

Public Hearing
September 15, 2016, 6:30 p.m.
Fuller Town Hall
Town Police Department

Selectmen Present: Ladd, Davis and Macdonald

Public Present: B. Blodgett, S. Zanes, W. Zanes, G. Routhier, W. Hurley, R. O'Meara, C. Stinson, D. Corbeil, M. Goulet, D. Hall, W. Hall, S. Walling, C. Goulet, J. Hakey, J. Hakey M. Brauer, L. Marcotte, T. Marcotte and J. Mardin (News & Sentinel).

Clayton Macdonald, Selectmen, called the Public Hearing on the Town's Police Department, to order at 6:40 pm.

Clayton thanked everyone in attendance and introduced Mike Lynch as the Moderator.

Mike said that everyone will need to follow the rules and there will be no repeats allowed.

Clayton presented his opening statement saying that his impression from the last Public Hearing was that the town would like their own Police Department and having a visible presence. Clayton went over some of the qualities everyone would like to see a town's Police Officer have. Clayton also said that the option of Contracting with the State Police seemed to not allow enough coverage for what everyone wanted, the part time Sworn Town Police Officer was the most likely option and the Community Service Officer was the least favored option.

Clayton presented the spreadsheet with the cost projections of each option.

Ginny Routhier- The State Police at 8 hrs. at their discretion.

Suzanne Goulet – The Town can put in a request for the hours we would like but if there is no one interested in working those hours we won't get anyone.

Dawn Hall - There are many different officers working and there is no consistency.

Lise Marcotte – Why is it necessary to know the officer?

Wayne Hall – It is a small town and everyone is closed to outsiders. It is best to be known to be trusted.

Michael Brauer – What is the pay rate for the State Police?

Clayton – It is \$85.00/hr. and it covers all equipment. The \$85.00 is for patrol time only, everything else is on them such as gas, cruiser, court time, etc.

Clayton – I am assuming the high end. It could be only \$79.00/hr.

Ben Blodgett – The charge for Court is not included?

Rachel O'Meara – Looking at the calls on this handout for the last two years there were 235 and 277 with only 42 being handled by the town's PD. The State Police are providing service anyway.

Ben – State took care of 90% of the calls.

Michael – Get the State Police, anything additional no cost to the town.

Charles – Can the State Police set aside 1 hour to work in the office downstairs to answer calls and questions/assistance?

Clayton – No.

Dawn – People are concerned about the response time if we rely on the State Police. It is not responsible to overburden the State Police.

Wayne – A couple of weeks ago the State Police were called and it took them 55 minutes to respond.

Ben – Response times compare to town's PD.

Dawn – We're not looking into the past but into the future.

Wayne – Part-time department you get part-time coverage.

Ben – We need to look to the past to fix the future.

Charles – There are only 4 State Police for a large area.

Clayton – We would have a State Police not on State Police Duty. They would actually be moonlighting to do Stratford.

Wayne – 36 hours volunteer time?

Clayton – Option #2 State Police Patrol/Community Service Officer. So, 8 hrs. for the State Police and 36 hrs. for the CSO, which would only be a presence, no arrests, just reporting.

Clayton – Option #3 State Police/Sworn Officer.

Michael – Subject to modification?

Clayton – Yes.

Michael – Former Contract \$13-\$15 and the new hire pay is \$22-\$24.

Clayton – The old rate was very low. Local towns /country, can't get police officers. We are going conservative so that there are no surprises down the road. It may take us quite a while to get someone. We are going a bit higher than what others are paying.

Clayton – Option #4 Our own PD with 2 Sworn Officers with a higher rate of pay.

Clayton – Option #5 Sending someone to the Police Academy. Cost of Labor, Mileage, Meals, etc. \$18,000.00.

Dawn – Option #3 you have different pay. Like Pittsburg....

Clayton – The table is completely open. A full-time officer is an option.

Michael - \$120,000.00 a year?

Clayton – No. Pittsburg has 1 full-time officer at \$60,000.00 with benefits and 4 part-time officers.

Michael – What are the maximum number of hours for a part-time officer to be full-time.

Clayton – 13 hundred.

Lise – Compare the population of Stratford to the population of Pittsburg.

Clayton/Mike – The Seasonal population in Pittsburg is significant.

Clayton – Option #6 Sworn Officer/CSO (to do paperwork and phone time to free up Police Officer) to save money.

Clayton – Option #7 No Police Department. Save \$62.00 a year on \$1,000.00 assessment.

Clayton – Option #8 Sworn Officer only On-Call.

Ben – There is an advantage to having an On-Call or have someone on patrol. The On-Call makes sense.

Dawn – People want coverage on trails and there will be none with On-Call.

Stewart – With ATV the town is limited. You can't have a CSO patrol trails.

Lise – I have seen the State Police in town. Have the State Police with On-Call Officer.

Clayton – That would not give us 24/7 coverage.

Public Discussion:

Wayne – Are these options for Town Meeting?

Clayton – It is to give us a direction to focus our efforts on now. It could lead to a Warrant Article. In 2014 there was a Warrant Article for the Police Department. We are looking for the best direction to go as quickly as possible.

Ginny – Could we do a hand vote? (nothing binding)

Option #1A – 7, Option #2 – 0, Modified Option #3 – 1, Option #4 – 2, Option #5 – 0. Option #6 – 0, Option #7 – 1, Option #8 – 1.

Stewart – Has anyone inquired about the number of calls between these two meetings?

Clayton – No.

Clayton – The taxes are different every year so this spreadsheet can change. There is nothing concrete.

Michael – The max is 20 hours. Can we increase the hours?

Clayton – That is comparable to what we were doing.

Charles – If there are complaints about the ATV's it should be up to the clubs.

Mike – If you talk to the clubs they will tell you that they pay money to the Fish and Game (who is doing minimal patrol). Nobody is doing anything.

Wayne – If we write a ticket on a town road we get \$33 of \$100.

Clayton – Anyone have any different ideas?

Stewart – If you have a speed limit they will always go faster.

Charles – On the news they say "Know your neighbor and be observant".

Macdonald adjourned the Public Hearing at 7:50 pm.

Recorded by B. Ladd