



**BARRINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
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Replacement Plan for Police Equipment

TA MacIver,

In early 2020, the Police Department was asked to establish a robust replacement plan for police equipment. In that year we spent many hours meeting with staff to investigate our options in developing that plan. As we entered the fall, Chief Joy and I discussed many options for not just a replacement plan, but most importantly a funding mechanism for that replacement plan. We felt that a replacement schedule could more easily be developed if we could establish a funding source. Recognizing that both the fire and public works departments have well established capital reserve funds for replacement of their needed equipment, we decided to ask the voters for the same. After garnering the unanimous support from both the Advisory Budget Committee and the Select Board, a warrant article to establish such a fund for the Police Department was proposed. Article 9: Police Equipment Capital Reserve Fund was drafted and placed on the 2021 warrant. In March of that year, the taxpayers voted in support of this article and the fund was created.

With the funding source established, our attention turned to creating an inventory of that more costly police equipment. After months of work, attached you will find a spreadsheet and detailed explanation outlining only that police equipment with a value of over five hundred dollars. It is not just this initial cost per item that makes replacement a challenge, rather it is total cost across the entire department that is the challenge. Creating this inventory with a clear purchase date, life span of the item and a projected replacement date all in one, we can more effectively replace such needed equipment.

With our Capital Reserve Fund and a structured replacement schedule working together, the Chief and I are confident that not only will our department's goals be met, but we will meet the Select Board's goal to even out our future budget requests as well. After all, we are all working towards avoiding spikes in future annual budgets due to proposed large equipment purchases. Giving our staff the equipment they need and the taxpayers a structured purchase schedule for the replacement of that equipment is in the best interest of the community as a whole. If the funding needs are met and the recommendations for replacement as we have outlined followed, this program will meet all our expectations.

Sincerely,

Daniel A. Brooks
Deputy Chief of Police

Replacement Schedule Synopsis

The following information is meant only as a brief explanation outlining the replacement of some types of police equipment and is not representative of all police equipment. Some of this equipment replacement is absorbed into our normal working budget but replacement of others are too costly and need more planning.

Cruisers

Cruiser replacement is part of the annual budget presentation package. Looking back at the past decade, replacement of cruisers on a one, one, two basis allows the most consistent replacement of police vehicles. Unfortunately, in that same decade it was found that the replacement schedule was not followed, and the result was running vehicles longer than we should have. This over extension of service life cost us more in maintenance resulting in some creative replacement strategies, as the need for replacement was accelerated.

In 2020, we began sending retired cruisers to public auction utilizing St. Jean Auctioneers in Epping, NH to get the most return on our investment. The prior year was the last year that we traded a cruiser in towards the purchase of a new cruiser, as we only received five hundred dollars as a trade in. Over the past three years we have sold four retired police vehicles through St. Jean yielding fifteen thousand nine hundred and fifty dollars that came back to the Town. The sooner a vehicle is replaced the larger benefit there is to the Town.

To continue with the projected replacement of cruisers on the one, one, two basis, it was agreed that fiscal year 2022 would be the restart date of that cycle. So the years to come, the department would purchase cruisers in the following manner: 2022 – one cruiser, 2023 – one cruiser, and 2024 – two cruisers.

Computer Equipment

In 2020, it was determined that the computer systems utilized by the Police Department were at the end of life. This included the desktop computers and the Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) utilized in the cruisers.

As a volunteer member of the Town's Technology Committee, Detective Sergeant Amanda Barber agreed to research a viable replacement for all the department computers. After significant research and with the support of the Technology Committee, it was determined that a wholesale change to the entire system was well overdue. The dual system of desktops and mobile computers would be done away with, and the department would move to an assigned laptop computer plan. In early 2022, the department applied for and was awarded a grant specific for this computer project.

This replacement project is currently underway with a projected completion date of November of this year (2022).

Radar Units

A radar unit is an essential piece of police equipment that is used for motor vehicle enforcement. The Town of Barrington has a distinct history of participation in the New Hampshire Highway Safety Grant program specific to motor vehicle enforcement on New Hampshire roadways.

Currently we have eight cruisers that are equipped with radar units. Out of those eight we have two units that were purchased in the last two years and four that are nearing the end of their respective life cycle. The remaining two are not slated for replacement for several more years.

Just recently, as a participating department of the Highway Safety Grant Program, Chief Joy made request through the program to replace four radar units on a 75% -25% match purchase structure. If awarded, we stand to significantly reduce our cost of replacement of the four outdated units.

