As well as being on Zoom, meetings will be on Amherst Media channel 17 and live-streamed online

Meeting Date/Time	Topic & Link to Amherst Calendar with Joining Information
Mon 5/2 at 6:30pm	Budget Presentation
Mon 5/16 5:00-6:30pm	Brief Budget Presentation and then the Public Budget Forum
Mon 6/13 at 6:45pm	Budget Vote
Anytime	Submit comments online View other people's online comments

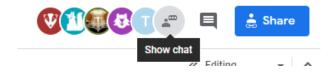
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How to use this guide:

Defund413 Amherst and Sunrise Amherst hope that this guide helps you feel prepared to give public comment on the FY23 Budget proposal. Here you'll find tips for giving public comment, information about the budget proposal, contextual information about policing in Amherst, the Defund 413 Amherst and Sunrise Amherst demands, and a way to connect and strategize with others giving public comment.

During the meetings we will be using the chat function in this google doc to communicate as a group. The chat is a great place to ask questions, share insights, communicate updates to this document, etc. If you're unable to access the chat, click share and send the doc to your email, then open it from the link in your inbox.



Intro to Giving Public Comment:

- 1. **Consider writing out your comment ahead of time.** For some people this can help with the stage fright, but it's not everyone's style. Do what works best for you!
- 2. **Join the Zoom Webinar** by clicking the link provided at the top of this document. That will take you to the Town of Amherst calendar event page for the meeting where you can join by link, Meeting ID, or phone.
 - To join by link click on the Zoom link for the meeting you want to join on the Town of Amherst calendar.
 - To join with a Meeting ID open the Zoom app or go to Zoom in a web browser > log in > select join meeting > enter the Meeting ID provided on the Town of Amherst calendar event for the meeting you want to join > submit.
 - To join by phone Dial the in-country number provided on the Town of Amherst calendar event page for the meeting you want to join. If you dial a toll number, your carrier rates will apply. You will be prompted to enter the meeting ID and then #.
- Your video and profile picture will NOT be visible to anyone at any point during the meeting, even while you're speaking. To show our collective support, <u>change your</u> <u>Zoom name</u> to include the word "Defund."
- 4. Raise your hand in Zoom as soon as the forum starts. Depending on how many people there are, each of us will have 2-3 minutes to speak.
 - On a computer: Select the bottom 'reactions' button, or the 'more' button if it does not appear initially. Then choose 'raise hand.'
 - **Dialed in by phone:** dial *9 to raise and lower your hand.
- 5. **Unmute:** When it's your turn, the Town Council will invite you to turn on your microphone. Unmute the microphone, state your comment, and mute again afterwards.
- 6. Direct your public comment to your district's councilors. Find out who your councilors are.
- 7. State our <u>Demands</u>. We've found repetition to be helpful.
- 8. **Say why defunding the police is important to you.** You can find data on policing in Amherst to back up your comment in the <u>Facts to Share</u> section.

NOTE: **If you'd rather share your comment anonymously**, there's a place in our Guide for Public Comment where you can <u>paste something you'd like someone else to read for you</u>. We do our best to make sure everyone's testimony is read to the councilors!

How to Structure your Public Comment

1) Greeting + Introduction + Credentials

- Name and (if applicable) district number
- Occupation
- Years being a part of the Amherst Community
- Parent or graduate of Amherst public schools (?)

"Hello! My name is	and I live in Distric	t I have been a resident in A	mherst for
years. I work at <u>Demands</u>)."	and attended school.	Today I am asking you to((see

2) Why I care -- Story about how issue personally impacts me

"This issue is important to me because.."

How can you make this more of a story? What does it sound like? What does it look like?

Use information from the Facts to Share section to bolster your argument.

3) What should the Town Council do?

In conclusion, that is why I am asking you to cut the APD budget by XX and reinvest that money in a way that centers the needs of the BIPOC community in Amherst.

