



# PHOENIX LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATION

*The Professional Association of Phoenix Police Officers Since 1975*

October 21, 2008

Frank Fairbanks, City Manager  
City of Phoenix  
200 W. Washington St.  
Phoenix, AZ 85003

Frank:

Police officers often pay for the protection of our communities in the form of life and limb. Because of this, the Phoenix Law Enforcement Association believes that front line rank-and-file officers who function in a first-responder role can offer a unique and practical perspective in reducing costs for the citizens of Phoenix. We believe the submitted budget cut proposals are far less threatening than the daily encounters of our front-line personnel. In following your lead to meet budget cut demands, PLEA is proposing the following reductions within the Police Department and also the City.

- **Eliminate at least one assistant chief position.** Since a sergeant is expected to manage a squad of 8 to 12 officers, only one assistant chief is needed to supervise 6 commanders in the 6 patrol precincts in the two patrol zones. Currently there is one north and one south zone chief with 3 commanders each. **Estimated savings \$230,000 in wages and benefits.**
- The legal department in the Police Department is crucial - this unit is not managed by a commander but by a lieutenant. This leads us to believe that **the elimination of the following commander positions** is feasible and warranted:
  - Water department. **Estimated savings \$210,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - Property. **Estimated savings \$210,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - Employment Services. This used to be managed by a lieutenant but was subsequently given a commander's position. **Estimated savings \$210,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - Professional Standards Bureau. This currently has two commanders assigned to it. This budget climate warrants only one. **Estimated savings \$210,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - City Council/City Manager police liaison. The close proximity of the police department along with other communication tools coupled with the budget crisis warrants the elimination of this position. **Estimated savings \$210,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - Transit. Like the Downtown Operations Unit (DOU) this task can be accomplished by a lieutenant. **Estimated savings \$60,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - Planning and Research. This is an administrative commander's assignment that can be accomplished by a lieutenant. **Estimated savings \$60,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - Public Affairs Bureau. This is an administrative commander's assignment that can be accomplished by a lieutenant. **Estimated savings \$60,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - Communications. This is an administrative commander's assignment that can be accomplished by a lieutenant. **Estimated savings \$60,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - Patrol Administration Commander. This is an administrative commander's assignment that can be accomplished by a lieutenant. **Estimated savings \$60,000 in wages and benefits.**

