

## **Police Study Group (PSG) – Thursday January 20, 2022 5:30 pm Virtual Meeting**

Attending members: Select Board members: Rita Farrell and Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil, Chair

Town Administrator ex-officio member: Becky Torres

Acting Chief, Shutesbury Police Dept (SPD): Kristin Burgess

Finance Committee member: Susie Mosher

Personnel Board member: Melody Chartier

Community at large members: Cheryl Hayden, Mary Jo Johnson, Mike Vinskey

General Public: Rachel Schwab-Rehorka, Tim Logan, Jeff Lacy, Brigid Murphy, April Stein

The meeting convened at 5:35 pm

Reviewed the agenda

Jeff Lacy requested a discussion of the letter he sent to the committee be on an agenda. It will be discussed at the Thursday meeting on 2/3/22.

Approved 1/6/22 minutes as amended.

A request that agenda items be more specific.

A review of the charge was suggested and scheduled for the 2/3/22 meeting.

Mail Direct has been sent the cover letter and survey. Two copies of each will be mailed out to 858 Shutesbury households. The cost has not yet been established. The town is using a private company in light of COVID limitations.

The committee reviewed police budgets from Pelham, Leverett, and Wendell to compare with Shutesbury's. Although the level of detail each town uses to list police department expenditures are not the same, using the data shown enabled a comparison of population, area covered, chief salaries, other officer expenses and the total bottom lines, which are consistently about 3-4% of total town budgets except Wendell, at 1.47%. Wendell has a budget of \$44K which is being paid to Leverett for recently contracted police department services. This interim agreement has yet to be finalized.

What do we hope the comparative budget data will show us? The hours of service, use of mutual aid, differences in community expectations and history all shape the police department in different towns. The data shows the budgets voted to meet their town's expectations. Annual Town Meeting (ATM) votes the police department budget annually. Our town survey will give us information on the expectations of Shutesbury residents. The Select Board will use our research to make recommendations to ATM concerning the police department structure in a warrant article in the future. Changes will require negotiations.

The Fire Department Study Committee designed a list of questions to interview each member of the current department. It was suggested that our committee use a similar tool to interview each member of the current SPD.

Tim Logan commended Kristin Burgess for her integrity and professionalism on the job and while participating on the PSG.

Next PSG meeting is Feb.3, 2022 @ 5:45. The agenda will include approval of 12/9 and 12/23 minutes, a review of our charge, Jeff Lacy's letter, a chart with more information on area police departments and New Salem's budget history specifically, and a review of the On Call model.

Meeting adjourned a 6:58 pm. Minutes drafted by Susie Mosher.

