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Executive Summary

The Norwich Police Services Committee (NPSC or the Committee) recommends to the Selectboard the reduction of the number of officers in the Norwich Police Department (NPD) from five to four full time officers with the possibility of enlarging the force to five in the future. The Committee, although not asked to consider the question, supports the retention of Doug Robinson as Chief.

The number of officers, however, never seemed as important to the Committee as the attitude of the police toward the residents of Norwich and, as we eventually learned, the attitude of the residents toward their police force. With that in mind the Committee recommends the following:

- (1) A re-orientation of the NPD toward an emphasis on Community Policing. This will require:
 - a. enactment by the NPD of policies, promulgated by the Selectboard, on issues of actual concern to residents;
 - b. ongoing education in the form of courses, learning what Norwich residents want and require from the NPD but not, at this time, CALEA certification;
 - c. greater positive visibility for the NPD in the form of youth and community involvement, foot or bicycle patrols and informational forums on police related issues;
 - d. increased transparency manifest in an effort, on the part of individual officers, to explain, without arrogance, their actions during arrests or traffic stops and, on the part of the NPD, to make general policies—such as the use of traffic warnings rather than tickets, or the existence of truck scales—known to town residents.
 - e. adoption and dissemination to town residents of a Norwich Police Department Mission Statement consistent with Community Policing.

- (2) A recognition, on the part of both the NPD and the residents of Norwich, of the attitudinal problem that is the basis of the ongoing friction between the NPD and the residents; to wit, it will be necessary for the Selectboard to take an active role in

bringing both residents and officers together to achieve mutual respect.

- (3) The establishment of a vehicle to serve as an intermediary between the police department and residents with a grievance.
- (4) The freedom of the Police Chief to run his department without micromanagement from the Town Manager or the Selectboard.
- (5) The freedom of the Police Chief to establish hours of patrol coverage consistent with manpower available from four officers, actual crime statistics in Norwich and scheduling circumstances of which the Police Chief is aware.
- (6) Clear communications between the Selectboard, as the setters of policy, and the NPD, as the implementers of those policies.
- (7) Ongoing accountability of the Selectboard for progress made toward the implementation of the recommendations made in this Report.

II. Report

A. Methods.

1. Meetings. The Committee met weekly from April 27, 2007, until mid-August when it began to meet every other week. The meetings allowed for reports of subcommittees, interviewers and input from Chief of the NPD, Doug Robinson. They also provided an ongoing opportunity for Committee members to air concerns, raise issues brought to individual members by town residents and to mull over ideas together.

2. Data Gathering.

a. Interviews. Committee members, singly or in pairs, interviewed individuals identified by the NPSC as having information potentially useful to our task. (See Appendix C.) Interviewers reported the content of their meetings with subjects to the Committee and, in some cases, provided a written report of the interview. All interviews were discussed at Committee meetings and, occasionally, subjects were contacted again with follow up questions.

The one interview that did not conform to this model was the presentation by Chief Steve McQueen of the Winooski Police Department. Several sources identified Chief McQueen, as the Vermont's expert on Community Policing. He came to Norwich and attended one of our meetings during which we asked him the questions we had about how to implement changes in the behavior of the NPD and Norwich residents consistent with the Community Policing model.

b. The Forum. At the suggestion of the Selectboard, the Committee held, on June 23, 2007, a Forum to which all Norwich residents were invited. The gathering, moderated by Cotton Cleveland, gave Norwich residents an opportunity to divide up into small groups and discuss their concerns about the status of policing in Norwich, come back to the larger group and offer suggestions for improvement, many of which are either incorporated into this Report or formed the basis for additional exploration by the NPSC. The Forum was also the first opportunity for most Norwich residents to learn about the NPSC; this visibility encouraged residents to contact Committee members, attend the Listening Post sessions and fill out the Survey form

sent along with the invitation to the Forum. (See Appendix D.2 for comments from small groups.)

c. The Survey. In mid-June copies of the Survey were sent to all Norwich households (and made available on the internet), inviting residents to respond to four questions addressing size of the force, the amount of police coverage desired, relations between the NPD and Norwich residents and changes sought. The Committee received 205 completed Surveys whose analyzed contents are attached to this report as Appendix E.

d. Listening Posts. A subcommittee of the NPSC created five evening opportunities at the Norwich Historical Society, dubbed "Listening Posts," for residents to come speak confidentially to members of the NPSC. The listeners also made themselves available to go to homes and offices to hear concerns and anecdotes and to receive written or e-mail communications. A total of 55 residents made use of these occasions to let the Committee know what was on their minds. A synthesis of the information received in this way is attached to this report as Appendix F.

3. Reaching conclusions. The Committee set a goal of reaching consensus on the issues that concerned us most; while we did not necessarily achieve total unanimity on each point, our differences within the group were not significant enough to prevent us from presenting this report from the Committee as a whole.

B. Findings and Recommendation

1. Hierarchy. There was copious evidence from the Listening Posts, Survey responses, Forum, individual interviews and within the Committee that town residents voted down the appropriation for the operating expenses of the Police Department and voted for a reduction in the number of police officers from five to four in an effort to get the attention of the Selectboard and to voice dissatisfaction with policing in Norwich. One of the primary complaints, but one that initially was lost in the morass of speeding tickets, truck scales and attitudinal issues, is the relationship among the Selectboard, Town Manager and Police Chief.

The NPSC found it impossible to move forward with our charge without a thorough understanding of the statutory relationships among these three

entities. To that end the Committee spoke to Chief Steve McQueen of the Winooski Police Department, Jim Barlow of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, and Norwich Selectboard Chairman Ed Childs as well as consulting the Vermont Statutes on point. (See relevant statutes included in Appendix C.10, Interview with Jim Barlow.)

The law (and opinions we found on it from those mentioned above) is very clear. In a town such as Norwich, with the town manager form of government, the selectboard establishes policy and appoints the town manager. The town manager is accountable to the selectboard, is an employee of the selectboard and is responsible for the day-to-day running and administration of the town. The police chief is appointed by the town manager, is accountable to the town manager for financial and human resources-type issues (e.g. vacation days, salary) but has a tremendous amount of autonomy in running the police department.

There needs, therefore, to be a conspicuous separation of responsibility of the Police Chief from the Town Manager, especially given the present Town Manager's former position as Police Chief. There is, currently, a widely held perception that the present Town Manager is still in charge of the Police Department. Without debating the merits of that allegation, the perception is unfair to the current Chief. The competency of the present Police Chief needs to be assessed on those issues arising, or being continued, under his watch not under that of his predecessor.

