

Budget Committee Inquiries #2 FY 2025 Budget

Town Manager Responses in red.

1(A). Under Police. the BC is asking for more info as to what two communication fees cover: Under Community Relations, service fees for Communications and under 24-Hour Answering Service, Utilities - Communications. The 24-Hour Answering Service is dispatch and we are in a regional agreement, the "Communications" increase based on a vendor increase.

1(B). The "Communications" increase at the PD is largely due to the increase for the new phone system. Consolidated Communications was contracted to install a new system in Town Hall, PD and DPW in October 2018, the agreement did not include "plain old telephone" (POT) lines, sometimes known as "cooper lines" for direct phone lines necessary for an elevator, fire alarm, and in the case of the PD two other necessary POTs. Both the Finance Director and I have had several conversations with Consolidated Communications about the agreement, however it is complicated by the fact no one on Consolidated side or the Eliot side presently employed were part of the agreement, which is hurts our understanding as to the goals for the new system.

The Town Hall only needed two POTs line to facilitate the alarm and one other dedicated line, so there was not as much of an increase, same with DPW. We are working to absorb those increases through tighter cost controls. We continue to work with the contractor to resolve the disputes.

There were other fees we continue to monitor more closely from Consolidated in terms of their billing which has had its challenges.

2. Concerning the Fire Department, how many calls does the department get a year?

The number the Chief had submitted was I believe about 340 calls for service annually (alarm is sounded so to speak), there are others that come through the PD or other agencies calling for assistance annually which may go direct to the FD or the Chief. I believe the number of calls was in the Budget Manual. It is just under one a day, unfortunately that is not how it usually works out, one call turns into several calls on any given day.