

Midway City Council  
25 January 2024  
Strategic Planning Meeting

Law Enforcement

# Municipality Law Enforcement

## Midway City Police Services

01/18/2024

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# Quick Review

- What led us to today

- Midway at one time had a small police force
- Several years ago, Midway contracted for services with the County instead – the price at that time was \$50k/year. I'm uncertain but I think the contract was somewhat vague about what services were included. This contract seemed to work well for several years.
- In approximately 2018 Midway and the County Sheriff mutually agreed the contract should be updated with new pricing. New built-in increases were also determined in an effort to make the contract more long-lasting. In addition more clear contract terms were defined.
- Near the end of 2022, the Sheriff proposed updated prices – well beyond the scope of the agreed increases. (Best laid plans...) Everyone can acknowledge that the 2020-2022 included some unusual social challenges (COVID/DEFUND MOVEMENTS/INFLATION to name a few).
- With the new pricing, the Midway Council was not sure if the ROI was appropriate. Based on the existing contract terms we allowed a termination of that contract (because the price was not in the scope of the agreement).
- So --- Now what? Do we need services? What do we need and what is a fair price? We've worked to get more context and that's what today's discussion is about.

# Options and Typical Municipal Investment Levels

- Councilmember JC and Mayor Celeste have been working for much of 2023 to...
  - Identify options – what are in the array of options; what have other Utah cities done? What is “normal” and what should we expect?
  - Determine comparative typical investment levels based on the record of other cities.
- We have met with several people
  - Wasatch County Sheriff
  - Heber City Police
  - A rep from Spring City Utah, a city with a 1-man police force
  - A rep from Ivins/Santa Clara Utah, a pair of cities who share a combined force
  - A few other Utah police officers and chiefs
- We learned a great deal from these conversations

# Options and Typical Municipal Investment Levels

- We also collected data from various sources
  - We looked at a list of essentially all cities in Utah
    - Do they have police service? What approach are they taking?
  - We looked in more detail at a subset of cities that are “similar” to Midway’s size/population
    - How do they get police service?
    - What is their annual budget for those services?
    - How many officers service them for that cost?

# Identifying Normal – Options

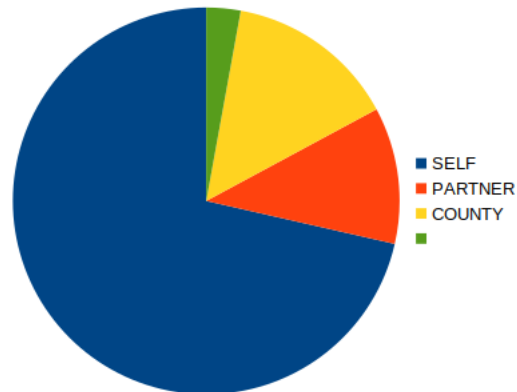
- Re: “Normal” -- We need to recognize there are many different factors, for example:
  - Area crime stats (is it a “small” city in the middle of SLC Metro, or is it isolated somewhere in the central desert area?)
  - Regional economics (Park City is an expensive area to live)
  - Etc
- We have found that there are three common options for securing Police Services
  - **Start your own Police Department**
    - Some of these are quite small, as small as 1 officer
    - The smallest usually still require some help from their County Sheriff and have arranged other cooperative sharing arrangements for Justice Services and etc.
  - **Partner with neighboring cities for a shared Department**
  - **Contract with your County Sheriff**

# Again, The Goal

- As a councilmember, I'm not knowledgeable about how to run a Police Dept. I think generally none of us are, since the departure of former Sheriff Kenny Van Wagoner.
- And, things have been changing. Especially costs are going up for manpower and equipment, etc.
- My goal was to review a broad cross section of Utah cities.
- I just want to facilitate good decision making, I don't like making decisions based on emotion and lacking much in the way of data review.