There is, in addition, no sign that the Selectboard is setting the policy that is enacted by the Police Department. There is a perception that individual Selectboard members are in close contact with the current Town Manager and are leaving to him the determination of policy questions for the Police Department. Once again, the Committee's concern is less over the reality of the relationship between the Selectboard and the Town manager than it is over the perception that the Selectboard has abdicated its responsibility to another entity.

(It is beyond the scope of this report to address the question of how Norwich residents feel about the competence, attitude or accessibility of the present Town Manager. The comments about the relationship between town manager and selectboard are, for purposes of this report, generic.)

We, therefore, recommend that the Selectboard, with input from Norwich residents, establish general policies, to be enacted by the Police Department, on topics such as enforcement of traffic and trucking laws, treatment of juveniles by the Department, visibility of officers, forums on police related issues and, public announcement of changes in police policy. The NPSC, in the course of this report, has made many suggestions for such policies and urge that the Selectboard establish a vehicle for ongoing discovery of information on this subject from town residents.

Many members of the NPSC as well as town residents suggested the implementation of an ombudsperson or grievance committee to address those questions for which there is not a satisfactory answer found between the Police Department and an individual town resident or group of residents (e.g. the Kendall Station Road neighborhood which feels that the police are not always responsive to the problems created by a difficult family living in the neighborhood.) There are serious legal impediments to the formation of such a committee. (See interview with Dominick Cloud included in Appendix C.11.) The Selectboard could, however, appoint an advisory committee to serve as a sounding board, help advise the Police Chief and Selectboard, and thoroughly vet questions of public safety in the same way the existing Planning Commission examines issues of land use. Brattleboro and Hinesburg both have such public safety committees in place.

2. Current Policing in Norwich. The present problem with policing in Norwich is not "a few angry Norwich residents." There are many very angry townspeople who feel their concerns are not being heard by the Selectboard and believe that they are being treated disrespectfully by police officers paid with the tax dollars of Norwich residents. There are also many people in Norwich who report being perfectly happy with the job the NPD is doing. (See Appendix D.2. and Appendix E. for comments representing each position.) The Police Chief, and by extension the Police Department, needs clear policy statements from the Selectboard, supervision and feedback from the Selectboard.

The Department needs as well to take seriously complaints by Norwich residents of arrogant, insulting, belittling and belligerent behavior on the part of officers. In our interview with Chief Robinson he defended a former

officer as "an excellent officer and first rate investigator who has a strange sense of humor which sometimes offends people." This description begs the question of what to do with those offended people; they are tax paying Norwich residents who, because they do not know the rest of the officer's allegedly fine qualities, are left with a residue of what comes across as arrogance and condescension not "a strange sense of humor."

Chief Robinson further stated that "95% of people who come to the Police Department to complain over a ticket or other issue, including the attitude of officers, leave satisfied or at least understanding why the ticket was given or why the officer behaved as he did." Complainants are given the opportunity to view video tapes of traffic stops and to discuss what transpired in their encounter with a NPD officer. What this does not address are those whose interaction with an NPD officer left them feeling that there was no point in going to the Police Station to discuss their experience, not an unexpected reaction on the part of someone feeling insulted, belittled or demeaned by belligerent or arrogant behavior.

There continue, as well, to be a number of truckers and tractor drivers who feel that they are being harassed by the NPD. The truckers' complaints arise not only from issues emanating from the scales but from stops allegedly for permits and registration, seen by truck drivers as opportunities for Police Officers to slow down the truckers' progress through Town. (See Appendix F.)

Counterbalancing these complaints are reports of sensitivity on the part of the police (see section II.B.3.), various positive interactions with the Community (see section II. B.3.) and the admission of past errors such as the imposition of the truck scales without notice. (See section II.B.4.)

3. Community Policing. The Committee recommends the adoption of the Community Policing model for Norwich. Compared to the traditional "enforcement model" (the one with which Norwich is living and with which there is strenuous disagreement from town residents), the Community Policing model puts the stated needs of town residents above a myopic concern with the enforcement of laws. This does not suggest a policy of lawlessness but rather an interest in discovering the priorities of town residents and having police behavior concentrate on enactment of those

desires *within the requirements of the statutes*. For example, there might be two (or more) equally effective ways to remind drivers to maintain a speed not over 25 miles per hour as they enter Norwich. If residents prefer radar signs indicating the speed at which their vehicle is traveling rather than a police cruiser waiting to pounce, and both can be shown to reduce excessive speed, Community Policing would suggest that the method preferred by the community should be the one applied.

Police behavior under the Community Policing model would include increased consistency, another theme mentioned repeatedly by respondents. If one driver, exceeding the speed limit by seven miles per hour is served with a warning by a detaining officer, the next driver, behaving similarly (and without extenuating circumstances like previous warnings or a belligerent attitude) ought to be treated in the same way: given a warning. Similarly, the police need to be aware that their demeanor in making a traffic stop needs to be consistent: a full explanation of the purpose of the stop has a very different effect on the speeder than a wordless stop in which the driver is given a ticket with virtually no explanation. And, to beat this drum one more time, the police need to be made aware through training, of the different reactions two individuals might have to two very similar traffic stops: one officer, uttering exactly the same words in the same tone of voice may strike two different speeders completely differently. We note the need for officers to be sensitive in their dealings with town residents and recommend training to that end. (See this section below.)

Part of Community Policing is the recognition of the police officers as part of the community. Respect and support need to go both ways: the police toward the residents *and* residents toward their police force. Among the goals of increased visibility (see this section below) and improved communication between residents and the police (see section II.B.4.) is an improved respect and support of Norwich residents for the NPD. (Suggestions for achieving those goals are noted at those locations in The Report.)

While the Committee is well aware that respect and support must go both ways, the fact is that the PD has the power to stop citizens, interrogate them, influence the view of children toward police authority and that those uses of power must be applied judiciously. The policy underlying how that

power is used needs to be established by the Selectboard and made clear to the Police Department and Norwich residents.

All opportunities to report to the NPSC included comments on the attitude of the NPD. Comments were diverse: there was support for the solicitousness shown the Holley family when their son disappeared, there was gratitude for the presence of an officer who sat with a grieving spouse after a death. But, unfortunately, for as many comments as there were on the kindness of individual officers, there were counterbalancing offenses of arrogance and insensitivity: a traffic stop in which there was no verbal explanation of the infraction (no verbal comment at all, in fact), and seemingly endless stories of trucks being harassed for what appeared to be inconsequential infractions (like the exact location of a diesel tax permit on the truck) or the amount of time taken to question the driver when it was clear that for that driver time is money.