Mobile Radios

When we retire a cruiser and purchase a new, we try to reuse as much installed police equipment as we can but in the recent years this has become a challenge with some of that equipment. Fortunately, the mobile radio is one piece of equipment that we utilize for as long as we possibly can. We hope to utilize it for the entirety of its eight-to-ten-year service life before looking to replace it.

Like the radar units outlined above, we have eight mobile radios installed in our eight cruisers. Out of the eight mobile radios I could only find documentation of purchase of five of those units. Currently, I have no idea when three of them were purchased but believe they were prior to 2016, as I have no purchase records prior to that year. Based on the documentation I was able to locate, I would recommend the replacement of these three unidentifiable units in fiscal year 2023.

Tasers

One of the less than lethal weapon systems we currently equip officers with is the Conducted Energy Weapon (CEW) Taser X2 made by Axon Enterprises, Inc.. Since the inception, the Taser, as they have come to be known, has evolved into a highly technical piece of essential police equipment. A Taser is basically a computerized weapon system, that when used according to training is highly effective in saving lives. Officers can utilize this tool to help defuse situations that without it may force an officer to have to resort to a more intrusive level of force. The importance of a CEW system cannot be overstated. Simply put, they are essential to our job function of preserving the sanctity of life.

In 2020, it was determined that all the Tasers issued at that time were well past their expected service life and needed to be replaced as soon as possible. After months of planning and presenting to the Select Board, it was the replacement of the Tasers and associated equipment that sparked the creation of the Police Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

The purchase of new Tasers for all personnel was completed in June of 2021. For this purchase, we entered into a purchase plan with Axon Enterprises and spread the cost out over a five-year period. Even though replacement of the Tasers is scheduled for 2026, the option exists to combine the purchase of new Tasers and Body Worn Cameras at the same time in 2025. We intend to look at this option and are planning for that combined purchase now.

Body Worn Cameras

In early 2019, the Department invested a significant amount of time researching the inception of a Body Worn Camera program. After completing the research, the department then presented their findings to the Select Board in November. At that presentation, the Board authorized the submission of the Police Department's 2020 Budget outlining a purchase program with Axon Enterprises for the expenditure of \$13,000.00 in the first year (2020) for the startup of the program and \$8,000.00 in every year after (2021,2022,2023, and 2024) to continue the program.

In March 2020, the taxpayers approved this department's budget as written containing these expenditures.

In November of 2020, the purchase of the needed equipment for the Body Worn Camera Program was completed and the equipment was put into service a short time later.

Currently, Axon Enterprises supplies both our Tasers and Body Worn Cameras under separate purchase programs. When the Body Worn Cameras are due for replacement in 2025, with the spirit of cost effectiveness in mind, we believe that combining the two programs together will be the best way to proceed. We have begun now with the plan for this combined purchase.

Portable radios

All the portable radios that are currently assigned to officers are at the end of their lives. Although there were no purchase records found, research through Motorola utilizing each unit serial number revealed that all our portable radios were manufactured in 2012. These units still in service are at the end of the eight-to-ten-year service life.

Recognizing the impending need to purchase new portable radios, at the September 12th, 2022, Select Board Meeting, Chief Joy made request to purchase six new portable radios utilizing funds from the Emergency Communications Capital Reserve Fund. This request was authorized by the Board and the new radios have been purchased from Motorola Solutions. We expect delivery of the radios by the end of the year.

The replacement of the remaining outdated radios is a priority. We will continue replace portable radios as quickly as we can until all our radios have been replaced.

Weapon Systems

When that time comes when a Law Enforcement Officer is faced with the crucial decision to draw their weapon, it is imperative that they can count on that equipment. A situation like this is at the highest-level of liability we as officers can experience.

Our need to provide the best weaponry equipment we can is of the utmost priority. It is that ultimate situation where an officer may be faced with taking another human being's life that they need to be the best equipped in all facets of the job. Their weapon is a crucial part of that preparation. Weapon

systems, like other equipment, as they relate to law enforcement are ever changing. Advancement in technology exists within the weaponry world just like other equipment. Keeping maintenance and replacement cost in mind

A step to better long-term maintenance, this year (2022) we have sent an officer to a pistol and rifle armorer courses. These courses carry a three-year certification that will allow for any in-house maintenance to be performed without much down time.

