need for public safety and to revamp and recoup some of the other City services.

Mr. Sudler indicated his agreement with Mr. Hare regarding an increase in the number of police officers and expressed that his primary concern was how many of the 10 officers would be minority officers. Responding, Chief Bernat stated that the City had a very aggressive minority recruitment plan, noting that he and Deputy Chief Marvin Mailey had attended a National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBEL) Christmas dinner and met with the NOBEL Chapter for Delaware State University. Chief Bernat indicated that this group would be coming to the Police Department within a few weeks for a mini civilian police academy to become more familiar with what the Police Department does. Chief Bernat stated that the Department recently went through reaccreditation and would hear the results in March; however, the Department had been told that there were no issues, examiners were very impressed with the Department's minority recruiting efforts, and the Department's current ratio was very good, although Chief Bernat stated it was not acceptable to him.

Mr. Sudler relayed his thanks for the continuous efforts made to be inclusive of other ethnic groups.

Mr. Hutchison expressed his opinion that the City of Dover had the best Police Department in the State and credited the leadership of Chief Bernat and the management team for their performance. He stated that the first priority in the City had been public safety. Mr. Hutchison reminded those present that 2014 had just concluded and the City was embarking on a brand new year. He felt it important that the City Manager, Controller/Treasurer, and every department manager in the City put priorities in order, since this would not be the only request coming before Council and that the City must be looked at in total. Mr. Hutchison reminded members that there were 200 miles of underground infrastructure, including water and sewer lines, that must be addressed. He stated that he was open minded about the Police Department's concerns and expressed a desire to look at facts and figures. Mr. Hutchison expressed his hope that the Committee and the Mayor would support deferring this request to allow an opportunity to review it with the support of the City Manager,

Controller/Treasurer, and Council. Mr. Hutchison felt that increases in numbers should not be requested arbitrarily but should be looked at in terms of facts. He urged everyone to look at facts and figures to see where the City stands as 2014 had finished and moving into 2015.

Mr. Hare concurred that there would be other requests and felt this was a matter of prioritizing those requests. However, he felt that if an additional staff person were needed in economic development or human resources, it might take a little longer to obtain information; whereas, if someone were being held hostage in their house and there were a riot on the other side of town, "we don't want to take a little longer" to get there because an officer was not available. Mr. Hare felt that the City "always finds the money for things that they want to do." He stated that the manning level may not be raised to 102, but maybe these positions could be filled with a projection and this could then be dealt with "down the road." He stated that these officers would be needed, supported the request, and did not feel it should be deferred.

Mr. Sudler concurred with Mr. Hare, stating that nothing was more important than public safety. As the manager of an apartment building, he stated that he had called upon the Police Department on many occasions and they made him feel safe. Mr. Sudler expressed his belief that the money could be found, noting that funds had been found for the new Dover Public Library and other things, and that adjustments could be made to fund the Dover Police Department. He stated that he was in favor of moving this matter forward.

Mr. Slavin expressed his own responsibility for both public safety and finances. Noting that there would be nine (9) mandatory retirements in the next five (5) years in the Department, he questioned if the authorization and funding levels already existed in the baseline to replace those nine (9) officers. Responding, Chief Bernat confirmed this, but explained that it would take 18 months to replace retiring officers. Mr. Slavin stated that he manages a public agency with 89 people and over 20 of them are eligible to retire; however, he indicated that the majority would not retire anytime soon. He stated that "a deeper dive into the numbers" would help everyone understand the issue.

Noting the cost of $966,393 that Chief Bernat had provided for the cost of the 10 officers in FY 19, Mr. Slavin questioned what was included in this figure. Responding, Chief Bernat stated that this figure included salaries, other employment costs (OECs), and step increases, as well as equipment and training.

Captain Robert Scott stated that a number of factors were built into the analysis, including a 2.5% increase for the civilian accreditation manager position and 3% for the officers.

Responding to Mr. Slavin regarding the deadline for the March Police Academy, Chief Bernat stated that paperwork had been requested by February 20, 2015 and by approximately August 20, 2015 for the September class. Chief Bernat stated that the Department would also be willing to hire a certified officer.

Responding to Mr. Slavin regarding the urgency of bringing this matter to the Committee and to Council on the same evening, Chief Bernat stated that his request was based on the March 2015 academy.