Demands:

Defund 413 Amherst Demands:

- 1. Implement all of the CSWG's program and policy recommendations at the funding levels recommended in their reports (Part A & Part B).
 - a. Fund DEI office at \$354,647 per year (Part A, pg 14)
 - b. Create and fund Teen Empowerment Center (<u>independent from the Jones Library</u>) and BIPOC Cultural Center at \$815,396 per year (Part A, pg 15)
 - c. Fund CRESS at \$2,739,300 per year (Part A, pg 13)
 - i. Proposed total budget for 12 responders (\$2,824,300) minus \$85,000 of startup costs for equipment and vehicles
 - d. Changes to Amherst Police Department Policies
 - i. Use of Force (Part B, pg 20)
 - ii. Consent Search (Part B, pg 23)
 - iii. Low Level & Pretextual Stops (Part B, pg 25)
 - e. Reimagine traffic enforcement outside of the APD (Part B, pg 36)
 - f. Engage in an extended process of community healing and visioning (Part B, pg 41)
 - g. Develop an anti-racist departmental culture in the APD (Part B, pg 46)
- 2. Reduce the size of the APD (Part A, pg 16)
 - a. Don't fill any APD vacancies and transfer positions to CRESS
 - b. Cut number of police officers by 50% over 2 years
- 3. Cut APD budget by 47%
 - a. Get the number by cutting in half the staffing line item when budget is released
 - i. Total proposed personnel budget: \$4,761,772
 - ii. Half of that: \$2,380,886
 - iii. The APD would still have \$2,702,436

Sunrise Movement Amherst Demands:

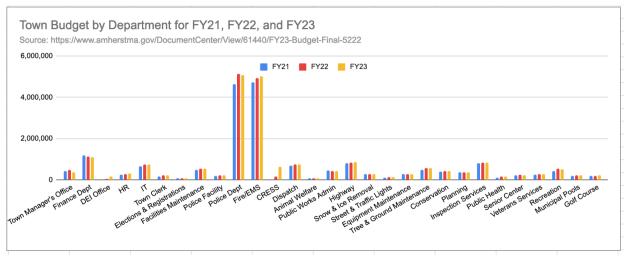
The budgetary demands of Sunrise Amherst regarding our community and the FY23 Budget are as follows:

- Full school funding, and higher pay as well as funding to art, special education, and ELL teachers. Education is vital to providing children with the tools needed to flourish and contribute in society and should be treated by the Town Council as such.
- We also demand money go towards racial equity programs, CRESS funding, and a cessation of police department budget inflations.
- In addition, affordable housing programs and finally climate justice initiatives are also a necessity and thus in our list of demands as well. By decreasing police funding and focusing funding on racial equity programs, the town's system can begin working for everyone regardless of race and help ensure equal opportunity. Sunrise also believes that we must find affordable housing to assist all families, rather than students and that the Town Council should consider public programs like this in addition to increased public transportation as well as funding for mental health and rehabilitation services.

Finally, as a group that strives to achieve climate justice, Amherst Sunrise understands
that our town must do its part to contribute to a greener planet, and hopes to see more
steps taken to tackle climate change on a local level, such as repairing and adding bike
lanes as well as sidewalks and trees throughout the town. Funding for our educational,
DPW, Fire/EMS, housing, CRESS, and climate/environmental services is critical to
building a healthy, inclusive, safe, and just community.

FY23 Budget Proposal:

Read it in full here.



APD Budget keeps 48 FTE (full-time equivalents) staff, which is the same as last year and only a reduction of 2.5 since 2019.

