



Public
Safety
Services
Jenkintown
Borough

Shock from a Tragic Situation

- Jenkintown Borough Council, Mayor Lerman, and the Borough Administration acknowledge and understand how much of a shock this discussion is to the community, the Police Department Personnel, and the other providers in our community.
- We do not take this issue lightly, and we are working diligently to find the right process or resolution to this major problem for the Borough and its future. The Police Department has been serving the community for 134 years.
- We will make every effort to support our staff and their families no matter what the decision is with this issue, but we have an obligation to identify opportunities to improve/create efficiencies that are both fair to the taxpayers and those who serve and protect.

Leadership and Partnership with the Community

- Partnership Agreement of Public Safety
 - The agreement is rooted in ethical and mandated standards of practice. Trust and transparency are major parts of the agreement. The citizens rely on honesty and respect for their well-being by the professionals they entrust to provide the safety they rely on everyday, every hour, every minute, and every second. When that partnership is broken or violated, it takes leadership to identify the issues that caused the break and create a process to mend that broken agreement.
- “Leadership is lonely, you are not going to please everybody. If you are going to be a leader, you’re not going to please everybody. You have to hold people accountable, even if you have that moment of being uncomfortable.”

Public Safety Services Presentation Items

- Borough Council is committed to preserving the best public safety services to the taxpayers
- Background of Police Services Provided and Documented Issues
- Fiscal Responsibility of the Borough
- Strategic Plan for Public Safety for Jenkintown Borough
- Questions

Public Safety Services Commitment

- Jenkintown Borough Council is committed to providing the best public safety services to the Borough Residents while also being fiscally responsible.
- Fiscal responsibility includes analyzing the current taxation of the residents and businesses, while working to find other resources to defer the cost burden.
- It also includes analyzing the services provided and the relationship to why the residents move to the Borough, namely the Jenkintown School District.
- There must be a balance, and continuing to raise taxes is not the answer.

Borough Public Safety Services

- Jenkintown Borough is currently providing Police, Fire, Emergency Management and Public Works as part of its obligation to public safety.
- The Borough contracts with Second Alarmers Rescue Squad for EMS/Ambulance service.
- The Borough allocates money via specific tax millage for the Fire and EMS services provided in the Fire Protection Fund, Fire Apparatus Fund and the Ambulance Service Fund. The Police, Emergency Management, and Public Works are funded through the General Fund.

Borough Public Safety Services

- The costs of Ambulance Services are increasing, and the millage assigned to this fund is anticipated to increase over the next ten years.
- The Fire Department consolidation and future considerations for possible assistance for fire protection through a partially paid system are an honest projection for the future. The timeline is uncertain, but the current staffing could change drastically and necessitate an immediate intervention funded by the Borough.
- The aged fire apparatus is currently under consideration for replacement.
- Modernizing the pay scale for our Public Works staff is a necessity in order to maintain and retain the current staff.

Borough Public Safety Services Public Works Salaries

Municipality	Laborer	Driver/Operator
JENKINTOWN	\$48,651	\$50,752
CHELTENHAM	\$65,520	\$66,123/\$67,600
SPRINGFIELD	\$73,174	\$76,606/\$78,041
ABINGTON	\$80,246	\$82,825/\$90,729

Borough Public Safety Services

- The Borough currently is operating without a legitimate Reserve Fund for Catastrophic incidents or failures that could impact the Borough.
 - Typically, a minimum of 10% annually should be allocated for possible issues.
 - Currently, the Borough can only manage about 5%, which is bare minimum
- The Borough has been in contract negotiations for the last five months
 - Provided a very fair offer to the PBA with a base pay increase
 - We have consistently talked about the sustainability of the Police Department
 - We have never talked about outsourcing in any negotiation meetings
 - The PBA stopped negotiations and walked away from the table

Bellevue Contract

- The Borough contracted with a strategic communications firm to discuss major issues identified that needed to be communicated with the citizens.
- The goal was to ascertain the best way to be transparent and communicate the actions or decisions that were under consideration at that point.
- We had just conducted a consolidation of the fire department and were looking at a possible issue with the largest expenditure for the budget, the Police Department.
- When making major change to services provided, you have to consider all possibilities. Contracting with professionals to assist with how to best communicate the major change was a prudent decision. Especially when no person in the leadership had any experience in dealing with this issue or the possible drastic change to services provided.