Council President Bonar expressed his belief that there is nothing more important to support than public safety; however, noted that a request brought forth halfway through a budget year presents a big conundrum. He questioned whether five (5) qualified people could be recruited, have background checks, and undergo physical examinations before the February deadline if some of the officers were hired in March and some in September. Responding, Chief Bernat stated that there were three (3) officers he would pick from the existing list, he would like to civilianize the accreditation manager, and there was one (1) certified officer who was interested.

Mr. Bonar inquired of Mr. Koenig and Mrs. Mitchell if there were funds available, including the cuts the Police Department was proposing, to pay for five (5) additional officers to begin in March and get through the end of FY 15 without doing undue harm. Responding, Mr. Koenig stated that he was confused by the discussion and the documentation associated with the entire request, noting that the written documents for the original request did not include the civilianization of the accreditation manager. Mr. Koenig reiterated that the impact on the FY 15 budget would be fairly small but the concern was with the baseline budget, noting that this request was not accounted for in the FY 16 budget. He indicated that he could not answer this question tonight because he did not have the numbers in front of him.

Mr. Bonar stated that it would be up to Council to get the money to enable the City Manager to face this issue.

Mr. Koenig reiterated his confusion regarding the request. He stated that he was unsure if the request was for 10 officers and an accreditation manager, or nine (9) officers and civilianization of the accreditation manager.

Chief Bernat stated that the Department had an accreditation manager who was a police officer; however, if this position were civilianized, the new person would be paid at a civilian rate. He explained that this proposal would put a uniformed officer back on the road and result in a five (5) year savings of $119,000. Chief Bernat stated that he was trying to save the City money. He indicated that he was not asking for an additional accreditation officer.

Mr. Koenig stated his understanding that the request was to take the authorized strength of officers in the Police Department from 92 to 102. He indicated that their current authorized strength was 92 officers and it was his belief that there were 22 civilianized positions. Mr. Koenig reminded members that a temporary adjustment was made in 2014 to authorize up to 94 officers while the Sex Offender Unit was civilianized. He stated that if the accreditation manager were civilianized, the civilian authorization should go up by one (1), which would be an additional person that was not accounted for in the budget.

Chief Bernat stated that he would be requesting one (1) less police officer.

Noting that there was a large contingent present from the Police Department as well as from the general public, Mr. Bonar asked, by show of hands, how many of those in the audience, not counting policemen, were present due to their concerns regarding the staffing of the Police Department and public safety and approximately 25 members in the audience raised their hands.

Responding to Mrs. Williams regarding the cumulative effect on community policing if 10 officers were added, Chief Bernat indicated that he would put five (5) officers into community policing and two (2) of them would eventually be dedicated to the Police Athletic League (PAL).

Mr. Hutchison inquired if the Chief would be willing to give members more time and to focus on the September Police Academy rather than the February academy. Reiterating his support for public safety, he asked that time be given to obtain a "fair" number, perhaps not 10, perhaps five (5) or eight (8). Mr. Hutchison stated that making a decision tonight without the facts, figures, and support of the City Manager and Controller/Treasurer would be unfair to the citizens of Dover, noting that if there were a deep concern, he would say it should be done now.

Chief Bernat stated his belief that an officer would be retiring within the next month, this would be an ongoing problem, and he was unsure where the Department would be in September. He stated that, as the Chief of Police, he believed this request reflected the needs of the City of Dover, and was why he was appointed and what he said he would do when he took his oath. Chief Bernat stated that he would not submit to politics and did not want to be a politician. He informed members that he was hired in 1989 by Councilman Hutchison, who was then serving as Chief of Police, and Chief Hutchison had the same concerns as Chief Bernat and was able to hire 21 people. Chief Bernat stated that some of those 21 people were those who could now retire from the Police Department.

Mr. Hutchison stated he had no problem replacing any officer or with keeping the authorized strength at 92 or 93 until the City could get through the process but reiterated his request for time to get facts and figures. He stated his belief that a number could be developed but he could not know what that number would be without sitting down and getting the support of the City Manager and Controller/Treasurer.

Mr. Slavin advised those present that other items on the agenda would be deferred and the expected length of the meeting would be extended due to the importance of this issue. He invited the public to comment.