Critical to the Community Policing model is an increased visibility of police officers. Often noted in the data gathered by the NPSC is the value of officers serving as crossing guards for Marion Cross School children and, although somewhat controversial, the house checks. (Chief Robinson has assured the NPSC that the house checks do not unduly burden officers already on patrol and, hence, are not adding to the cost of policing in Norwich. Furthermore, it is a practice very common in Vermont towns.) The Committee recommends that police serve as crossing guards at least some of the time and that house checks continue.

Additional opportunities for visibility are foot or bicycle patrols in the business area of town, forums on police related issues (see section II.B.4.) and a variety of activities that put the police in contact with all ages of town residents. For elementary school age children continuation of the bike safety program, Kids and Cops program and the presence of an officer at Marion Cross School on request are encouraged by town residents and the NPSC. (The Committee is very aware of the considerable expertise of the Police Chief as an ambassador from the NPD to schools and is grateful for it.) For adolescents, continuing participation in the Hanover High School Student Council, teaching a course at HHS and presence at sports events and driver education programs would be helpful.

In order for the NPD to become proficient in Community Policing they will need additional information and instruction. Although some of the skills cross over from the enforcement model, and although some officers may have already received some training in Community Policing, we strongly recommend that the Selectboard establish a policy implementing Community Policing as the model for Norwich. This policy will include instructing Police Chief Robinson to avail himself and his officers of courses in and workshops in sensitivity training, improving communication skills, and working together with town residents to set priorities for policing priorities in Norwich.

The NPSC is aware that many respondents to the Survey (see Appendix E), as well as commentators at the Forum (see Appendix D.2.) and the Listening Posts (see Appendix F) favored 24 hours per day, seven days per week coverage. The Committee, however, after studying carefully actual crime statistics in Norwich (by type and hour), concluded that fully comprehensive coverage is not necessary at this time. Consistent with Community Policing, it will be the task of the Police Chief to determine the exact hours and manpower extent of coverage needed, given both his perceived needs for safety and the community's need and desire for police protection. It will be an educational task for the NPD to explain to Norwich residents the extent of the coverage established given existing opportunities and constraints.

And, finally, the adoption by the Norwich Police Department of a Mission Statement consistent with Community Policing values is essential. (See Appendix G.) The Mission Statement needs to be embraced by the NPD, introduced to the Community by the Department, and discussed and understood by town residents.

4. Transparency. There is a critical need in Norwich for a sense of honesty and open communication among residents, the Selectboard, Town Manager and the Police Department. In all phases of our data gathering we encountered words like collusion to describe the interaction among these various entities. Nowhere is it more important than in policing to make residents comfortable in the knowledge that they understand what is transpiring. If, for example, it is necessary for an adolescent to be arrested for failure to pay a fine and the police appear at his parents' house to arrest him, it is very important that the police make it clear that a bench warrant was issued by the court for that arrest and the police have no choice but to

serve it immediately. And if the parent of that child rises at Town Meeting to relate that story without the detail that the hands of the police were tied, someone needs to make that clear. There is simply an enormous amount of fiction about the NPD and what they do; and much of it could be counteracted with explanations from the Police Department. If additional information had been dispensed by the police, either at the time of the attempted arrest or at Town Meeting, greater clarity would have been achieved.

Similarly, there is a sense that the Town Manager is still running the Police Department. That clearly should not be the case. Much can be done to offset that perception by making it clear that the Chief is in charge. He could, for instance, host a series of forums on police related issues such as traffic, crime in Norwich, self-defense, bicycle safety (for adults as well as children), pedestrian safety in a town which is, in places, without sidewalks—the list is endless. Gatherings like these would convey important information to town residents as well as giving them the opportunity to know more about the roles and responsibilities of their police officers. Consistent with the model of Community Policing, it provides a chance for the NPD to learn what is important to town residents. This creates an environment in which information is exchanged, opportunities for respect and support are created and an understanding of the community on which Community Policing is based is appreciated.

Information also needs to be conveyed by the public announcement of changes in policy. When, for example, the town was going to purchase and begin using truck scales, the Chief, as he now acknowledges, needed to inform those using the roads of that fact. If tickets are going to be given for some infractions (or levels of infraction) but warnings given for others, people need to be made aware. This, together with information dispensed at the time of an interaction with the police (e.g. a traffic stop), dispels the perception of arbitrariness that currently abound.

One important way to avoid that sense of capriciousness, to encourage transparency and to keep all parties focused on that goal, is for the Norwich Police Department to have a working Mission Statement, copies of which would be sent to all Norwich residents. Several members of the NPSC have expressed an interest in the importance and elements of such a document

and would be available to help in its drafting. (For sample Mission Statement see Appendix G.)

5. Police housing incentive. The NPSC recommends that police officers receive a bonus to live in Norwich. Supporting the proposal is a sense that officers would become more a part of the community if they lived in town, if their children attended school here and if they, and their families, became a part of what happens here. Given the price of housing in town, and given what police officers are paid, prospects for their being able to live in Norwich are not good and the bonus would be a way partially to offset the problem and to encourage them to live here.

6. Selectboard accountability. Ultimately responsibility for the policies available to the Norwich Police Department to keep Norwich safe and to make it a comfortable community rests with the Selectboard and the State. The NPSC has set forth in this Report its suggestions for ascertaining what the town-mandated policies should be, for the institution of a policing model that will facilitate their enforcement, and for encouraging the police force and town residents to share and recognize their responsibilities for supporting and respecting each other. This cannot be accomplished without the oversight and awareness of a Selectboard willing to acknowledge community needs vis-à-vis police issues and willing to establish policies consistent with community needs. The Committee has welcomed the occasion to create this Report and to bring its ideas to the Selectboard; now we look forward to the opportunity to ensure that its recommendations are considered seriously. We strongly suggest that the NPSC meet with the Selectboard on October 24, 2007, after the Selectboard has had the opportunity to read this Report, and then at intervals of three months, over the course of the next year to insure progress and a continuing dialogue on the issues raised in this Report.

The Norwich Police Services Committee would like to thank the Selectboard for taking the issue of policing seriously and appointing the NPSC; the many Norwich residents who participated in the Forum, responded to the Survey, communicated with us through the Listening Posts or stopped us on the street to convey their concerns; and Chief Doug Robinson who answered our questions, made his Department available to us and encouraged our suggestions on how the Norwich Police Department might be improved.

Appendix A: The Charge

Charge for Committee on Police Services

Town Meeting on March 6, 2007 voted to "advise the Selectboard to consider a reduction of the Norwich Police Department from five officers to four officers recognizing that such a reduction will likely result in a reduction in the level of services and hours of coverage provided by that Department." It was clear from this vote and discussions at pre-town meeting that the community has concerns about the size and operations of the Police Department and the approach the Police Department takes in providing law enforcement services to Norwich. At pre-town meeting, the Selectboard made a commitment to hold a community forum on police services. This forum, or forums, is a first step and not the only step in arriving at town-wide consensus on the functions of the Norwich Police Department.

