

From: Vincent Creel
Sent: Thursday, August 31, 2017 4:11 PM
Cc: Cecilia Dobbs Walton
Subject: biloxi budget info

No one likes to reduce budgets, but the mayor and city council are having to draft a budget that lives within our means while providing the services that Biloxi residents expect and deserve. Public safety, of course, is one of the basic functions of city government. Accordingly, the reductions in the budgets in the police and fire departments impact **proposed purchases of equipment**. There will be **no reduction in the numbers of police officers or firefighters on the job in Biloxi every day**.

The proposed police budget is \$15.5 million. The budget reflects a reduction of \$1.4 million that had been proposed for purchasing new police vehicles, upgrades to other equipment, and additional officers. In any given year, we purchase from 8 to 12 police vehicles, mostly police cruisers, to keep our fleet in top working order. What this means is that some of the vehicles in our fleet will be on the road longer. We are also eliminating 9 vacant positions. We continue to have 130 sworn officers in the Biloxi Police Department, and the department continues to be one of the few in Mississippi to be state-accredited.

The proposed fire budget is \$14.1 million. Ninety-five percent of the fire budget is personnel and benefits. The budget reflects a reduction of \$300,000, which would have been used for nine sets of new turnout gear and upgrades to other equipment. One vacant position is also being eliminated, and firefighters for the new station 10 in Woolmarket will not be hired until the next fiscal year when the station is complete. We continue to have 171 firefighters in the Biloxi Fire Department, and we will continue to be one of only three Class 3 departments on the state and the only one in south Mississippi.

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