Mr. Harry Meeks, owner of The Grocery Basket, 301 North Bradford Street, stated that he had been a business owner for 28 years. Mr. Meeks stated that he and Ms. Sara Herbert were representing the Old Dover Neighborhood Watch. He advised members that this association had approximately 30 members, had done a great job in their area, and planned to increase their reach to Governors Avenue

within the next month to try to help that neighborhood "get straightened out." Mr. Meeks stated that the neighborhood's community police officer, Jennifer Lynch, had done a great job and expressed thanks and appreciation for her efforts.

Ms. Sara Herbert, 223 North Bradford Street, stated that the Old Dover Neighborhood Watch supported hiring additional police officers, noting that they were thankful for the dedication of the current police but additional help was needed. She indicated that burglaries, robberies, car thefts, drugs, prostitution, assaults, fighting, and weapons crimes take place daily in a one (1) mile radius of the neighborhood and she felt that these incidents need to stop now, not in the far future. Ms. Herbert stated that each of the Old Dover Neighborhood Watch members could relay how this had affected them individually. Ms. Herbert noted that she lives less than a 10-minute walk from Loockerman Street and used to walk there but now, due to safety concerns, she usually drives. She indicated that she does not drive on New, Kirkwood, or Queen Streets at all and rarely on South Governors Avenue. Ms. Herbert indicated that she no longer enjoys time at Silver Lake Park unless someone is with her and is nervous about using her ATM since a murder occurred next door. She stated that Dover is a beautiful City but is no longer her City to enjoy because crime controls her decisions. Mrs. Herbert reminded members that the City was recently awarded a Downtown Development District grant; however, expressed her belief that revitalization plans would not be successful if citizens do not feel safe, and businesses and families may not choose to make Dover their home, which would be a loss to the tax base. She acknowledged that adding police would be difficult in the current economic times, stating that Council's commitment to cleaning up the City would require either more revenue or cutting non-safety related services and that difficult decisions must be made now and not pushed "up the road."

As a businessman, Mr. Meeks stated that he understood budgets and had worked with them for 28 years, noting that his business had been very successful in its current location. He stated that the comparisons showed that the City of Dover was understaffed, since Annapolis' population was almost the same as Dover's and there were 119 police officers in Annapolis and 92 in Dover.

Bishop G. E. Gordon, Sr., 56 South New Street, stated that he moved into the community in 2011 to start a ministry and drugs and alcohol were prevalent. He stated that in February of 2011 he expressed his concerns to the former mayor and former police chief. Bishop Gordon stated that he had seen drugs and prostitution, including youth prostitution. There had been four (4) deaths on his street or around the corner from his residence. Bishop Gordon indicated that a young man died a door away from him trying to get to him for last rites. He indicated that the past administration had done a great job and that community policing was vital in his community. Bishop Gordon thanked Mayor Chrisitansen and Police Chief Bernat for the "cleaning" of New Street, which he stated was "not the ravisher it used to be" and people could now sit outside. Bishop Gordon stated that he had found that being proactive instead of reactive in his ministry was very important. He indicated that in the latter part of 2014, a 25-year-old man came to his facility at his mother's request to get off heroin. Bishop Gordon tried to save him, but the young man decided he did not want help. 24 hours later, his mother received a phone call from the local police department informing her of her son's

death. Bishop Gordon expressed his belief that if community policing were available, the heroin epidemic in the City could be "squashed or downtrodden." He felt that if the City prepared itself for the retirement of police officers it might be possible to stem the tide of the community's ills. Bishop Gordon stated that if the father, mother, or wife of a member were being attacked, the excuse that there were not enough officers to send to their aid would not be adequate. He shared that he had a problem with the drug epidemic since he had been afflicted by drugs and was pulled out of it by God to help others. Bishop Gordon asked members to help him do this by squashing the tide of drugs in the community, noting that heroin was "no joke."

Mr. Joseph D'Urso, 305 North State Street, stated that he and his wife had been homeowners and taxpayers in the City for five (5) years and during that time had seen change in the neighborhood, not for the better, since they experience crime on a regular basis. He stated that, according to the Chief of Police, the City was in need of 10 more police officers, and those were the facts and figures that needed to be considered by Council. It was reported that the cost would be approximately $1M, which Mr. D'Urso indicated was less than 1% of the total City budget. To him this was a very small price to pay for the public safety of the citizens of this City. It appeared to Mr. D'Urso that if this were not paid for by revenue, the price would be paid in many other ways, that there were two (2) choices, to "consider the consequences of hiring these needed policemen or consider the consequences if we fail to."