As a first step, the committee will assist the Selectboard and a facilitator in conducting a community forum or series of forums that will:

- Identify problems with the current operations of the Police Department.
- Examine the origination and resolution of friction points between Police Department staff and members of the community.
- Identify proposed initial solutions to the identified problems.
- Propose an action plan, for review by the Selectboard, with performance measures to implement the initial solutions.
- Develop recommendations to the Selectboard on a plan of study that will define additional studies that should be undertaken by the committee to develop a town-wide consensus on Norwich law enforcement services.

The committee will structure its additional studies based on outcomes of the forums and the plan of study as approved by the Selectboard, and will develop a database from a viable comparative base of demographically similar communities that supports its conclusions and recommendations.

In assisting with the community forums and in conducting additional studies, the committee should review the pertinent information and opinions of Norwich and similar communities; consider the report of the Law Enforcement Survey Committee dated September 2000; consider the report on the Police Department by the Norwich Finance Committee of July 12, 2005; interview the Town Manager, Department Heads, other elected officers, employees of the Town and as many citizens as wish to be heard; consider criteria that can be used to determine adequate staffing levels for the department; and report its findings and recommendations as to size, operations, services and general approach of the Norwich Police Department. In addition to the items mentioned above, these additional studies may include a review of:

- Community Needs
- Community Expectations
- Distribution of Calls for Service by Time of Day
- Distribution of Calls for Service by Type of Call

- **Distribution of Response Times by Time of Day**
- **Distribution of Response Times by Type of Call**
- **Standards for Response Times by Type of Call**

As an outcome of this process, the Selectboard would like to have a more community-oriented Police Department with a philosophy, management style, and organizational strategy that promotes problem solving and police-community partnerships to deal with law enforcement problems and address other community issues. This would include:

- **Promoting the safety of the public and police officers;**
- **Responding to emergency and nonemergency demands of Norwich residents and businesses in a timely manner;**
- **Conducting prevention and other patrol tasks effectively using a community-oriented policing approach;**
- **Allowing officers to meet all administrative requirements satisfactorily, including report writing, training, and court attendance.**

The recommendations should be made in the form of a committee report to the Selectboard and should include recommendations on the hours of patrol coverage by day of week, the number of officers needed to provide this coverage and organizational structure needed to support the provision of police services to Norwich residents and businesses. The final report of the Committee on Police Services should be ready for presentation to the Selectboard by October 10, 2007.

Appendix B: NPSC Members

Norwich Police Services Committee members:

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Appendix C: Interviews

1. Chief Doug Robinson I
2. Chief Nick Giaccone
3. Chief Byron Kelly
4. Former Chief Gary Watson
5. Chief Doug Robinson II
6. Chief Jim Lanctot
7. Sergeant Mike McGee
8. Officer Phil Brunelle
9. Geoffrey Vitt
10. Attorney Jim Barlow
11. Attorney Dominick Cloud

Notes from interview of Chief Doug Robinson, May 28, 2007
By Alison Lauter and Ned Redpath

Attached is a list of questions we tried to focus on. We did get to many of them but time went by, certain questions took far longer than expected thus several were not even brought up.

The interview took place in Doug's office, no one else was present though one officer did stop by "in civilian clothes" but departed immediately once he knew what was going on.

- 1) We discussed who was on the force as of the date of the interview and where they lived. It was Doug's opinion that living in the town of Norwich would not make a difference in the service given or involvement made by any and all officers. At this time only one officer lives in Norwich while others live in White River (2) and one in Windsor.
- 2) Discussed the "scale incident" and Doug immediately took total blame for this situation getting totally blown out of proportion. He felt that he had let it get well beyond normal control and was taking steps to correct present policy in order to make future situations better for all parties involved. Doug felt that there should always be a grace period prior to full enforcement of new laws and regulations which would allow the town's people to adjust to the coming change. Doug also mentioned that there is a state statute that requires the police department no more than 30 minutes to place a truck on the scale if it is being considered as overweight.
- 3) Discussed the "snow ball incident" and Doug categorically disagreed with the media rendition, stating that the handling of the situation by the police officer involved was well done and under standard policy procedure. Doug stated that the entire episode was a "five minute situation".
- 4) Discussed the "George Argument" and, once again, Doug's perception was far different than George's. Doug felt he never raised his voice and that the discussion was relatively normal.
- 5) We then asked the question of "how did present problems get to where they are now". Doug felt that personnel turnover played a major role and that the police officers did not get out as "people" talking to the citizens thus those people began looking at the police forces as "there goes the cops" instead of thinking "there goes Doug, or Kim or Phil". Due to a shortage of officers everyone was spending far too much time on patrol and not creating relationships. As this situation

continued to developed there was a wider difference between the police force and the population of Norwich.

- 6) Discussed "Property Checks" and Doug mentioned they are completed as a part of a normal tour of duty, do not take very long and are a way for the police force to help the community.
- 7) Discussed Steve Soars regarding management, etc. Doug felt that Town Manager Soars did over manage initially but less so now. Doug stated that he did not feel the Town Manager was a micro manager. Doug emphatically stated that the Town Manager does not run the police force that he, Doug, does.
- 8) Discussed the "chain of command" and Doug said that he answers directly to the Town Manager (Soars) but that he can go directly to the Select Board.
- 9) At the end of our two hour interview we asked Doug what were some of the changes he would like to see. The first was to let the public know immediately about changes in policy, rules and regulations well before they took effect, like maybe six months at least. He also would like to see more "walk & talk" foot patrols around the village and, finally, he felt that all officers should get out of the office more often and become more involved with the community in general. He would like his officers to be considered "people" and not just another police officer to be afraid of.

Submitted by Alison Lauter & Ned Redpath

Interview with Hanover Police Chief Nick Giaconne on August 23, 07

Terry Lyons and Sarah Reeves

Chief Giaconne invited us in and listened attentively, as we described what our committee was about and the purpose of the interview. He has been Chief in Hanover for about 35 years. Chief Giaconne does not live in Hanover, but nearby.

We asked him first about community policing--the relation of the police to the community. He responded by referring to their department's mission statement and then talking about 1) stopping drivers for traffic violations, 2) relations with teen-agers, and 3) the way the department handles citizen's complaints.

The mission is:

to "provide professional and compassionate police service through partnerships that build trust, reduce crime, create a safe environment and enhance the quality of life in our community. To fulfill this mission we will have an uncompromising insistence on quality people who believe in the following core values: Integrity, Respect, Fairness, and Excellence.

