

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE



BUDGET REVIEW OFFICE

October 7, 2008

Gail Vizzini
Director

To: Presiding Officer William J. Lindsay
and All Suffolk County Legislators

From: Gail Vizzini, Director
Budget Review Office

Subject: ***Cost Comparison of Police Personnel versus Sheriff Personnel for Highway Patrol***

Based on a directive from the County Executive, the Police Commissioner has reassigned 35 Police Officers from patrolling the Long Island Expressway and Sunrise Highway to address the need for additional Police Officers in the precincts. Negotiations to obtain relief from the State of New York for this function have not yet resulted in a solution. The Sheriff has assumed highway patrol responsibility on the LIE and Sunrise Highway and has assigned a combination of Deputy Sheriff I and II for patrol and supervision. To assist the Legislature in their deliberations on the 2009 Recommended Operating Budget, the Budget Review Office has provided a cost analysis of 1) the cost to perform the Highway Patrol function, and 2) the cost for a Police Class.

The Suffolk County Police Department Highway Patrol Bureau utilized 35 top step Police Officers to patrol the LIE and Sunrise Highway. A top step Police Officer earns \$98,722 in base salary. The average reported W-2 earnings in 2007 for a top step Police Officer was \$127,079.

Based upon testimony at the September 18, 2008 Special Public Safety Committee Meeting the Sheriff has assigned seven Deputy Sheriff I and two Deputy Sheriff II on each of three shifts. A top step Deputy Sheriff I base salary is \$75,194 and a top step Deputy Sheriff II is \$89,741 or \$8,981 less than a top step Police Officer. The average reported W-2 earnings in 2007 for a Deputy Sheriff I was \$103,506 and a Deputy Sheriff II was \$138,852.

For the purposes of our analysis we make the following assumptions:

- Salaries for all titles are based upon the 2007 W-2 reported average salaries for top step.
- Although 35 Police Officers were reassigned to the precincts, the BRO analysis compares 27 Police Officers to 27 Deputy Sheriffs reflecting the current number of Deputy Sheriffs assigned to highway patrol.
- The 27 Deputy Sheriffs are made up of three shifts each for seven top step Deputy Sheriff I in patrol and two top step Deputy Sheriff II for supervision.
- Nine top step Police Officers on three shifts are assumed to reflect the officers reassigned to the precincts.
- Supervisory Police Sergeants remained in Highway Patrol and are not calculated in the analysis.
- The administrative supervision from the Deputy Sheriff III (Lieutenant) is also not included in the cost calculation.

Based upon the average W-2 reported 2007 salaries for seven top step Deputy Sheriff I and two top step Deputy Sheriff II covering three shifts, the Budget Review Office estimates that the annual salary costs for highway patrol performed by Deputy Sheriffs would be \$3,006,738. Utilizing the average W-2 reported salary for nine top step Police Officers covering three shifts, the annual salary cost is estimated at \$3,431,133 or a difference of \$424,395 annually.

If savings are associated with the assumption that a class of 35 Police Officers will not be hired on September 1, 2009 because the highway patrol officers are redeployed a cost avoidance of \$1,050,659 is estimated as follows:

Date Hired	1-Sep-09
Number Recruits	35
Months on Payroll	4.0
Base Salary	\$676,680
Holiday Pay	\$52,330
Night Differential	\$16,973
Cleaning Allowance	\$7,000
Cost to Outfit	\$63,000
Benefit Fund	\$68,775
Retirement	\$114,135
Social Security	\$51,766
TOTAL	\$1,050,659
Cost per Recruit	\$30,019

The cost to hire a new Police Officer recruit for a full year is \$81,948. A class of 50 recruits for a full year would be \$4,097,400.

Not quantified in our analysis are the potential for additional costs associated with:

- Overtime to compensate for the loss of 27 Deputy Sheriffs per day (seven in patrol and two supervisors for three shifts) and perhaps more during rush hour and inclement weather conditions.
- Hiring additional Deputy Sheriffs to backfill positions redeployed to Highway Patrol. This could be offset by the cost avoidance of hiring a Police Officer class in 2009 (which was not requested by the department).
- Improving Sheriff vehicles to Highway Patrol standards.
- Additional Sheriff dispatchers and related equipment.
- Training for the Deputy Sheriffs.
- Legal costs for PBA and SOA PERB actions.

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Highway Patrol Misrepresentation of Annual Savings

	BRO Report	BRO Report Average Police Officer Top Step	BRO Report Difference per Officer	Steve Levy's Cost saving per Officer (Annually)	Steve Levy's Overstated Savings per Officer	Overstated Savings %
Base Salary DS-I Top Step	\$75,194	\$98,722	\$23,528	\$42,000	\$18,472	78.51%
Base Salary DSS-II Top Step	\$89,741	\$98,722	\$8,981	\$42,000	\$33,019	367.65%
Annual Savings per BRO	\$424,395					
Steve Levy's stated Annual Savings	\$2,000,000					
Overstated Annual Savings	\$1,575,605					
Overstated Savings %	371.26%					