Background of Police Service

- Currently employ nine police officers, one sergeant, and chief of police
- One part-time officer
- Budget is roughly \$2.5 million, which includes insurance and other costs
- Staff works twelve-hour shifts
- Contract expired December 31, 2023
- Staffing is usually two to three officers per shift, based on past practice and supervision
- No Detective Division
- No Community Policing Division
- No Traffic Safety Unit

Background of Police Services

- The previous Police Administration did not foster or train all officers on the tenets of 21st Century Policing. Established in 2016
 - Building Trust and Legitimacy
 - Policy and Oversight
 - Technology and Social Media
 - Community Policing and Crime Reduction
 - Officer Training and Education
 - Officer Safety and Wellness
- Failure to adapt and maintain the Accreditation standard practice and updating policies accordingly has contributed to a withdraw from the Accreditation program
- The previous Police Administration did not collaborate or communicate effectively with the Borough Administration and Borough Council causing many breakdowns and failures.

Background of Police Service

- Current contractual obligations and language conflicts have been difficult to manage
 - Conflicts resulted in \$38,000 spent in 2022, \$78,000 spent in 2023 on legal expenses, and a budgeted \$80,000 for 2024
 - The average salary for 2023 for the officers was \$126,593.99, that included overtime and sick sell back.
 - Sick Sell back is 144 hours of time allocated annually that can be sold back at 100% value. Roughly \$7200.00 or 6.9% bonus
 - Borough has to pay this benefit in the next calendar year because of limited resources.

Background of Police Service

- Current training and past training has been limited but improving since April 2022
 - Seven officers have completed the Crisis Intervention Basic Level, five have completed Advanced Level
 - All officers trained in County level Basic Active Shooter response
 - One officer is an Active Shooter Instructor along with the Chief
 - One officer was trained as a Control Tactics/Defensive Tactics Instructor
 - Control Tactics to be conducted annually with possibility of more frequency
 - Firearms training to be conducted twice a year instead of once like the past
 - Virtual Reality training through Axon equipment and software

Background of Police Services

- Projected costs to improve the service and performance of the Department will cost a significant amount of money for the Borough
 - Rough estimate would be \$500,000.00 over the next five years
 - In addition to an anticipated contract increase in base salary by 3%-4%
- Calls for service do not justify the minimum staffing requirement set by past practices, expended \$80,000 in 2023 to meet this requirement
 - One officer minimum is more of an effective strategy for staffing and call volume and helps to minimize overtime, and the Smeal Report addresses overall manpower through recognized standard calculations.
 - In addition, the Borough is surrounded by the second largest Police Department in Montgomery County

Background of Police Service

- Training in leadership, investigations, community policing, de-escalation, use of force, and communications must be completed immediately to improve the performance of all officers and supervisors
 - Previous administration failed to encourage and improve the training of all officers. Only mandatory training was conducted. It cost the Borough an additional eight hours of pay per employee when they were sent in person to the Mandatory training instead of online like many other Departments.
 - Example: No active shooter training until new administration took office.
 - Contractual obligations mandate 12 hours compensation for 8 hours of training attendance. Not the standard in majority of other Departments
 - Costs for training and time away from patrol duties will affect performance and staffing based on past practice and contractual language

Background of the Police Services

- Mismanagement of paid time off and other administrative related items have created a cost liability for the Borough and created over-expenditures in the past that are affecting the future.
 - Specifically, the Kelly Time that is part of the Fair Labor Standards Act requirement with the 12-hour shift. It was accrued outside of the contract without the Borough knowing until 2021. Estimated payout today at \$106,000.00.
 - The unfunded liability for payment or mitigation increases with each year it is not addressed.
 - Past unapproved compensation (Comp Time) for K9 care cost the Borough a significant amount of money and resources when the K9 unit existed. Roughly \$156,000.00 total from 2015 till 2020 for the Comp Time. An additional \$56,000 in training time costs and \$69,000.00 in auto/fuel/insurance costs. Total of \$281,000.00 in unexpected or undescribed costs during the documented accounting of time management.
- Improving the accountability and performance standards is a long-term process with considerable effort and commitment from the formal and informal leadership

Background of Police Services

- The mismanagement by the previous Police Administration influenced the relationship with the School District. It was non-existent or diminished because of a lack of communication and understanding.
- The previous Police Administration affected the safety of the officers by removing the Department from the current communications radio band, not providing essential repetitive training, and not looking for funding to improve the technology with body cameras and other necessary technology improvements. Even restricted the use of all capabilities of the in-car video audio recording capability.
- The previous failures and current obstructions are creating an adverse effect to whether there is any sustainable recovery for the Department.
- These reasons are also amplified by the small department limitations to provide expected modern police services that are easily provided by larger departments.

Background of Police Services

- The abolishment of a viable part-time officer program by the previous administration has impacted the current status of mitigating overtime expenditures. The abolishment resulted in the catastrophic decision to furlough two unwarranted full-time employees who were unnecessarily hired.
- The current cost of selection, training, and outfitting a part-time officer are a serious concern when the sustainability is easily corrupted by the need for full time officers in so many other municipalities. Too often the talent pool is not what would be acceptable for fulfilling the goals of a 21st Century Policing Agency.
- Many small Departments are avoiding the process of part-time officer management and looking at alternatives to staffing issues.