1) Traffic violations: Only 15 to 20 % of motor vehicle stops end in tickets in Hanover. Hanover police have an extensive system of warnings. The public generally assumes a 15 mph grace area above the speed limit, which the police usually observe, and give tickets for violations that are unreasonable, imprudent and dangerous under the driving conditions. There is not monetary pressure to give a lot of tickets. In New Hampshire, unlike Vermont, ticket money goes to the state, not the town. A certain percentage goes to Police Training. DUI's are hard to observe because of the terrain (they have mostly small, winding roads and no Interstate under their domain.) (For more information re procedures with traffic stops, see Recruitment and Training below.)

2) Regarding teenagers. Sometimes the police have had brushes with parents, who think the police are overzealous. Often the officers don't like to feel they are being duped, so they run a tightrope between being trying to reasonable and overzealous.

3) Handling citizens' complaints: Hanover Police Department handles complaints itself. The Chief monitors police behavior and people's complaints. When a complaint comes in, the on-duty supervisor has the option of talking to the complainant. The supervisor is the highest ranking officer on duty, often a sergeant who is in charge of a team of officers. In this way there is some buffer or insulation, between the officers on patrol and the citizens. Usually the complaints are regarding minor things. If there is a pattern of complaints of overly aggressive behavior against a certain officer, he/she can be switched to another shift and the chief can monitor his/her performance. Sometimes he finds that an officer is not aggressive but has a manner or a look in his eye that sets people off, and there are complaints about him. Sometimes they have an officer who gives a lot of tickets, but has a smooth, non-aggressive manner and does not get complaints. It's the chief's responsibility to deal with the situation; not to tell the officer when something is trivial, but to address problems as needed.

Later in the interview, he described police work.

Police work: Officers on duty:

Officers on patrol do a walk through of all the banks. They have parking places in town so they can get out of the car and walk the streets; they are encouraged to do so. They do crossing guard duty at the Richmond School and teach High School students how to be crossing guards. One officer, Lt. Patrick O'Neill, sits on the Student Council of the High School. He is involved with the senior class in a behavioral science class and takes the students on a road trip to the County Jail.

In New Hampshire the State Police does the weight enforcement. Chief Giaccone has seen fines of up to \$1,200. He has never seen a \$12,000 fine. The Hanover Police does Motor Vehicle Unclocks and House Checks once a week when requested (with no charge). They also do fingerprinting for a charge of \$20 for out-of-towners, no charge for in town. When requested by parents, they also do House Checks, when kids are at home and parents out-of-town (for parties), although the parents need to know that their own children might be arrested if caught.

Uniform: The chief is usually not in uniform. Officers wear dark blue shirts and gray slacks with a stripe on the side; in the summer, they have the option of wearing shorts and a polo shirt and baseball cap. They always wear bullet resistant vests, which can be hot in summer.

We also learned about other topics:

Structure: Hanover has teams with a Sergeant and approximately 3 officers each. If they work the night shift, they work 4 days with 3 days off. If they work days, they work 5 days with 2 days off. They can also earn over-time and do specific duty times. The sergeants choose a shift, and the shifts last for 3 months--the teams have to move after 2 (3 month) periods. Police Unions require that shifts be selected by seniority, which the department does, yet by requiring a switch after 2 periods, no one team is required to be on the night shift constantly.

Recruiting and training:

When the department advertises for a position, they generally have fewer applicants than a decade ago; it may be between 15-20, rather than over 100, perhaps because of the relatively low salary. Where do new applicants come from? They are generally new to the area, One recently hired was from southern New Hampshire with a criminal justice degree; another was the former manager of Jesse's Restaurant. They have a couple of officers who live in town, but most don't because of the expenses in the Town of Hanover.

A board of 4-5 people interviews the candidates individually, firing questions for 20 -30 minutes, evaluating the person's character and thinking process. It then recommends about 3 to the chief, who makes a conditional offer to the candidate of his choice. It is conditional, pending 1) a background check, 2) a psychological test, one on one with a

psychiatrist, 3) a physical test, and a polygraph truth detector for 2 1/2 hrs. of questioning (where they go through your whole life).

The person is then trained in Hanover's Field Training Program and at the Police Academy. The Field Training Program (FTO) is 6 months of working with an experienced Sergeant or officer. Good aggressive officers with no complaints from the public are chosen to teach new recruits. Those teaching may be quiet or talkative. If recruits have a rough-around-the edges personality, the chief will be careful to place him with a more easy going, calm officer.

In the FTO Program recruits get accustomed to the way Hanover does things, re communicating, the use of computers and dispatch. It might include attitude as well as rules, regulations, and how-tos. They learn things like motor vehicle work, how to make a stop, and how to get things done. One of the things they might learn is that the officer should know whether or not he is going to give a warning or a ticket, before leaving the patrol car (contingent on background checks.) (This should not be something that he can be talked into or out of).

The recruits go to the Police Academy before, during or after this FTO training, depending on the schedule of the Academy, and the time they were hired. Training there takes about a year. If the person has been on the Police Force of another State or Town, they can take the courses that they need without taking the entire training.

Upon completing the training, the person is given a 6 mos. probationary offer of employment, which can be extended another 3.

Relation to town governance: Structure.

The Town Manager, who hires all Department Heads, is Chief Giaconne's immediate boss. However, the Town Manager cannot be involved in the decision making process regarding the enforcement of the law. She handles financial issues and budget. Chief Giaconne's ultimate boss regarding policework is the New Hampshire Attorney General.

Coverage: The Department covers the Town 24/7 and holidays. They have approximately 18 or 19 full time staff in addition to an Administrative Assistant, a Records Coordinator, a Communications Coordinator, 7 Dispatchers, 3 Parking Enforcement Technicians, a Parking Secretary, a Parking Control Facility Technician, and a Parking Facility Cashier. (Hanover has about 6500 residents plus about 5500-5900 Dartmouth undergraduate and graduate students.)

We thanked the chief for the interview.

Interview with Byron Kelly, Chief of Police, Village of Woodstock, VT
August 6, 2007
By Bill Lamb

Until this year, the Town of Woodstock did not have any direct police services. This is in contrast to the Village of Woodstock, which had 5 officers. At last year's town meeting it was decided that the town of Woodstock would contract with the Village to provide limited patrol services and 24/7 emergency response.

The Village of Woodstock went thru 5 police chiefs during an 11-year period prior to Byron taking the position. He had worked as an officer in the department prior to accepting the chief's position.

