



**City
Budget
Office**

Emergency Communications

Analysis by Christy Owen

SUMMARY

Required General Fund Reduction

The Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC) submitted one decision package to reduce the General Fund discretionary transfer of one-time funds by \$363,000. To achieve the savings, BOEC will rely on current year vacancy savings from the 14.0 FTE that are currently vacant but will be filled during the FY 2020-21. CBO recommends this reduction, noting it is incumbent on the bureau to monitor its staffing and costs, including the use of back-fill overtime, in accordance with available resources.

Key Decisions for Council

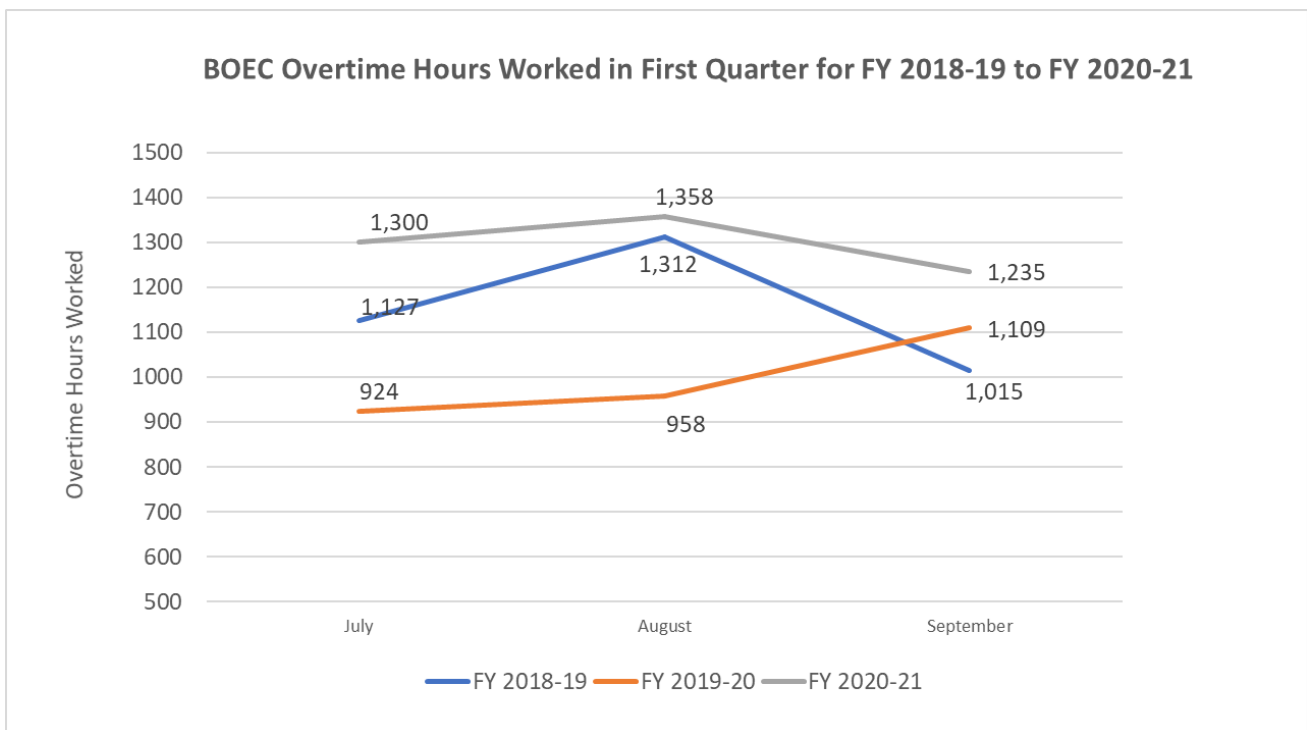
1. Request to transfer \$12,249 in one-time resources to the Office of Management & Finance (OMF) Office of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to fund a Public Safety Director in FY 2020-21.
 - The ongoing costs of \$25,000 for BOEC's share would become an interagency in the FY 2021-22 base budget.
 - CBO does recommend this request due to the bureau's stated ability to manage a one-time interagency with OMF through use of existing resources. There is concern with the ongoing nature of this request, as approval of this interagency will put pressure on BOEC's budget starting in FY 2021-22. The use of an interagency agreement indicates that services are being provided to BOEC but those benefits to the bureau have not yet been fully articulated.
 - CBO recommends the Public Safety Work Group continue to assess internal efficiencies within all participating parties, including OMF, to mitigate the impacts of interagency agreements on public safety operation budgets.
2. Request to receive \$341,464 as an ongoing fund transfer from the Citywide Obligations Reserve Fund (CORF) to support ongoing costs per the recently ratified labor contract.
 - These resources were set-aside during the development of the FY 2020-21 Adopted Budget. The contract was ratified in June 2020.
 - CBO recommends this request.