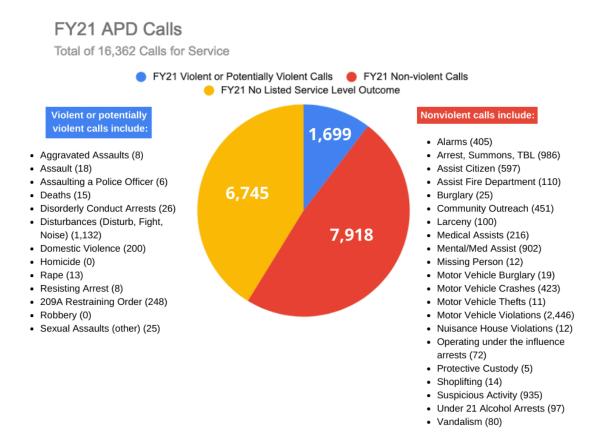
Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Manager	
FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	
50.50	50.00	50.00	48.00	48.00	

Reducing the APD's budget by 47% would release enough money to fully fund the CSWG's recommended programs.

	CSWG's recommended budget	Allocated funds in FY23	Difference
DEI Office	\$227,647	\$175,257	-\$52,390
BIPOC Community Center	\$407,698	\$0	-\$407,698
Youth Empowerment Center	\$407,698	\$500,000	\$92,302
CRESS	\$2,739,300	\$621,520	-\$2,117,780
Totals	\$3,782,343	\$1,296,777	-\$2,485,566
		47% of the APD budget	\$2,380,886

Facts to Share:

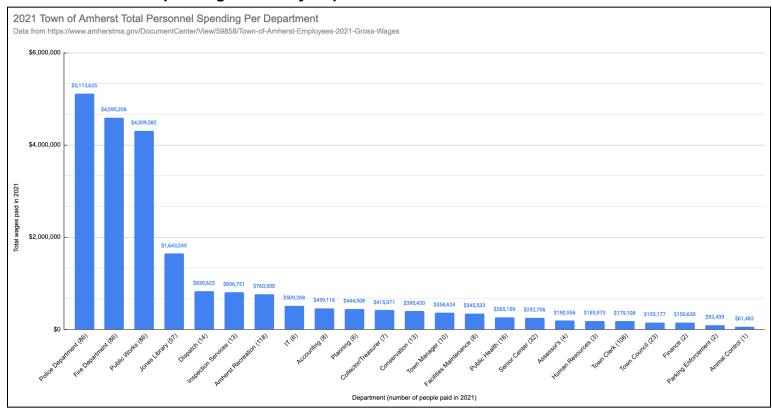
APD Call Data for 2021



Source: FY23 Budget Proposal, Page 121

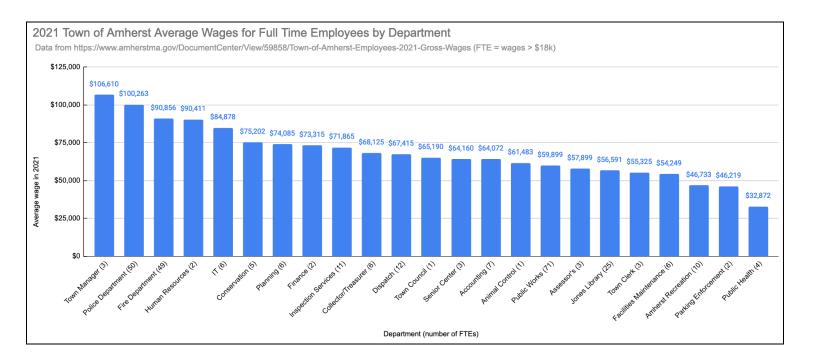
There were 902 mental health calls in Amherst during 2021, which is three times more than in previous years (351 in 2020, 370 in 2019, 279 in 2018). This speaks to an increasing need for programs like CRESS.

Personnel Spending in 2021 by Department



Wage Disparities for Amherst Municipal Employees (Total Wages 2021)

- Non-police Amherst town employees make on average \$68,025.02/year, which
 is 32% less than the Police Department employees, who make on average
 \$100,262.63/year. (Town of Amherst Gross Wages 2021).
- Employees in the Public Health department make on average \$32,871.86/year, which is 67% less than the average wage for Police Department employees (Town of Amherst Gross Wages 2021).
- Police officers in Amherst (4% higher than their daytime rate) receive more compensation for working nights and weekends than Department of Public Works employees (\$1 more/hour than their daytime rate). (<u>Amherst Labor</u> <u>Contracts and Salaries</u>).



