

Public Hearing
May 16, 2018, 6:00 p.m.
Fuller Town Hall
Police Department/State Police

Selectmen Present: Davis, Macdonald and Goulet

Public Present: William Hurley, Wayne Labatte, Wayne Hall, Dawn Hall, Ben Blodgett, Steve LaFrance, Ginny Routhier, Marcel Goulet, Thomas Whelan, Dan Fuller, Ted Burns, Bruce Blodgett, Joyce Dunlap, Jack Dunlap, Bill Zanes, Chuck Stinson, Vicki DeLalla, Chris Caron, Bob Eich, Tom Marcotte and Suzanne Goulet

Clayton Macdonald called the Public Hearing to order at 6:00 pm.

Clayton said that this is the third PH for the Police Department. There were two PH in 2016 which lead the Board to go with limited coverage from State Police. At Town Meeting the subject of the Police Department came up again so the Board decided to hold another PH to get a feel of what the Town would like now. At the first PH the general discussion was slightly in favor of having its own PD and the second PH the general discussion was in favor of State Police Coverage. The Board at that time decided to go with State Police with advertisements for a part-time Police Officer for Stratford with few results. It is not easy to find a part-time Police Officer even with a pay raise by the town.

Clayton also said that currently we are averaging a cost of \$800.00/month to have State Police for 4 hrs./week. In 2017, from April to December, State Police cost the town \$6,047.90 for 4 hrs./week and so far in 2018 it has cost the town \$3,942.54. State Police do not cover Civil, ATV's and Animals.

Clayton said that the town still has all of the equipment from the PD. Some equipment is getting old like the bullet proof vests, radios (with software no longer supported) and the cruiser that is 10 yrs. old. The Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund has \$10,000.00 presently with another \$5,000.00 to go into it for a total of \$15,000.00.

Clayton commented on the Research done of other surrounding towns' PD Budgets.

Clayton opened the floor up to Public Discussion.

Dan Fuller asked the Board to explain Option 1 of the handout obtaining to State Police.

Ginny asked if we have to pay State Police if they work the 4 hrs. or not and the answer was no. Then maybe we should go with 8 hrs.

Thomas asked if State Police come for domestic? He was told they come for domestic but not civil.

Ted said that he has never been happy with the police presence in town. He wants to know what we are getting for our money. We don't need radar on Rt. 3. Not happy with what we are getting.

Dan said that State Police are in the Hollow 3-4 times a week.

Clayton said that Jan.-Apr. 2018 there have been 41 calls during scheduled Patrol and 204 calls while on-call.

Charles said that there is a concern about no coverage for the Fire Department when they get called out until State Police can get there.

Clayton said that sometimes it is 45+ minutes before State Police arrive.

Steve asked what a Community Service Officer was?

Dawn asked about the concern of coverage on ATV trails. Ted said that if there are more people there are more problems, noise is the biggest offense and it is really a people problem. Fish & Game is supposed to patrol but they are not doing much patrolling.

Steve said that his opinion is to not pay police to patrol ATV Trails. He said that he does not support contracting with the State Police, they are here already and when there is a problem they don't show up. We pay Federal, County and State Taxes.

Ted said that its going to be hard to find a Police Officer when everyone is sue happy.

Chris said that he would like to keep the 4 hrs. with State Police and that it can prevent things from happening.

Bruce asked the Board what they were in favor of?

Bob said that he goes with Steve, no police.

Bill asked, with some of these proposed projects, won't that have an impact on the town? Clayton said that we do not know what these proposals are and we need to keep that in the back of our minds.

Ted said that there are 30 trail patrols watching out.

The Opinion Poll Results were in favor of State Police and a close second to No Police with very few results for Town Police.

Clayton Macdonald adjourned the Public Hearing at 7:10 pm.

Recorded by B. Ladd