

Testimony of Superintendent Johnson
CPD Budget Hearing
October 27, 2016

Good morning. I'd like to thank Chairman Austin, Vice- Chairman Ervin and Members of the City Council for inviting me here to testify today on the proposed fiscal year 2017 budget for the Chicago Police Department (CPD). My name is Eddie Johnson and I serve as the Superintendent of the CPD.

Last spring, when I became Superintendent, CPD faced unparalleled challenges. We suffered from a crisis of confidence in our ability to be transparent. The public did not believe we were willing to listen and work with the community. State laws changed how we documented investigatory stops. And we were adjusting to a world in which incidents were recorded on video and judged before we had a chance to investigate and determine the facts.

After a top to bottom review of CPD, I am happy to report that we are making significant progress in several key areas.

First, we made changes to the management team at CPD which resulted in 26 Command Staff adjustments. This new team represents the most diverse command structure in the history of CPD, an accomplishment I am extremely proud to point out.

We also reorganized by creating a new internal bureau, the Bureau of Organizational Development. This bureau is charged with updating our policies, training the Department, and auditing to make sure our policies and training are effective for our officers and the communities we serve. This bureau is instrumental in implementing the recommendations of the Mayor's Task Force on Police Accountability and is charged with responding to the eventual findings of the Department of Justice when they complete their review.

Second, we focused on the issue of transparency. For the first time in the department's history we publicly posted a draft of our use of force policies for public input. The days of creating and implementing major policy behind closed doors at headquarters are over. I encourage all Chicagoans to log on to policy.chicagopolice.org to provide input as a part of this process.

We've also fostered transparency by speeding up the timeline for how we release body camera footage and acting with urgency when we find mistakes or misconduct by officers. We understand the frustration and mistrust that can build when investigations take too long or aren't communicated in a timely manner. Those feelings aren't going to change overnight, but we're working hard to make sure that we change the way we release information.

The third area where we have made significant progress is training. Today, our officers are receiving live scenario-based training where they practice reacting to situations they may face on the street. They're learning how to introduce the concept of "time" in high tension situations and identify individuals in a mental health crisis, with the use of deadly force as their option of last resort.

We also plan to utilize space at the campuses of Chicago City Colleges and DeVry University to temporarily expand our training capacity next year while we plan for a new permanent, state-of-the-art 21st century training academy in 2018.

The fourth area of significant progress is technology. Over the last year we have made investments in the use of body worn cameras in seven police districts. In 2017, we will expand the body worn camera program to another seven districts and, by the end of 2018, every Chicago Police Officer on patrol will be trained and equipped with body cameras.

We have also announced plans to expand ShotSpotter technology in the 7th and 11th police districts and invest in additional pod cameras in those districts. These investments will help us respond to incidents faster, allowing for more resources in solving cases and more information that will position CPD in a more proactive posture.

These areas of progress are a solid foundation of reform for CPD. But we must also change the paradigm to have the kind of impact we all seek to reduce violence in some of our neighborhoods.

This is why the Mayor and I recently announced a commitment to hire 970 new personnel over the next two years. These additional resources will provide communities with the officers and detectives they need to build partnerships that help solve cases. These resources will also allow for appropriate levels of supervision so that officers can be mentored and provided with the in-the-field guidance they need to be successful in this new 21st century environment.

Now I know that each of you is wondering how the addition of 970 new personnel will impact manpower in your districts. That is a logical and legitimate question.

To ensure equity across the city, we must have a fair, transparent and objective methodology for determining beat officer deployments.

To that end, CPD recently initiated a study that will lead to the development of an objective standard that will be used to determine the allocation of beat officers across the city.

While the increase in personnel is a large component in our violence reduction strategy, manpower alone will not solve the problem. CPD must also focus on two critical goals in 2017.

First, we must enter 2017 with a revitalized crime strategy built upon strategic partnerships, targeted enforcement of repeat offenders and reinvigorated community engagement. As we develop this strategy we will utilize information obtained from data, what we've heard from the community, and what we know from national best practices.

Our plan will rely on analyzing crime data, conditions, strengths and known areas of concern in neighborhoods on a block-by-block basis. We will address issues like repeat calls for service or petty conflicts before they create an environment for violence. And we will emphasize beat and sector responsibility at the officer and sergeant level.

We must also maximize our investment in technology so that we can identify areas in real-time that require a greater visible presence including foot and bike patrols, greater community interaction, and traffic patrols, to prevent, disrupt and put an end to criminal activity.

The second key task that CPD must accomplish heading into 2017 is to revamp our community policing efforts. When I go into the community and talk with law-abiding families they tell me they want the police in their neighborhoods – visible, engaged and present.

I tell officers if you're doing your job right, you are part of the community you serve and protect – you're not apart from it. Even if you live in a neighborhood halfway across the city, this is still your beat, your street, your city and your responsibility. We need to better embrace the critical role community can and should play in addressing issues of crime.

Our crime strategy must be rooted in a community policing strategy that is based on giving every Chicagoan equal treatment, and equal respect. Police officers and district commanders must increase their interaction with community members, business owners, members of the clergy, and others to gain better insight into the communities we serve and bring them in as meaningful partners in our efforts to fight crime.

This is why I am pleased to report to you today the creation of a Community Policing Advisory Panel made up of national and local experts in the field and community members to help shape the future of community policing here in Chicago.

The charge of this panel, which will be chaired by our Chief of Patrol, Fred Waller, will be to develop a series of recommendations that CPD can implement. Twenty years ago, Chicago was the birthplace for community policing. We were a national - if not international - model. And I set our goal at nothing short of achieving that status once again.

The type of community policing that I believe is necessary to address our crime fight represents a major cultural shift for our department. The panel is charged with delivering a written report with recommendations by the end of the first quarter of 2017.

After twenty eight years as a Chicago police officer and many meetings with residents around the City, I've developed some core values, and I expect our community policing strategy to reflect them. First, community policing has to be our core philosophy as a department. Community policing is everyone's job, not just the job of the CAPS unit. Second, it is our responsibility as a department to engage and collaborate with communities in the crime fight. So I expect our plan to have specific strategies for doing that. Third, I want our plan to leverage all of the city's resources, including economic development and basic city services because the police can't do this alone. Fourth, we have to restore trust and see the humanity in each other, and our plan has to have solutions for breaking down barriers. Fifth, this plan needs the resources to succeed, so I'm asking this panel to make specific recommendations for how to align our management and resources. Finally, I want to evaluate our community policing strategy to make sure it's working to reduce crime and restore trust in police.

Trust and confidence helped me be a good cop and that's what will help our officers succeed. They need to know that if they do their jobs well we will support them and that if they struggle we will help them. As for the few who can't meet the standard, they need to know that it's a new day for policing. We will not tolerate abusive or unprofessional behavior.

We have made significant steps in our efforts to foster transparency and trust with the public and give our officers greater resources in providing better service to the city. But we have a great deal more work to do and we need your help to do it.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and we look forward to your questions.