Investment in APD Vehicles more than other Town Vehicles

- Police vehicles are replaced every 100,000 miles or every 4 years, whichever comes sooner. Sunrise Amherst was able to find comparable Fire, School and Public Works vehicles that are over 25 years old, and/or have nearly 200,000 miles that are currently used for lifesaving duties. The vast majority of town vehicles in non-police town departments are expected to last 20 years or more. Some Police vehicles being replaced this year have under 86,000 miles or are only 3 years old (FY22 Capital improvement program).
 - This April, Amherst firefighters had two wheels literally fall off of an ambulance (with ~155k miles on it) while they were driving it. Their union has been advocating for their vehicle replacement cycle to be 7-8 years instead of 10 years (<u>Amherst (MA) Firefighters, Local 1764 facebook</u> <u>page</u>).
- Most new police vehicles that Amherst purchases get around 15 mpg, which is
 worse than the national average and even many larger vehicles like larger trucks
 and SUVs. Consumer Reports recommends avoiding the main vehicle our police
 department purchases as low fuel economy and reliability ratings make it a poor
 choice for the environment and town residents.

The two APD unions have provisions that insure their vehicles are replaced often
and that all the vehicles they ride in have air conditioning. Despite working with
fires and hot asphalt some fire and DPW trucks do not have air conditioning and
there is no provision requiring it in their contracts (<u>Amherst Labor Contracts and Salaries</u>).

Investment in APD Buildings more than other Town Buildings

- The Police Department building has its own section in the town operating budget devoted solely to Police Department building maintenance. That section totals over 207,000 per year. Most other town assets do not have a section solely for the maintenance of one building (FY22 Budget Document).
- APD employees work out of a safe, fully code- and ADA-compliant building that
 is valued at over \$9 million. Many elementary school teachers and staff,
 firefighters and DPW workers conduct their critical work in buildings that are not
 code or ADA compliant, and have been deemed unsafe by professional
 inspectors and engineers (<u>Amherst Capital Investments Listening Session 2019</u>,
 <u>FY22 Capital Improvement Program</u>).

Racial Discrimination in the APD

White drivers were 8x more likely than Black drivers to be stopped by APD, but when they got stopped they often got less harsh outcomes than Black drivers (2020 APD Racial Profile Review). For a sense of scale, there are 15x more white people in Amherst than Black people according to the 2010 census.

Outcome	Stopped Black Drivers	Stopped White Drivers
Civil Citation (Ticket)	3.9%	2.5%
Crim.App (Driving without a license, Driving to endanger, Drunk driving)	10.8%	3.8%
Arrest	4.4%	2.2%
Written warning	43.3%	59%
Verbal warning	34%	29%
No action	3.4%	3%

 In 2020, 15.30% of all arrests and charges (including those relating to student behavior) brought by APD were against Black people, despite Black residents only making up 5% of the Amherst population according to the <u>2010 US Census</u> (<u>2020 APD Racial Profile Review</u>).

Many Amherst Police Officers choose to not live in Amherst. The result is that officers often go into situations with no context of the situations many of Amherst's working class and BIPOC residents face.

Many careers in Fire/EMS as well as in DPW are <u>vastly more dangerous</u> than being a police officer nationally according to the Bureau of Labor.

Findings from the **7GenMC** report commissioned by the CSWG

Often white Amherst residents like to think about Amherst as a very progressive place where police violence and racism doesn't happen here. This is a misconception.