# Identifying Normal – Options

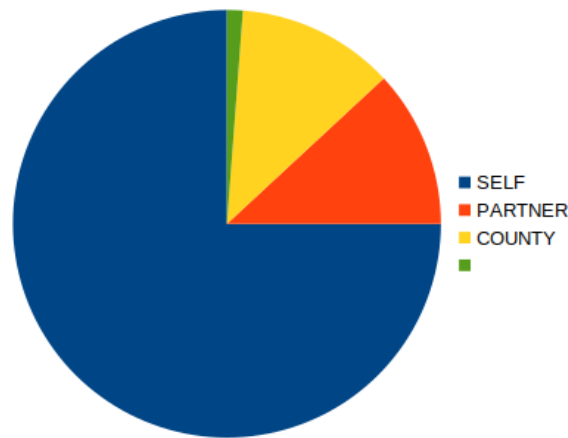
- Statewide, looking at the top 105 cities with population above about 3k...
  - It is not common for cities to have no budget for police services.
    - Basically all of these have a budget for it, ignoring the 3 we couldn't confirm (green).
  - 73.53% of these cities have their own police department.
  - 11.76% participate in a partnership arrangement with other cities.
  - 14.71% utilize a contract with their County Sheriff's office.





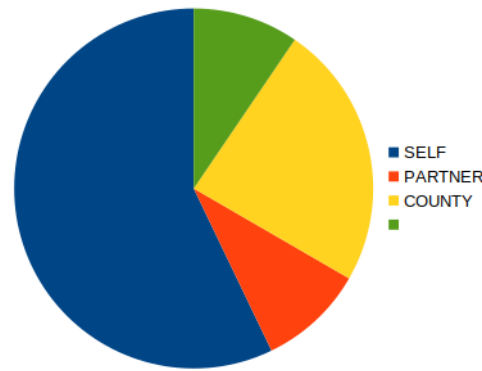
# Identifying Normal – Options

- Looking at cities with population greater than Midway
  - 73.90% of these cities have their own police department.
  - 12.05% participate in a partnership arrangement with other cities.
  - 12.05% utilize a contract with their County Sheriff's office.
  - (Not dramatically different from previous slide, but it's clear as cities grow they rely less on their County)



# Identifying Normal – Options

- Looking at cities with population less than Midway down to about 3k
  - 63.16% of these cities have their own police department, still more than half.
  - 10.53% participate in a partnership arrangement with other cities.
  - 26.32% utilize a contract with their County Sheriff's office.
  - The unconfirmed green ones could be SELF, PARTNER, or COUNTY
  - Perhaps it makes sense that Midway, a growing city, may be approaching a “turning point.”



# Identifying Normal – Deep Dive

- We looked closer at 28 Cities, population approximately 5k-10k
  - (In a range similar to Midway population 6,217)
  - (Note: Midway is growing and is expected to continue growing)
  - As I looked at the data, I decided to drop the largest and the smallest per-capita spend from the averages because they were so exceptional. I also looked at medians but used averages for projections.
- Overall average spend per Capita (raw \$ / citizen, **any approach**)
  - Average spend per capita: \$149.95 (146.83 Median)
  - Min \$11.82 Providence, Max \$348.09 Price (Park City was Excluded at \$526.24)
  - Projected Midway spend
    - If (\$149.95) average: \$932,265.82

# Identifying Normal – Deep Dive

- Among cities with pop. ~5k-10k with their **own Police Force**
- Average spend per Capita (raw \$ / citizen)
  - Average spend per capita: \$209.91
  - Min \$89.45 Ephraim, Max \$348.09 Price (Park City was Excluded at \$526.24)
  - Project Midway's spend
    - If average: \$1,305,017.72
    - If Min \$556,099.50, Max \$2,164,063.05

# Identifying Normal – Deep Dive

- Among cities with pop. ~5k-10k with a **Partnership arrangement**
- Average spend per Capita (raw \$ / citizen)
  - Average spend per capita: \$96.10
  - Min \$56.39 Cedar Hills (partners with AF), Max \$144.77 Alpine (partners with Highland)
  - Project Midway's spend
    - If average: \$597,444.17

# Identifying Normal – Deep Dive

- Among cities with pop. ~5k-10k with a **County Sheriff contract**
- Average spend per Capita (raw \$ / citizen)
  - Average spend per capita: \$51.38
  - Min \$11.82 Providence, Max \$133.12 Washington Terrace
  - Project Midway's spend
    - If average: \$319,419.80
    - This gives some needed perspective on the Wasatch County Sheriff contract...
    - We don't know for sure what they "get" from their county in return.

# Per Capita Spend Summary

- Basically all cities have a budget for police services.
- If we spent only \$320k, we would be spending pretty near to the minimum, for the barest of services.
- It may be time for Midway to ante-up and allocate a significant amount for ongoing police services.
- The questions remain: What are our needs, and how do we get the best bang for our buck in meeting them?