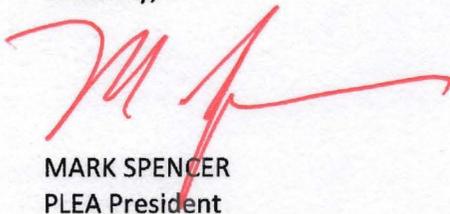
- Arizona Law Enforcement Academy (ALEA). Another agency in the state is rotated into this position. The Department can relinquish this seeing that an in-service Phoenix commander is already assigned to the Academy. **Estimated savings \$210,000 in wages and benefits.**
- Major Offender Bureau (MOB). Combining this unit with the Tactical Support Bureau (TSB) in this budget crisis is warranted. **Estimated savings \$210,000 in wages and benefits.**
- **Eliminate the Crime Lab lieutenant.** This position can be managed by a civilian. **Estimated savings \$150,000 in wages and benefits.**
- **Eliminate the following sergeant positions:**
  - Firearms Unit. There are currently three sergeants at the Academy firearms unit. There are approximately 16 officers. A patrol sergeant is expected to manage 8 to 12 officers. Elimination of one sergeant in this budget crisis is warranted. **Estimated savings \$125,000 in wages and benefits.**
  - Driving Track. The driving track used to be managed by an administrative sergeant off-site. An on-site sergeant is currently assigned to the track. Elimination of this position in this budget crisis is warranted. **Estimated savings \$125,000 in wages and benefits.**
- **Private purchase of rifles by officers.** This has been a concern for PLEA for the past 2½ years. The City has agreed to purchase 60 more patrol rifles and the cost per rifle in this bid is listed at \$750 per rifle. When these 60 rifles are on line, Phoenix is still 480 rifles short of similar cities such as Dallas or Denver. If 480 officers are allowed to privately purchase and qualify on their own rifles this would equate in an **estimated cost savings of \$360,000.**
- **Civilianize the wagon/jail booking process.** This has been a concern for PLEA for over 5 years. There are currently 8 officers (*junior off probation*) assigned to the jail at any given time (*normally 2 to 3 month increments*). This represents a full patrol squad. They are engaged in tasks that other Valley agencies have civilianized. The current budget crisis warrants putting these 8 officers back on the street and replacing them with civilian personnel (*a Detention Officer position*). Frank, when you suggested that two DOs could be had for one officer, PLEA was willing to trade some officer vacancies (*potential officer*) for two live detention officers. Dr. Levi Bolton, PLEA's labor consultant, has facilitated numerous solutions with other law enforcement agencies that directly addressed this problem. These solutions have routinely been ignored and would have generated significant cost savings.
- **2-man patrol cars.** This would increase officer safety, save on vehicle wear-and-tear, and save on fuel costs. The current budget crisis warrants a more consistent use of this deployment option.
- **Compressed Work Schedule.** Over 5 years ago PLEA proposed and demonstrated to the Department that a 3/12½ or 3/13 work schedule would increase coverage efficiency, improve moral, and lower costs. These findings were based on studies from agencies in Southern California. For example, cost savings are generated because fewer squads have more officers – this subsequently requires less sergeants but better coverage. Also, in limited financial times, an incentive for senior officers to return to patrol is not money but a 3-day workweek.
- **Require City Prosecutors to aggravate repeat misdemeanor career street criminals.** A direct cost savings by doing this would be a decrease in housing City misdemeanors costs (*County Jail*) due to aggravating them to felonies and transferring the cost to the State (*Arizona Department of Corrections*).
- **Lieutenants moved from hourly to salary.** Other Valley agencies such as Peoria, Scottsdale, Tempe, and Glendale as well as Tucson have controlled overtime costs with upper level police

management by classifying lieutenants as exempt employees. We are waiting to provide you with our analysis of the savings this would generate when our public records request is obtained.

- **Compress discipline for all city departments.** The necessity of large suspensions above 40 hours was challenged by PLEA years ago. 120, 180, or 240 hour suspensions are punitive and impractical. Large suspensions clearly place a burden on co-workers while the affected disciplined employee is away from work. An absent employee, whether through sick leave, comp time, vacation or a suspension, impacts the quality of service the city can provide. Time away from work can be minimized by compressing discipline to a maximum of 40 hours. In addition to increased and improved productivity, PLEA saw no value in harming an employee's family and finances with large, punitive punishments. Discipline is intended to correct behavior not damage families. The goal of progressive discipline can be obtained within a 40 hour suspension range. Under this system in the police department, "repeat offenders" have decreased and productivity has increased (*see the current crime stats*). It's long overdue for other departments to leave punitive discipline behind and help employees become productive through compressed discipline. The positive impact of compressed discipline prompted us to include it in our MOU.

Frank, as partners, we are more than willing to discuss these and others issues with you, the City Council, or police management. The success of the City is a priority with the Association. We believe these practical suggestions in cost savings are a difficult but crucial step in the right direction and demonstrate to citizens we serve that we have their best interests in mind.

Sincerely,



MARK SPENCER  
PLEA President

- c:
- Mayor Phil Gordon
  - Councilperson Thelda Williams
  - Councilperson Peggy Neely
  - Councilperson Maria Baier
  - Councilperson Tom Simplot
  - Councilperson Claude Mattox
  - Councilperson Greg Stanton
  - Councilperson Michael Nowakowski
  - Councilperson Michael Johnson
  - Donna Neill (N.A.I.L.E.M.)
  - Ann Malone (Require the Prior / Indian School Corridor Citywide Association)
  - Jack Harris, Public Safety Manager