7GenMC, the consultants to the Community Safety Working Group, conducted participatory action research in the community. These are some of the voices they heard:

- "Police don't need to acknowledge their biases before they kill Black people."
- "Good' police officers are still maintaining an oppressive system that murders Black people. They are still culpable."
- "As a Black person in America, I have to debate whether I should call the police because doing so may cause a situation to escalate and someone could end up dead because I called the police."
- "Sgt ____ sat me on the floor and said, 'I'll f----ing kill you if you f----ing move!... F--k your kids!!"
- "I tell no one in my house to call the police. I don't call the police because things could go either way."
- "When police approach especially males of color, the darker they are the more police try to exert dominance. They do this before someone is given the benefit of the doubt."
- "We never hear of White people getting choked out by White cops."
- "I feel an anxiety when I see them even though I know I am not doing anything wrong."
- "[Police] will harass you till they get you. I've seen them do this!"

- "I told you about that girl they slammed to the ground. That [police officer] is a [expletive] captain now."
- "My sister was harassed a lot by Amherst police... one of the reasons she hardly comes to Amherst now"
- "I get to my house as the father of the minor [who called the police because of a white intruder] and the police officer approached me in an aggressive manner an officer I had just interacted with the week before [at my job in a professional capacity]."
- "[My loved one] was arrested because he did not show up to jury duty. He had no priors."
- "Their aim and objective seem to be, to see me as Black and that makes me a suspect and they feel they can control and do whatever they want to do with you."
- "The first question he asked me [upon approaching me after a traffic stop] was if my car was mine."
- "I was accused of fitting the description of someone who had stolen at the CVS. The
 pictures they showed us were all of white people. We were told to go with police
 nonetheless."
- "At a Black party they always impose curfew. They do this all the time with [student of color events]."
- "I turn (sic) up to hear that the owner of the establishment called the cops because he hated the way my son was sitting in a chair!"
- "Whenever there is a huge presence of POC the police presence is strong. But not when the crowd is white. Why is there bias?"
- "I recall an incident in which kids of color wearing hoodies were followed off the bus by police and accosted in CVS."
- "I was [driving] towards Pelham doing about 35 mph. A cop stopped me. I tried to explain that I had a meeting and was trying to make it on time. We argued back and forth for about 15 minutes. Then he told me to go on my way....They continue to stop us because they want to anger you by stopping you needlessly."
- "Police were called for [family member with mental health issue]. There were about 10 cops surrounding my family member. They all had their hands on their guns. Just the sight of police holding their guns before even asking questions was beyond scary. Every time I would walk by [the spot] where this happened, it triggers me."

Testimonies to Share:

If you'd rather share your comment anonymously, you can paste something here that you'd like someone else to read for you. We do our best to make sure everyone's testimony is read to the councilors!

Meeting Notes:

5/16: Public Budget Forum

Speakers:

19 people in the audience

- 1. Peter Demling, School Committee (asking for more money for school budget)
- 2. Allegra Clark, in haiku form:)
- 3. Kaylee Brow
- 4. Andrea Munoz Ledo, (I think ARHS student?)
- 5. Adam Gibbs, Amherst College student
- 6. Birdy Newman
- 7. Marisol Pierce Bonifaz (ARHS student)
- 8. Zoë Crabtree
- 9. Demetria Shabazz

21 people in the audience

Finance Director Sean Mangano clarifies that the 500k for youth empowerment center is for implementation not another study; the recreation department is internally studying whether they have the capacity to run it themselves.

- 10. Jeff Lee (talking about wealth gap and challenges of poor residents)
- 11. Julian Hynes (ARHS student)
- 12. Lauren (doesn't think we need to defund police to fund social services)
- 13. Vira Cage

22 people in the audience

- 14. Darcy DuMont (mostly about climate action goals)
- 15. Lydia Irons

Dorothy Pam supports a separate youth empowerment center outside of the library in addition to a teen space at the library.

6/6: Last Council Meeting before the Budget Vote

6/13: FY23 Budget Vote