

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TO: All Media Outlets – Greater Worcester Area
From: Worcester Police Patrolman’s Union, NEPBA Local 911
Re: 2019 Police Detail Revenue Statistics & Board of Health Statement
Date: June 25, 2020

Media outlets recently published 2019 earnings for City of Worcester employees. Advocates and some in the media have used this data to support the argument that City funds for police services should be decreased and used for other purposes. As usually occurs when this data is published annually, there is a major public misconception about (1) the source of the funding, (2) the extra work required to earn the income and (3) the benefits flowing to the City because of this mostly privately funded system.

The Worcester Police Patrolman’s Union, NEPBA Local 911, recently did a public records request for the amount of police detail revenue generated for the City of Worcester in 2019. Among the statistics, the following is of note:

1. **Source of Payments:** A large amount of a Worcester police officers’ regular income is generated by extra-duty work, most of which is paid by a private vendor and is not city salary or even city-funded overtime. Extra detail work is in reality a second job for officers. This format allows the City the benefit of having uniformed officers on the street for thousands of hours, subsidized by private industry, and not paid public funds. This system, because the private sector hiring the officers compensates both them and the City for the services, actually results in the City needing less funding for police, not more. The millions of dollars generated each year by this system are not something that any municipality can simply move around – as the money comes mostly from the private sector and is not part of City appropriated funds.
2. **Amount of Detail Income:** For 2019, approximately \$12,000,000.00 was generated by Worcester’s police officers working extra duty details. This figure reflects more than 225,000 extra hours of work by officers, above and beyond their regular shifts. This amount of money and hours is significant part of the compensation to officers that was recently reported in the media.
3. **Amount Paid by Private Industry:** The majority of extra compensation - approximately 2/3 of it – is funded by private industry. This means that in 2019, uniformed police officers worked in the community for approximately 144,000 hours, creating an extensive public safety presence funded by private contractors and not tax dollars. The minority balance of the extra funding provided by the city is primarily for city essential services, including DPW, water and sewer details, etc.
3. **The City Makes Money on the Deal:** Many are unaware that municipalities, including Worcester, charge an administrative fee to vendors for police details, above and beyond the cost of the officers. In 2019, the City of Worcester earned approximately \$750,000.00 as a direct result of its police officers working extra jobs. This extra funding, generated by police officers

working for and being paid by private industry, is roughly equal to support the base salaries for about 16 entry-level teachers here in the city for 2019.

4. **Proud of Our Record:** The extra city revenue generated by Worcester's police officers, through the administrative fees to private vendors, is available for use by the City – it alone could easily support a large team of city social workers for example.

5. **A thought on the Worcester Board of Health's proposed police reforms:** As our community participates in the national conversation about police reforms, many, like the Worcester Board of Health, are presenting data that is not from Worcester, and in fact is not even from Massachusetts. They are proposing sweeping changes without ever even asking how we are doing in Worcester. The public should demand that this question be asked by those proposing radical change. We aren't saying don't look at us – to the contrary, we are saying DO look at us. Use our data. Our numbers. Look at us here in Worcester – don't do the easy thing and pass along national data compiled by advocacy groups in order to serve as pretext that change is a public health emergency.

To the Board of health – have you examined the data in Massachusetts? In Worcester? For example, in the period of 2013-2019, are you aware that only one (1) police related death occurred out of approximately one million calls for police service. And that death was connected to police using a taser, after de-escalation? And what's more, that single death was confirmed to be as the result of a severe drug overdose? So, when you are demanding sweeping reforms, have you considered our record? Have you even looked at it? When you are passing along data from elsewhere, are you aware that violent felons killed in shootouts with police are included – like, for example, the Boston Marathon bomber, or the individual that murdered a police officer recently in Auburn, MA. Is that the type of data that demands radical change locally?

We are not hiding from transparency. We contractually agreed to body cameras. We have an educated police force. We have had mandatory training for years. We pride ourselves on protecting our community. When evaluating the need for reform, we say look at us, evaluate us. Data from Alabama or Georgia or Texas is not what is happening in Worcester. We welcome the discussion. We ask that the citizens of Worcester have the facts – that its Board of Health and other officials be honest with everyone about the facts. At least ask the right questions – how are we doing here in Worcester?

We hope you'll agree to share this important perspective with your audiences.

Dan Gilbert, President NEPBA Local 911