He immediately faced pressure from established Woodstock personalities in their effort to micro-manage his activities. For instance, one of the Selectboard members insisted Chief Kelly wear a white shirt. There was pressure for him to strictly enforce town bicycling and skating ordinances, which were being violated by youngsters. The Selectboard at the time was quite conservative. They wanted the police department to be equally conservative. Byron was of the opinion that there should be discretion exercised in policing. His philosophy was and is: "Equal and fair enforcement while using discretion appropriately."

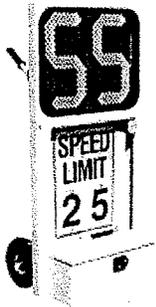
He views his job with new officers as that of a mentor. Kelly shared that in his opinion, the training academy prepares officers for "worst case" situations, which Woodstock officers will seldom face. Most of their work involves dealing with normally law abiding citizens who, from time to time, break relatively minor laws – like speeding or weight. There are few situations where his officers need to face life-threatening criminals. He has found that there is a need to "make our badges smaller". He emphasizes this in his training.

Byron wears a summer casual uniform during the interview. This consists of a short sleeve cotton polo-type shirt with an embroidered badge. He makes the same uniform available to all of his officers. Officers also have the option of wearing more formal – traditional police uniforms. Some of his officers hesitated to wear the summer casual uniform when Byron introduced it to his department. They believed it would not engender the respect that was appropriate. There seemed to be a sense that it would make them look like campus police rather than legitimate law enforcement personnel.

Byron responded by giving them a choice with him choosing to wear the casual uniform. Most eventually followed his lead.

In mentoring new officers, Byron reminds them to "remember where you came from." This is intended to help them deal more gently with juvenile problems.

Woodstock has garnered a reputation as a village, which strictly enforces their speed limits. Route 4 carries non-stop car, truck, and bus traffic right



thru Woodstock Village. They now use a Radar Speed Display Sign at the east-side entry to the village. The device records the speeds of all vehicles and provides a log showing the actual as well as average speeds for specific times during the day.

The department has submitted a grant request to purchase additional devices, which they intend to locate at each entrance to the village. It is Chief Kelly's opinion that the devices help those citizens who want to obey the speed limit to actually do so. It also provides a warning to those who are not familiar with the posted speed limits to slow down before they get ticketed.

Byron's orientation is to ticket a car if they are going more than 15 mph over the posted speed limit.

When Byron first took the position there was little enforcement of drunk driving laws. Early in his tenure there was only one DWI charge in the entire year. After Byron identified it as a concern and focused on enforcement, the year's DUI/DWI citations rose to 50. According to Chief Kelly, this caused a backlash from bar/restaurant and B&B owners. An ad hoc citizen's group of bar and B&B owners began to meet to form strategies on how to get the police to back off from their enforcement. The eventual result was the formation of a Police/Community Relations Committee. Chief Kelly's version of the events leading up to the formation of the committee is in contrast to an article in the January 28, 1996 of the Vermont Standard, which was provided by Chief Kelly. The Standard reported "*the board was created after several residents complained to Village Trustees that the police were handing out tickets left and right, tailing bar patrons home late at night, and stopping teenagers with little or no provocation.*"

The village police have A/V (audio and video) recorders installed in all of their squad cars. The chief put them in 15 years ago. They are encouraged to leave them on all of the time. They come on automatically when the blue light is activated. Initially there was a resistance to leaving it on out of the belief that the chief would be checking up on them. In time, the officers became aware that it provided them with a full documentation in case of citizen complaint. Chief Kelly believes that the A/V makes officers better. It also captures what the conscious eye does not capture. In fact, one sexual assault crime was solved because the tape allowed him to pick up on the meaning of statements made by the perpetrator which he had not digested during the actual interview.

Chief Kelly believes that "whatever you believe is your reality – even if it is different from my reality." Statistics and audio/visual recordings help bring the realities closer together.

The Police/Community Relations Committee actually reviewed hours of the videotapes, including the tape for many of the complaints expressed by citizens either in letter to the town or to the newspaper. According to the executive summary of the committee's final report, "Overall, the committee concluded that there was no apparent evidence of inappropriate behavior by the officers involved that could be substantiated by the video record...."

Because of the new contact with the town of Woodstock he brought on 1.5 new officers. They patrol the town roads four hours per day. They are on call the rest of the day. Of the seven officers full-time officers, five live in the Town of Woodstock. Chief Kelly is convinced that officers who live in the community will have more bonds with it. He has received support from the village in funding an incentive for those who do. Officers receive a \$1,200/year stipend if they live in Woodstock.

They also receive a \$1,200 stipend if they are EMT qualified. The department will also reimburse them for the \$450 cost of their EMT training. Of the 7 full time positions, three are EMT qualified. One is currently in EMT training. When a part-time officer has 160 hours work, they earn one day of vacation. This helps to equalize their benefits some with the full-time officers.

His officers are not under a union contract.

Mr. Demo Sofronas
Norwich, Vermont

Demo, it was great to meet with you yesterday to allow me the chance to offer my thoughts on the future of Policing in Norwich, Vermont. After spending five (5) years of my professional career working as the Chief of Police in Norwich I have a strong desire to assist in this review process. I realize some members of the committee have no personal knowledge of my contact and efforts while I was the Chief. However, I hope I can bring into focus some of the community policing programs we used to try to satisfy the desires of the community. When we last spoke, you presented two questions that were felt to be the most important for me to address today, namely: 1) As a former Police Chief in Norwich, what are your thoughts about Community Policing? 2) Why in your opinion is C.A.L.E.A. worth pursuing?

Responses: 1) Let me start by explaining that there is little question that the Community Policing approach to police work is critical for any police agency but more important for a community the population of Norwich. Basically what this approach is centered on is the concept that a police agency in a small town needs to work WITH the community and not just FOR a community. Often times a community will look down on police officers as somebody that is just needed and not wanted--overlooking the true value of those who would put themselves in harms way for the safety of the people. Today we have seen many occasions when safety officers have responded in other communities to the extent that they have lost their lives just "doing their jobs." While this hasn't happened in Norwich (and hopefully never will) the members of the department stand ready to do their jobs. Some of the programs we used to develop the sense of being a part of the community:

The Senior Garden Program

This involved making a garden in the lot of the police department, allowing the residents of the seniot housing (our closest neighbors) to have small section to plant a vegetable garden of their choosing. We

provided the water and encouragement needed and had many people get involved. Took very little effort and had a nice return in many ways.

The Haunted Halloween House

This came about by joining with the other neighbors the Grange. The members indicated that they were aging and would need some help trying to make this program work. We were able to get the students at the Marion Cross School to help paint scenes for the interior of the building and we were able to gather assistance from the American Legion in town to help with making framing for the projects. Members of the Legion and the Grange also volunteered to help on the night of the gathering. This was successful and well received by the kids and their parents (our neighbors).