Mr. Mike Hall, 228 North State Street, stated that he and his wife, Yvonne Hall, own the State Street Inn. Mr. Hall indicated that he worked at Wesley College and his wife had been a realtor in Kent County for 30 years and that the Halls have an enormous financial and personal investment in Dover. He stated that 14 years ago they renovated a vacant home on State Street. Before that time they lived for five (5) years in Wilmington, Delaware, a city now described in a major publication as a murder capital. Mr. Hall stated that when living in Wilmington there were signs that things were changing for the worse. Mr. Hall feared some of those same demographic signs were now becoming evident in Dover and stated that Council needed to take action. He advised members that former Councilman Sean Lynn not too long ago cited a study that concluded that Dover may be short as many as 20-30 law enforcement personnel. Mr. Hall stated that although that additional police would mean an increase in taxes, he felt that residents and visitors would feel safer and the City would experience additional revenue since this would show that the City would be taking crime seriously. He stated that this was an opportunity for the City to get ahead of the curve on fighting crime and help ensure that a few years from now the City would not be lamenting that the problem is totally out of control.

Mrs. Yvonne Hall, 228 North State Street, stated that the State Street Inn had many guests come for pleasure or business; however, she and her husband have become afraid to tell guests to walk to the downtown area for dinner as they used to. She indicated that they did not have this problem 14 years ago when they purchased the property. She stated that the City Council and the public had been talking for three years (3) about the additional police needed and nothing had been done; she felt that it was time. Mrs. Hall stated that there are drug deals in her neighborhood every day on State, Mary,

and Bradford Streets. She noted that she had a tenant in the past who witnessed prostitutes and drug deals from their apartment. Mrs. Hall indicated that there had been people knocking on her door in the middle of the night and people begging for money. She stated that, as a business owner, it was embarrassing to have this occurring in her neighborhood, noting that this is the capital city. As a realtor, Mrs. Hall stated that she was receiving calls from homeowners who want to leave the City, noting that homeowners and homes in this district are the City's tax base. As a homeowner and a business person, she expressed disappointment in what was happening. She stated her support for the hiring of the additional police officers and that the costs could be covered in the future by a slight tax increase. Mrs. Hall did not feel that the whole burden should be on taxes and that the City should look at modest budget decreases as well.

Reverend Elmer Neal Davis, Jr., Pastor, Whatcoat United Methodist Church, 341Saulsbury Road, stated his support of the police in their endeavor. He expressed his belief that if the officers were hired, the community would be able to work more effectively. In response to Mr. Hutchison's comments, he stated that "you can build all the railroads you want; if people don't feel safe in the community to move about" he felt there would be difficulties. Reverend Davis felt that the opportunity tonight was given by God. He asserted that the 10 new officers would be able to work in partnership with one another and open doors and vital communications so that the community could begin to understand and respect one another with integrity. The police officers, the City, and the community would then be dedicated and everyone would be empowered. Reverend Davis noted that pride is an acronym for partnership, respect, integrity, dedication, and empowerment, and that pride is something that members should have tonight. Reverend Davis indicated that, as a minister of the gospel, he was standing in support of police efforts in the community and that something must be done now or everyone would pay later. He felt that as Chief of Police, Mr. Bernat was tasked with public safety and not the budget. He asked members to work on something tonight to make everyone feel safe in the community. Rev. Davis stated his opinion that it was essential and vital to make a decision tonight for the betterment of the community and stated that the Whatcoat Church community was present because of their concern and to let their voice be heard in the community.

Mr. Slavin asked members of the Whatcoat Church congregation to raise their hands and approximately 21 members in the audience raised their hands.

Responding to Mr. Bonar, Reverend Davis stated that before his ministerial calling he was a lieutenant in the Salisbury Police Department.