Background of Police Services

- Full SMEAL REPORT from 2020 published ninety issues to be addressed.
- Recommendations are being addressed with additional improvements
 - Immediately had the Department placed back on current radio band to be able to communicate with Abington Township without impediment
 - Scheduling software purchased and managed by Chief of Police to improve data collection for time allocation, overtime expenditures, and training time
 - Budget updated to account for all overtime specific expenditures, technology hardware/software, holiday double time pay, and many other items separated into specific line items to improve transparency
 - Technology upgrades with new Borough server, body cameras, in-car cameras, tasers, Virtual Reality equipment, and goal to advance to a National Incident Based Reporting System for report management
 - Improved relationships with Jenkintown School District and conducted training for the staff

Current Updates to the Police Department

- Improved the working relationship and transparency with the Borough Council, Mayor, and the public.
- Developed and conducted performance evaluations for all officers and worked to improve their performance through coaching, counseling, and training
- Conducted regional meetings with area Chiefs and Command officers from ten municipalities on a monthly basis to share information and resources
- Worked 989 hrs of the 1966 hrs scheduled on the street, saving roughly \$74,000 in Overtime
- Supported one officer becoming part of the East Region SWAT team
- Improved accountability across all ranks and developed clear expectations of all staff
- Hired a full time civilian to assist with records management, parking enforcement, parking permits, and assist the Borough with other administrative tasks

Current Updates to the Police Department

- Fleet maintenance reduced in costs from sending to Ford dealership to a more reasonable fleet management service.
- Completion of supervisor/leadership training for one supervisor through the FBI LEEDA Trilogy
- Working on the current policies to improve their clarity and organize an easily searchable format in preparation for seeking accreditation again in 2025
- Hired full staff of Crossing Guards so the officers could be free to conduct traffic enforcement and community engagement during the arrival and dismissal at School
- Traffic calming project for York Road with speed signs installed and speed studies conducted. Worked with Traffic Engineer and Public Works to develop signage/markings improvement plan.

Fiscal Responsibility of the Borough

- Jenkintown Borough has General Fund Budget of \$5.1 million
 - The majority of the operating expenditures are dispersed through this budget fund
- The COVID Pandemic had a significant impact on the revenue from Business Privilege and Mercantile Tax. Losing large businesses that were major portions of these funds affected the revenue also.
- Jenkintown operates without the benefit of a full complement of Earned Income Tax. Majority is dispersed to the School District. Rescinding this commitment to the School District only neglects the bigger issue of expenditures and future plans.

Fiscal Responsibility of the Borough

- The Borough had a major expenditure in 2015 that affected the Borough funds
 - An \$800,000.00 real estate settlement depleted the contingency and reserve funds.
- There was a tax settlement to a commercial taxpayer that has been \$92,000 per year over a five-year period. Two more years assigned to that settlement.
- The Borough has raised real estate taxes by 28% in the last three years.
- The tax millage has been doubled over the past five years to fund the General Fund

Fiscal Responsibility of the Borough

- Traffic safety and pedestrian safety are major concerns for the Borough
- Updating signage and improving traffic calming measures have been delayed because of lack of funding
- Paving and street improvement projects have also been delayed
- A tax re-assessment court order for a business in the Borough will be an expenditure of \$190,000.00 in 2023. Expected to pay this settlement in 2024-2026
- Anticipating a major expenditure for downstream sewer improvements that is estimated at \$20-\$100 million, the Borough would be obligated to 11.9% of the final cost. Estimated \$2.4 to \$11.9 million as the Borough contribution

Fiscal Responsibility for the Borough

- The costs of personnel, fire department, public works, and other related costs have affected the funding available for capital projects
- Borough has not been able to fund a strategic capital fund plan for several years. In addition, the Borough could have qualified for several grants for capital improvements but did not have the matching funds available.
- A strategic plan for financial sustainability has been delayed because of the continued stress from lack of revenue.

Strategic Plan for Public Safety Services

- Planning for the future of the police services, fire services, EMS, public works, and emergency management.
- Plan for a stable reserve fund for possible catastrophic occurrences that have been more prevalent in recent years to our communities.
- Modernize the pay scale for our public works employees.
- Plan for the possibility of paid fire service employees when volunteer staffing is diminished or absent in the future.
- Plan the replacement of one aged fire apparatus now and a second over next four years.
- EMS funding through the EMS/Ambulance tax and possible diversion of General Fund millage to supplant the fund for the future increases in EMS costs.



Questions???