The Bike Rodeo

We set this up in the parking lot of the church off Beaver Meadow Road. We obtained helmets for safety of the kids and gave away many of them. We had an obstacle course to improve the operators skills (again for their own safety). We provided treats (from Dan & Whit's) for the kids after they were done with the tasks we had presented. This program too was enjoyable for the kids and their parents (our community) and successful.

The Kids & Kops Program

We joined our neighboring police departments in sponsoring our kids in this program. We had a community account from which we bought bikes on sale from the area stores as rewards for the program. This program involved our police officers making themselves available to the kids so the kids could obtain police trading cards. These cards were pictures of the officers with little things to think about, or comments about the officers. This created an environment where the officers and the kids could interact in a good positive situation rather than being scolded or told to correct some behavior.

Friendly's Ice Cream Days

On these days we would obtain free gift certificates from Friendly's in West Lebanon. We would stand at the stop sign in front of Tracey Hall and look into the cars and when we would spot a kid with a seat belt on they would be given a certificate for an ice cream cone for doing something good. This too was successful and again a positive contact between officer and the kids who are today's teenagers.

Citizens Police Academy

We have come to realize that not every member of our community likes police officers or understands the many facets of the job. Law Enforcement agencies had therefore established what is referred to as a citizen police academy and invite (many with actual personal invitations) members of the community to come and learn what happens at the department when: your house is broken into; what happens: when you have an accident what will happen; What to expect will happen when you might be arrested; how to defend yourself when physically attacked; and other topics of interest. Now being a small department meant that we didn't have the trained personnel needed to present some of these classes so we sought and received assistance from other police departments, State police and social organizations. Which they did gladly. There is an obvious connection in these programs and that is caring on both sides namely the community involvement and the officers themselves. There is a need for police officers and the community must realize the need. There are needs for training and adjustments along the way but there will never be a time when there is not a need, it's just making improvements as needed. There are many similar programs that have been and used to further the efforts of having the officers work WITH the Community and not just FOR the community. This brings me to the next question and it's response.

#2 RESPONSE: Why is C.A.L.E.A. worth pursuing. CALEA is an International Program established 1983 by professional Chief of Polices, Sheriffs and others to establish consistent legally based (adjusted with Supreme Court Decisions) Policies Procedures, Rules and Regulations covering all aspects of police work. This program may

very well be the very Bible of police work. While some may not know, when I was in Norwich I applied for a grant that would wave the fee for our department to enter this program. This grant was to be offered nationwide and we needed to show our desire to exhibit that we could be one of the best departments in the Nation in spite of the fact that not only were we small in numbers but we didn't have much money to spend. I had been the Accreditation Manager for the Nashua Police Department and was very familiar with the contents and requirements of this program. As luck would have it we did in fact win this grant to enter the program. Well it's been 10 years since I left Norwich and we are again looing at what to do next with the operations of the department, This program covers the entire functions of the police department and as stated above it contains policies rules and regulations concerning the administrative and operational issues of every police department large of small. Many of these issues concern items like the use of force and rulings from the Supreme Court and are adjusted accordingly. With the implementation of these guidelines a department and reduce their liability insurance. Please call the VLCT and ask them what the reduction and subsequent savings are currently. BUT perhaps more important is the people that are currently working as police officers in Norwich, Vermont. What are the expectations of the town, Selectboard Members, Town Manager, and the Community in general when and if an officer is put into a position to have to use deadly force in the performance of his/her duties? Does the officer know what will happen to him/her if they are forced to take the life of another? Are there policies to explain what will and can happen if something like this should occur? Although there are issues like this we don't like to dwell on, there are many, many issues like this that are addressed in the STANDARDS of Accreditation. They are included because somebody else in Law Enforcement has found themselves in similar positions needing an answer within the guidelines of the Court system. If the committee akes a few minutes to review the SELF ASSESSMENT MANUAL (that Chief Robinson currently is reviewing) to see the items that are covered in the Accreditation Program, They will see the full scope of coverage of the program. For example, the chapter of internal affairs

and how an investigation will be handled and the time frame of reasonable expectations. This allows the department to spell out the guidelines of performance and the violations thereof, and educated the members of the department in the process and leaves little unknowns. Making the overall functions of the department in compliance with INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTED STANDARDS should be something sought after by all departments. Accomplish this for the Community Relations improvement aspect and personnel satisfaction. It can be noted that there are not too many departments in Vermont that are in fact Accredited at this point in time, there have been many more who have at the very least looked at the program. Objectively the reason many departments are not involved is because it takes a lot of time and to some degree expense. It causes a department to make these decisions on items they would not like to address unless and until they have to. Thus communities are facing mistakes in the forms of law suits and other civil and criminal procedures. It is almost like pay now or--if mistakes take place pay later. An ounce of prevention vs. a pound of cure. And a lot of unhappy people. To sum this up I believe that the CALEA program should be given the highest priority and this effort will be directly related to improvements in the Community Policing aspects of the Norwich Police Department. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to express myself on these very important issues under review. If I can be of any further assistance in this matter please call me.

Thanks again,
Gary Watson

Interview II with Chief Doug Robinson
September 13, 2007

As to CALEA, the certification process, DR is not interested in pursuing at this time (and perhaps ever) for Norwich. CALEA shows the police community that a given Police Department has attained a set of standards set by the federal government. It perhaps is useful in a court case in which a PD is defending against allegations of a civil rights infraction; the department could state that since it conforms to CALEA standards it would be less likely to have trounced on someone's civil rights. And it is conceivable that insurance rates for CALEA departments are lower. (DR was unsure about this.) It mostly provides bragging rights for a department who has jumped through the CALEA hoops and DR is not interested in bragging--although he certainly shows a tremendous amount of pride in the department and his officers. There are only three CALEA department in VT: the University of Vermont, S. Burlington and Bennington; all are considerably larger than Norwich. NPD has completed part of the process and would not lose what has been done; the clock is about to run out on the current application (which could not have been completed given the flux of staff of late) so the application process would have to be started again.

As to house checks, DR regards them as part of community policing. He sees it as part of the responsibility of the PD; DR knows of no department in VT that charges for doing house checks. (He sent out an e-mail to all police chiefs, most of whom responded, saying that they do them and they are free.) DR says the checks do not take much time; they are often visual, sometimes (but not usually) the officer gets out, sometimes shines a spot light, sometimes shakes door handles. They may, given the cursory nature of the check, miss a break in; they may notice it on their next check. Since they have not promised much to those whose houses are being checked, there's not much liability if they miss something. The checks may serve as deterrents since potential evil-doers may see the random presence of a cruiser. There are between 12 and 30 properties on the list to be checked at any

given time; each house gets checked every three to four days. DR's conclusion is that this is a low cost effort for an unknown benefit. (I told him the story of Bill's unneeded check and DR thinks it was a failure to get the owner-has-come-home note into the notebook before the officer went out. He said that it is routine for an officer entering a house to announced himself and was surprised that Bill and Jenny did not hear him.)