Ms. Wanda Anderson, Dean of Students, Wesley College and resident at 416 North Bradford Street, stated that her neighbors had already eloquently expressed the challenges of residents in the community. She indicated that Wesley College was very proud to be a part of the downtown Dover community; however, issues of crime had raised particular concerns for Wesley. She explained that during the first week of school, Wesley College was in lockdown twice and that a student had been shot and students assaulted in the surrounding communities. Ms. Anderson stated that she was called upon to go to the parents, who had tears in their eyes, at the hospital to explain that the City

of Dover is committed to the safety of their students. In August, Wesley will bring in nearly 600 first-year students, many of whom will be away from home for the first time. Ms. Anderson advised members that having 10 additional police officers and having them attend the academy in March was critical because they would be prepared in August when these new students come into the community, knowing that these young men and women will bring with them their own issues, baggage, and thoughts about what it is to be in college, whether that is partying with drugs or alcohol or socializing in particular ways, and they will leave the campus and go to the surrounding communities. Ms. Anderson felt it important to prepare for this. She stated that student conduct problems at Wesley had decreased significantly in the past three (3) years and there had not been many issues of assault on campus. Based on her understanding with the Chief of Police today, this had dropped by 17%; therefore, Wesley was doing well in its efforts but needed partnership. She indicated that the City of Dover police had been "priceless" in helping to sustain an atmosphere of safety, health, and community and additional officers would sustain that community and its 1,400 students who live in the downtown area.

Based on rough calculations, Council President Bonar stated that those present were asking members to increase the tax rate in the next fiscal year by approximately 4.5 to 5 cents to provide this additional revenue. He wanted those present to know that a way would be found to accomplish this.

Mr. Cecil Wilson, 130 Brandywine Drive, stated that he was proud of Chief Bernat, having taught him in the sixth grade. Addressing Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Wilson stated that "crime cannot be tabled." Mr. Wilson expressed his opinion that "my people" have to have a conversation about the crime being committed in the City of Dover. He felt that the City could not hire the 10 additional people in the Police Department to have them "bashed" when they get on patrol. Mr. Wilson indicated that there are at least 18,000 police departments in the United States and all have the same problems that Dover has. He felt that the dropout rate among police happens because of the bashing they are getting and stated that this must stop. Mr. Wilson encouraged everyone to take the time to give officers the same support that is given to families and children sent out to school. He indicated that he had participated in a ride-along program with the State and learned more about policing than he ever knew. Mr. Wilson stated that the 10 additional officers should be funded.

With all due respect to Mr. Hutchison and Mr. Anderson, Mr. Sudler stated that he was not willing to compromise public safety, stating that he knew firsthand how effective the Police Department could be.

Mr. Sudler moved to recommend granting Chief Bernat his request for 10 additional police officers, seconded by Mr. Hare.

Mr. Anderson expressed agreement with the idea of more police officers and supported doing this through the budgetary process. He stated that skipping the budgetary process would concern him greatly because once that door is open, it would start destabilizing taxes and other components of economic growth, such as certainty in cost. Mr. Anderson felt that these things needed to be done

as a whole. He indicated that he supported adding approximately three (3) officers now and looking at the budget process before adding the others that were believed to be needed. He advised members that if the current motion did not pass he would bring a motion to that effect.

The motion to recommend granting Chief Bernat his request for 10 additional police officers was carried by a roll call vote of four (4) yes (Sudler, Hare, Slavin, and Shevock) and one (1) no (Anderson).

Mr. Slavin advised those present that there would be an opportunity to express their comments regarding this issue during the Open Forum segment of the Regular Council meeting, which would begin at 7:15 p.m. this evening, and that this item was scheduled for consideration by City Council during this evening's Regular Council meeting.

Review of Training, Conference, and Travel Policy
Due to time constraints, consideration of this item was deferred until the next meeting.

Review of Effectiveness of the Safe Communities Ordinance *(Request of Councilman Anderson)*
Due to time constraints, consideration of this item was deferred until the next meeting.

Updates
Certified Local Government Application
Due to time constraints, consideration of this item was deferred until the next meeting.

"Safe Whistles" National Recreation and Park Association Recommended Guidelines for Credentialing Volunteers (Background Screening for Youth Coaches and Sports Officials for All City Recreation Offerings
Due to time constraints, consideration of this item was deferred until the next meeting.

Mr. Shevock moved for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Sudler and unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Timothy A. Slavin
Chairman

TAS/TM/js/dd
S:\AGENDAS-MINUTES-PACKETS-PRESENTATIONS-ATT&EXH\Committee-Minutes\2015\01-12-2015 LF&A (revised 01-23-2015).wpd