Pistols

Currently, all sworn police personnel are issued a Sig Sauer P320 9mm pistol as their duty weapon. Purchased and issued in 2018, the P320 replaced very aged Sig Sauer P229 pistols. The P229 pistols were identified as having many failures during service in the later years because of lack of maintenance. At that time, the most cost-effective approach to the maintenance issue with the P229 was to replace the weapon system. Basically, the cost of the maintenance for parts etcetera for new parts and time for an armorer to replace those parts was close to the purchase price of new weapons. The choice was made to replace the weapons.

Per Sig Sauer's maintenance plan, a complete armorer inspection of each pistol shall be conducted every three years or after every one thousand rounds fired. During this inspection the weapon system is inspected and evaluated for wear under normal usage. Based on Sig Sauer's regimen of maintenance, it is common for the armorer to replace those common parts that could lead to failure of the weapon system if maintenance is not performed. The average cost for the replacement of these critical parts could be up to around a few hundred dollars per weapon. Routine maintenance of equipment, particularly a weapon system, is crucial for reliability of that equipment. We are currently in the second three-year cycle for the regular maintenance of the current pistols and will look to budget accordingly.

Since our purchase of the current P320 pistols, there has been a trend within the law enforcement profession to equip duty pistols with optical sights. There are a number of significant advantages to doing this, the most important being target acquisition/threat recognition. In layman's terms, the human eye naturally focuses on a threat because whatever it is can hurt you. You have to force your eyes to focus on iron sights as opposed to just looking through an optical sight.

In 2023, we look will be looking at equipping issued duty pistols with optical sights.

Rifles

At present, the department has thirteen AR15 platform rifles in several configurations. The age of each weapon is hard to determine, with the exception of the newest four. In the past three years the Town has accepted the donation of four rifles from 2A Tactical.

Similarly to the pistols, there has been great strides in the enhancements of rifles over the years. We are always looking for ways to improve. Since his certification as the department armorer, Officer Morse has completed a review/evaluation of all department rifles. As a result of this review a list of basic equipment needs was compiled.

At the September 12th, 2022, Select Board Meeting, Chief Joy made request to expend funds from the Police Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for our use of force program. This request was authorized by the Board and the equipment is being ordered.

Routine maintenance will continue annually, and we will continue to evaluate the need to purchase new rifles in 2023.

Body Armor and Load-Bearing Carriers

Every sworn officer of the police department is issued soft body armor. The service life of said armor is five years. The replacement schedule of body armor amongst the officers is spread out depending on what the officer's hire date was or in some cases the manufacturer date, as the armor came with the officer from another department.

Soft body armor is traditionally worn under the uniform but here, like many other departments, most our officers wear their vest in an outside vest carrier. The carrier looks and feels like a uniform shirt. This mode of wear has migrated into an outer carrier that also holds other duty equipment.

Over the years the increasing demand for officers to carry more equipment on their duty belts has resulted in a vast number of officers complaining of lower back and hip pain. A duty belt fully equipped can add an up to thirty pounds of additional weight on the officers' hips and lower back. The trend is to move equipment off the duty belt and put it on a load-bearing vest carrier.

In 2018, The University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire Police Department studied a significant change to how officers carry their equipment. A UW-Eau Claire research team determined that load-bearing vests are a safe and healthier alternative to the traditional duty belt. The study showed that officers who carry their equipment on vests rather than duty belts experience significantly less hip and lower-back pain. After reviewing the UW study and polling the officers, the decision was made in 2021 to begin purchasing new load-bearing vest carriers for all uniformed personnel.

Traditionally we have relied upon funds through the Ballistic Vest Program (BVP) Grant to supplement funds necessary to purchase the needed body armor. Unfortunately, the trend as of late is that the BVP funds have been going down. As a result, we must budget more money for replacement of body armor and carriers. Scheduled replacement of the body armor is outlined in the attached spreadsheet.

PD Security System and Surveillance Cameras

Simply put, the security system at the police department is outdated. We are currently waiting for a system review plan from Northeast Security, the company who currently maintains the system. When the renovation was completed in 2018/2019, it was proposed then that the system needed to be replaced but was not. Some of the surveillance cameras were replaced as part of the renovation, but it is unclear as to which ones, if not all of them may have been replaced. Again, a review of the system is pending with Northeast Security.

We would look to propose the replacement of the entire security system within the Public Safety Building renovation proposal in 2023.