# Options - Details

- **Option 1: Do nothing. Allocate no budget for Police Services.**
  - I'm very uncomfortable with this. We would be essentially unique. I think taking this route would be a mistake.
- **Option 2: Start a new Midway Police Department.**
  - This is a possibility. For sure the year one startup costs are daunting. Year two starts to look better, but it's a big responsibility and there are lots of details to wade through, even if we had competent help. It's definitely an option and something we should consider as we grow, although not necessarily a certainty. Several much larger cities have taken a partnership approach instead, and it appears to offer cost savings.
- **Option 3: Partner with another local City, IE Heber**
  - We've started this conversation, and we think it's a viable path. It checks the box of trying to do more for the taxpayer by leveraging economies of scale we can't tap into on our own at our size.
- **Option 4: Partner with the County.**
  - We were doing that. It was working for a time. The data suggests that as cities grow, they tend to choose this option less and less frequently.



# Option 1 - Start our own Department

- We have identified several things to consider
  - We CAN do it.
  - We can have a very small department if we want (even just one person.)
  - We can have our own name, badge, etc.
  - We would need to partner or contract for Justice services, and any services we couldn't cover (like Detective work for example.)
  - We would need to provide
    - Police car(s)
    - Policy management
    - Insurance
    - Patrol Software
    - And more

# Cost of Starting our own Department

- We have reviewed a rough sketch of a proposal to start a new Midway Dept. for less than \$400k in year one.
- In rough numbers:
  - \$200k 1 full time officer with benefits
  - \$55k 1 part time officer
  - \$67k 1 patrol vehicle, outfitted
  - \$25k Software and support
  - \$7k gas
  - \$3.5k training
  - \$30k capital replacement/various/other
- Thoughts:
  - I think it's possible, but there is a big learning curve and will be growing pains even after doing our homework. I think the budget is very limited and optimistic, and I also think the reality is we would benefit from more coverage/service. If we are interested we should do more refined research/discussion/negotiation.

# Partnership with a neighboring city

- We have reviewed a preliminary sketch of a proposal to partner with Heber. Heber is willing to provide dedicated manpower, and partner on vehicle needs. We can have our own Midway badge, vehicle brand/visual, etc. With this option it appears we can get 24/7 for ~\$216k/year. If we want 2x, the cost is simply double (432k), because we are already getting “economies of scale” via the partnership.
- **In rough numbers:**
  - \$146k 24/7 coverage (one officer at all times, dedicated to Midway)
  - \$15k 1 patrol vehicle lease, per year (they provide from their fleet, it would have Midway branding)
  - \$9k officer equipment
  - \$4k gas
  - \$4k training
  - \$38k admin
- **Thoughts:**
  - To me this seems like a very appealing option. It might seem a little costly per officer, but remember we are talking 24/7 which is 4.2x regular hours. That makes the comparative cost very good.
  - The County already works closely with Heber. I don't think there would be much if any “transition” for anyone.
  - Also note: Midway's projected spend if “Average” on partnership would be \$597k

# Partnership with Wasatch County SO

- We had a new discussion with our County Sheriff. He is still very willing to be of assistance. In our many discussions with others, we have noticed that cities tend to “outgrow” the relationship with the County. Without any suggestion of wrong, the County Sheriff tends to have a different approach and different perspective compared to cities. But regardless of what else we do, Midway will continue to need to cooperate with the County, for emergencies, and for any day to day circumstances where we lack the resources, skills, training, or etc. to process law enforcement needs. Our county “base services” will cover much of that in terms of cost, but it’s important that we have a great working relationship, aside from costs.
- We don’t yet have any new proposal from the Sheriff. So at this time we have to assume the previous offer stands, which was approximately \$380 for 60 hours per week.
- Thoughts:
  - We need to continue to have a good working relationship regardless. If the County can provide us the services we want for a competitive price, then it’s certainly an option.

# What's Next?

- Before we do anything else, we need to know what the Council most supports.
- Keep in mind, we can only consider “offers on the table” – if some other city in Utah hypothetically paid less for excellent service... it doesn't matter if nobody is offering us that service for that price. What we do know is we have 3 preliminary offers that are fairly realistic starting points. We also now have some way to gauge how those offers compare to other arrangements.
- If we have a favored approach, or two, we can dive in and get more complete and formal info.