Budget & Fiscal Monitoring: Impacts of COVID-19 Emergency on FY 2019-20 Expenditures

BOEC ended FY 2019-20 with underspending across most major object categories as part of the Citywide

efforts to reduce expenditures in response to the COVID-19 public health crisis. The bureau did not fill vacant positions and halted spending on capital programs—notably the replacement of dispatcher and call-taker consoles. Additional expenditures for information technology projects were delayed as well; however, both the console replacement and the information technology projects are planned expenses in FY 2020-21.

The number of overtime hours worked and paid is an area where there is volatility in budget management throughout the fiscal year. BOEC utilizes overtime shifts as one of the tools to manage staffing shortages and to meet desired response time goals. The use of overtime over the course of any given fiscal year typically is driven by the total number of vacant positions as opposed to seasonal or operational workload factors. In the beginning of FY 2020-21 the bureau is experiencing an increase in overtime usage to cover vacant shifts, to backfill for supervisors taking required furloughs and to backfill where employees have taken additional bereavement leave as authorized by the Bureau of Human Resources. The chart below compares the amount of overtime hours worked in the first quarter of each of the last three fiscal years. The bureau will be using vacancy savings to meet its one-time cut targets, and this has a corresponding impact on overtime as the vacancy savings are one of the resources for bureau overtime. As the bureau fills its vacant positions the flexibility of vacancy savings will be reduced. Addressing any shortfalls in resources will likely involve managing expenditures on goods and services throughout the year.



Succession planning is a high priority for the bureau as there are currently 13 call takers or dispatchers eligible to retire, and there is a lengthy hiring and training process to develop and support new employees. Should these positions become vacant in the current year the bureau will find itself in essentially the same position carrying approximately the same number of vacancies in June 2021 as they are at present. Given the uncertainty as to when individuals will retire, the bureau will likely continue to experience peaks and troughs in its usage of vacancy savings to cover operational needs with overtime hours. This practice is likely to place continued pressure on BOEC’s budget in upcoming budget cycles.

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET CHANGES TO ALL FUNDS

	Current Revised Budget	Bureau Requested Changes	CBO Recommended Changes	Total Recommended Revised Budget
Resources				
Budgeted Beginning Fund Balance	\$ 1,659,373	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,659,373
Charges for Services	\$ 406,234	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 406,234
Intergovernmental Revenues	\$ 9,646,353	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,646,353
Fund Transfers - Revenue	\$ 16,722,528	\$ 48,158	\$ -	\$ 16,770,686
Miscellaneous	\$ 40,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40,000
Total Resources	\$28,474,488	\$48,158	\$0	\$28,522,646
Requirements				
Personnel Services	\$ 19,520,541	\$ 35,909	\$ 12,249	\$ 19,568,699
External Materials and Services	\$ 1,445,353	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,445,353
Internal Materials and Services	\$ 4,794,387	\$ 12,249	\$ (12,249)	\$ 4,794,387
Capital Outlay	\$ 1,412,565	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,412,565
Bond Expenses	\$ 299,045	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 299,045
Fund Transfers - Expense	\$ 1,002,597	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,002,597
Total Requirements	\$28,474,488	\$48,158	\$0	\$28,522,646