

## **I. Mar 21 2021: Recommendations:**

- A. Focus on retention of well-trained and well-performing staff.
  - 1. Increase pay rates from the current \$16.78 hourly rate
  - 2. Consider establishing the Chief position as a salaried position (not hourly), with potential to increase from half time to  $\frac{3}{4}$  or full time.
  - 3. Consider “leaning up” the rest of the department to create fewer jobs that are better paid and benefited jobs.
  - 4. Consider shared service agreement with nearby towns to cover evening/weekends (with reciprocity) to give officers a break.
- B. Evaluate the significant proposed increase in FY2022 police department budget in context of overall town government needs and budget request
- C. Explore overall administrative needs of police department in context of the town-wide administration needs.
- D. Evaluate the investment in needed police department capacity to provide traffic details outside of town.
- E. Continue the practice of a designated Selectboard liaison to the PoliceDepartment (and all departments).
- F. Actively engage with Representative Blais and Senator Hinds to advocate for a “right sized” application of POST to Plainfield, and for financial support to offset the anticipated costs for compliance.

## **II. April 22, 2022 Recommendations:**

- A. Safety: Ideas for ways to address speeding, without significantly increasing department personnel, include:
  - 1. Conduct a community engagement and awareness effort, using the Plainfield Post and social media, and consider asking residents to make a public commitment not to speed in Plainfield.

2. Use the existing mobile message boards recently purchased by the town with ARPA funding to spread messages that caution drivers about excessive speed.
3. Deploy mobile radar speed signs that notify drivers of their current speed as compared to the posted speed limit. These traffic calming devices are affordable and many area towns are using them to augment their limited patrol officer capacity.

#### B. Weekend Coverage

1. Clarify the expectations for the police chief position, a full time, salaried, management/supervisory position, that is exempt from overtime provisions of labor laws.
2. Ensure that the Select Board and the Chief are in alignment about expectations for work.
3. Adjust the Monday-Friday public office hours, and limit the hours for non-emergency business to two times a week for 2 or 3 hour blocks (one during day, one in the evening).
4. Vary the Monday-Friday 6 a.m. through 9 p.m. schedule to increase hours of coverage on Saturday and Sunday. Department funding continues to be an area of concern. Leadership from the Select Board is needed here.

#### C. Police logs and proactive communications need improvement.

1. Adopt a log format that meaningful information about the nature of call and the disposition the situation. (e.g.date/time/location/response/action).
2. Consider using the Plainfield Post or the “Everything Plainfield” social media Facebook page to provide periodic

updates on Plainfield police department activities beyond publication of the log.

3. Consider providing regular remote access to Select Board meetings and/or disseminating recordings of the Select Board meetings via the town website.
  4. Continue judicious use of the reverse 911 calling system (aka Blackboard Connect), as was recently done in context of an uptick in local area vehicle break-ins.
- D. Make it easy for community members to provide input about the department's activities.
1. Publish the chief's goals and objectives for the department.
  2. Host a periodic meet/greet where community members could speak with each other and directly with police department staff.
  3. Provide an online google form for residents to submit feedback.
  4. Post frequently asked questions (FAQS).
- E. Conduct an analysis of the police off-duty traffic detail..
1. Consider the true costs of this program, including labor performed by Plainfield police officers while on duty (scheduling this work, dealing with the paperwork) or off duty (oil-changes and vehicle maintenance); calculate all of the indirect costs of billing, collections for this work, and the costs of insurance, fuel, and vehicle depreciation that impact other town expense accounts.
  2. Make the revenues and expenses of this program completely transparent to townspeople.

F. The police department's technology adoption, usage and training needs improvement.

1. The Select Board must ensure that police department staff have the necessary skills and training to use the systems and software required of them so that department activities can be compliant and also transparent.
2. Evaluate the technology in use by the police department, and develop a financial, staffing and training plan to effectively harness its use and plan for future uses (and investments).

G. Provide a written plan for the department's compliance with POST, including a plan for each officer, the overall estimated costs for certifications/recertifications, and assumptions made about timing for the same.

H. Consider shared services as a precursor to more formal full department regionalization, starting with smaller, shorter term shared service agreements.

1. For example: within existing Plainfield town departments
  - a. The municipal hearings officer
  - b. Consolidating administrative functions to well qualified, technologically competent and better paid position(s) serving multiple departments
2. For example: between one or more area towns.
  - a. [Solving] late night and weekend coverage without increasing the Plainfield police budget substantially, by collaboration with neighboring towns.