

Menahga Police Salary Budget

Adam Gunderson | Response to Menahga Police Salary Budget Claims

Mr. Broden states that the police department’s salaries exceeded budget by as much as 7.17%, totaling \$25,506.37 over 2020-2022. His dollar total matches the overages in the department’s main salary account. Those figures represent department-wide salary spending, not simply my individual pay, and should also be considered alongside the separate part-time salary account.

Although Mr. Broden presents these overages immediately after discussing my compensation, the department’s annual budget summaries do not identify how much of the overage resulted from my pay or from other officers’ wages and additional staffing coverage. My compensation arrangement is addressed separately in the payroll and forensic accounting response.

The city’s reports show:

Year	Main salary account	Both salary accounts combined
2020	\$4,699.06 over budget	\$3,457.22 over budget
2021	\$12,624.21 over budget	\$13,283.27 over budget
2022	\$8,183.10 over budget	\$5,725.00 under budget

Across those three years, the main salary account exceeded its combined budgets by \$25,506.37. Including both salary accounts, the combined overage was \$11,015.49.

These are separate accounts; the main salary line does not include part-time salaries. Considering both provides a fuller picture of department salary spending. It does not erase individual account overruns or establish that transfers between accounts were authorized. These figures exclude benefits, retirement contributions, and payroll taxes, which are reported separately. They also do not represent the police department’s entire budget.

In 2022, I did not have part-time officers available to provide the needed coverage, so full-time officers had to make up the difference. That staffing situation provides context for why the main salary account exceeded its budget while the part-time salary account remained below budget. Together, the two salary accounts were \$5,725 under budget that year.

COVID affected police staffing during this period. Officers were sometimes unavailable because of illness or exposure, and other officers worked additional hours to maintain coverage.

On June 26, 2020, the city council unanimously approved paid administrative leave for employees required to remain home because of COVID. This meant the city could continue paying an absent employee while also incurring additional costs for another officer to provide coverage.

These circumstances help explain the staffing pressures during that period. The annual budget summaries do not establish how much of the salary overages resulted from COVID-related absences and coverage or from part-time staffing shortages.

The city discussed overtime controls across departments. My recollection is that city officials did not specifically bring these salary-budget overages to my attention or present me with the analysis Mr. Broden now cites during my employment. I do not recall being reprimanded over those figures. This is separate from the discussion about my individual pay arrangement, which is addressed in my payroll response.

A fair assessment should acknowledge the overages while considering both salary accounts and the staffing circumstances behind the expenditures. The figures show where spending differed from the budget; they do not, by themselves, explain those differences or establish how much was attributable to my individual compensation.

Sources: City of Menahga police department expenditure reports for 2020, 2021, and 2022; June 26, 2020 city council minutes.

Evidence note: The availability of part-time officers, staffing experiences, and the account of what city officials communicated to Adam about budget overages and the later analysis reflect Adam’s firsthand account. The cited records do not independently verify those communications.