

Policing in Hartland Meeting Minutes Monday, July 24, 2023, 5:30 PM

Recorded by Christine Knippenberg

Committee Attendees:

Trace Tancreti, Mandi Potter, Tom Kennedy, Alan Beebe, Robyn Mosher (zoom), Christine Knippenberg (zoom), Lyndsie Perkins (zoom)

Public Attendees:

Chief Jennifer Frank, Windsor PD

Robert North, Sherry Clarke . Helen Esmond (zoom). Matthew Oscadel (zoom), Chuck Fenton (zoom), James Dow (zoom)

Public Comments-The following questions were asked:

1. Should the committee consider holding meetings elsewhere to possibly attract more people to attend?
2. Is there need for a constable?
3. What is Ratio of male to female officers in Windsor Police Department
4. Will minutes and the call data be available for public to view?

Chef Frank, Windsor Police Dept

Chief Frank provided a comprehensive orientation to the Windsor Police Department, types of training, school resource officer role, and the general trend of modern policing as she saw it.

- Department has 10 Officers, 2 PT, admin assistant, crossing guards. All have extensive training. Age range 19-50-60's. Time on force: 2 yr-35 years. Having a range of experience and ages a tangible asset to engage with community. Department 24/7, West Windsor through contract along with SRO's. Windsor will help other towns if an immediate need.
- Pillars of their policing philosophy:
 - Trust and legitimacy
 - Policy oversight
 - Training and education
 - "Relational policing:"—As a small community there are unique opportunities to create meaningful interactions and relationships that can lead to more community participation vs. individuals unwilling to call due to bad experiences with police.
- School Resource Officer: currently 1 fulltime SRO—Despite requests, not expanding avoid overstretching their resources and to preserve the value of the service. Relationships and consistency are essential. Important to proactively identify issues before they become a problem (e.g. truancy-to vandalism-to worse). Noticing changes in what might be happening at home due to familiarity with the student and routines. Proactive engagement with youth—drug education program, nursing, LEAD program—Law Enforcement Against Drugs—combines law enforcement and teachers. 3rd and 6th grade students as vulnerable ages with plan to expand. Most crisis calls for illicit substance, mental health or related. Hartland- very high use of officers. Issues: Truancy, emotional challenges (threats) that need to be addressed, not overlooked. Not a "response" program—focus is proactive –individual programming, teaching in classes, 1:1 around bullying or similar issues, setting up smaller environments to support struggling students (counseling, education, providing resources,

connecting with parents). Can help inform teachers of home/ community incidents that might impact a student in the school.

- Upcoming needs:
 - Infrastructure
 - Crisis Intervention Training: - levels 1 and 2, contracting with a liaison social work program, to better identify possible underlying issues that might have led to the call. Currently coordinates with HCRS, other agencies finding ways to solve underlying problems. Addressing these can increase compliance with laws. The importance of mental health and crisis response training.
- Difference between Level 1 and Level 2 training—
 - Level 1—court officers.?
 - Level 2—2 week training part time officers (in Windsor level 2 officer works with a level 3) limited in scope of response (may not always know fully until at the call)
 - Level 3—fulltime certified police officer (exception example: death investigation)
- Documentation load—difficult to estimate when thinking about allocating officer time. Paperwork may also change during times of the year (e.g. domestic assaults in winter, with large documentation burden).
- Traffic Control initiatives: Traffic control by environmental design (trees along road slow drivers, open roads result in faster speeds) Static Speed cart, mobile speed cart based on resident input. Mobile speed cart with changing locations is alerting and can be a better reminder than the static ones, have seen change in behaviors as a result. Spotlight speed monitoring in different locations. Use of social media posting where officers are checking— if people know, then they will be likely to go slower. Important at stops to add a conversation about purpose of specific speed limit, to gain understanding can pay long-term dividends. Other: Hash marks on State Street expanding loading zones and school, strategic placement of flower boxes at Butcher and Pantry to address speeding issues there.
- Difference between, state, local, and county police
 - All have statewide jurisdiction, allows flexibility and assistance to other towns— used example of multiple jurisdictions assisting with fires, is the same with policing and in the same “spirit. The levels determine what any officer can do.
 - VSP covers wide areas, as do county officers, but may not really get to know the community. Discussed the benefit of local police force where casual interactions can lead to more ease in later interactions that might otherwise be difficult or stressful. Officers can learn the style of different individuals (e.g. loud voice or way of acting that is really non-threatening). On the flip side, many more resources in state or county police; local force has to borrow or coordinate with other agencies.
 - Town Constable role in policing, usually Level 1-2. Handle ordinances (e.g. canine registration), motor vehicle issues (level dependent). If no Use of Force training, cannot respond to those calls. Constable answers to selectboard, not police chief.
- Transparency: all officers wear body cams—can serve as a way to highlight positive interactions as well as documentation for complaints. Helps with working through perception vs. reality—though there are limitations. Effective training tool for officers. Helpful to prosecutors and defendants.

- What should Hartland consider as we explore policing?_Community engagement essential. Broaden the discussion, get input from all the stakeholders, not just those who show up at a meeting. What does the community expect and want? Need a balance of rights and benefits, in order for community to value the importance of law enforcement. “What is an acceptable level of policing?” “What is an acceptable response time?” “What is the philosophy that people might want of their police officers?” “How do you want your officers to act/interact?” **Response time probably most important.**
- CALEA – Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement. Vermont Standards. State/National Accreditation programs for best practices and policies. Windsor uses Vermont programs to evaluate how they meet standards. Not all standards are applicable to each individual community. Standards can be used to update policies (sometimes very outdated) and to reflect changes in approach to policing (e.g. at motor vehicle stops, changes in how cars are approached for increased safety) as well as changes in the community and cultural climate over the years (e.g. gender issues) All standards inform Windsor’s Standard Operating Procedures.
- What is the cost for a Level 3 officer in Windsor? Salary + ½ for benefits. Salary range \$22-\$40. 80% budgets salary and benefits. Other costs: how dispatching is done, e.g. Hartford Police charge calls for service. Hanover PD flat fee, pay base amount + some portion. Other costs: police cars/ x number of officers. Much more expensive with only 1-2 officers. With VSP getting out of dispatching, there may be some grants for new systems. Other issues: poor cell service, and with loss of VSP support, officer safety is a large concern.
- Male-female: Windsor currently one- 12%, initiative goal to 30%
- Offers for a ride-alongs to experience Windsor policing

Call Review

Discussion and review of the various agencies and the type and number of calls between Hartford, Windsor, VSP, and Windsor County. Challenge to determine response times and who handled the responses. Of times that could be obtained long delays were worrisome. Back roads are another challenge to timely access. The 911 process—may be answered by a dispatcher in Hartford, other agency, New Hampshire, etc. The overall numbers of calls for Hartland is concerning. A discussion about whether Windsor policing philosophy is pretty typical of modern policing in the area.

Next Meeting August 14th.

Discussion regarding:

Response time

Community Policing

Proactive Policing

Reactive Policing

Number of police hours needed/wanted

Officer training levels

Mental Health Training & Collaboration with On Call Mental Health agency/professional

Traffic/Speed Carts