As to Bill's question as to the number of non-domestic, night time, out of town calls to which the PD has been asked to respond in the past three years, DR provided me with a print out of those calls from July of 2005 through June of 2006. There are about 200. The nature of requests for service include the following categories: suspicious, DUI, traffic hazard, accident, theft, parking problem, noise disturbance, citizen dispute, intoxication, lost property, drowning, alarm, citizen assist, juvenile problem, unsecure premises, MV complaint, 911 hang up (they have to respond to all 911 calls), background check, vandalism, found property, welfare check, wanted person, family fight, alcohol offense, fraud, animal problem, lockout, phone problem, burglary, unlawful mischief, VIN inspection and agency assistance (assisting Hartford, Hanover, the Vermont State Police, ambulance, Thetford, Lebanon.) And we thought they were snoozing!

As to the possibility of a citizen/ombudsgroup, DR thinks that it would be pretty boring (for group members) and not of much use. Well over 90% of the people who come to the station to discuss tickets, leave satisfied. The arresting officer sits down with the person who received the ticket, reviews the events and generally lowers the amount of the ticket or convinces the complainant that going 52 in a 25 mph zone really is a ticketable offense. As to problems like the officer(s) who came to the house to arrest the teenager, the court had issues a bench warrant for the kid's arrest and the PD didn't have any choice about arresting him so no amount of discussion would have changed the outcome. (That does not, however, mean that a citizen's group hearing a complaint from those parents couldn't have been

useful in discussing the attitude or demeanor of the officers.
[Editorial note from your scribe.]

Chief Robinson's wish list:

1. Five officers (including the Chief) without which he cannot provide 20/7 service. He provided me with sample schedules and offered to come talk to us about this but this gist is this: with fewer than five officers, there is no way to divide up the shifts without asking officers to have split days off (versus two days together), a consistent schedule of a reasonable number of hours to work continuously (versus four hours here and 14 hours there) and no way to insure that the Chief is working days so that he is available for the administrative requirements of the job.

2. Cruisers for each officer to take home. This would reduce response time by avoiding each officer having to come to the station in his or her own car and pick up a cruiser for the call. Statistics from elsewhere show that when individual officers have their own cars, the cars are better maintained than when they are shared. Presently each year a new cruiser is purchased to replace the oldest one in the fleet; for each officer to have his or her own car would require the purchase of one additional marked unit so that in one year two would be purchased. After that there would be a return to the current one car per year pattern.

Alison Lauter

Lanctot interview

Jim Lanctot, Chief of Police of the Town of Thetford, VT

David Cahill and Bill Lamb

Jim is currently the police chief in Thetford, a position he has occupied since January, 2006. Prior to that time he served as a patrol officer and later as a sergeant in Thetford, having been hired there in late 2003. Jim has worked for several other Vermont police agencies – including the Windsor County Sheriff's Department and municipal police departments in St. Johnsbury, Hartford and Norwich over the past fifteen years. Of particular note is Jim's stint at the Norwich Police Department, where he worked full-time for a six month period in 2003 and part-time from late 2003 through 2005.

Jim turned down an offer of full-time employment with the Norwich Police Department because he was concerned about the way some of the residents treated police officers. It seemed to him that there were a far greater than normal percentage of residents who believed themselves to be entitled to special treatment (our words). He also felt that the relationship between the community and the police in Norwich prevented the police from being able to perform their job duties effectively.

He shared an incident when he stopped a woman in Norwich for speeding. Her radio was at high volume and when he asked her to turn it down so he could speak to her, she responded with a challenge based on her Fourth Amendment rights.

He shared another incident when he stopped a man who proceeded to tell Jim that he was far better educated than Jim – inferring Jim was in the wrong to have stopped him.

Another incident involved a written complaint filed against a Norwich female officer. The complainant charged her of "Nazi-like" treatment and demanded that she be fired. Jim saw the videotape of the police conduct at issue as Chief Robinson was reviewing it. There was no substantiation of the complaint.

Jim spoke a bit about his job as Chief in Thetford. He said that one of the pitfalls of being a chief without a sergeant or another senior officer on the force is that he is effectively "on duty" 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Thetford has since remedied this perceived problem by hiring a sergeant to share the chief's supervisory duties and paperwork obligations.

He and his officers provide 100 hours coverage per week. This includes 20 hours part-time services. Their normal response time is 2 – 3 minutes. Dispatching services are contracted from the State Police communications center in Derby Line, Vermont. During hours when a Thetford officer is not on-duty, the State Police dispatch one of their troopers from the Bradford Barracks to the incident. Response time varies upon trooper availability. In a recent nighttime aggravated domestic assault / attempted murder case, the State Police dispatched an off-duty trooper, who in turn called Jim. Both arrived on scene 8-10 minutes after the call was received.

Jim reports that one of the pitfalls of using State Police dispatch is that they often don't notify Thetford PD of incidents that occur after-hours; instead their default response is to dispatch a trooper from the Bradford barracks – who may or may not be nearby. Jim also reports that the State Police at Bradford are understaffed and cannot always respond to calls for service.

Jim reports that he and his officers spend a fair amount of time on administrative and court duty, which necessitates placing patrol time on the back burner. Last week, there wasn't any patrol because Jim was tied-up down writing incident reports and his part-time officer was scheduled for court. It is not unusual for one of his officers to have to go to court as many as 2 to 4 times a month, consuming 4-5 hours each time. They do not give verbal warnings for traffic violations. 60% of the stops result in written warnings. 40% result in tickets. When they issue a warning, they write down the fine (on the ticket) which would have resulted if a ticket had been issued.

They have not been involved in the high schools much because the high school is not interested in their involvement. They are presently involved with the elementary school.

They do little truck weight enforcement, rarely weighing trucks. They do not have scales. If they see what they believe to be a minor violation they will write the operator up on a village ordinance violation with a fine of \$200. If they see what they believe is a flagrant violation, they will pull the truck over and hold him until the state police can respond with scales.

He believes that the more the public sees active policing, the less crime you will have. In his opinion, it is important that there be regular “flashing blue light” on the main roads (from traffic stops). This will be seen by those who live or visit in town and will deter criminal activity throughout the town. Jim attributes a recent decline in break-ins at seasonal residences on the outskirts of Thetford to an increase in random, intermittent nighttime patrols.

Both the Chief and sergeant live in Thetford. In addition, one of the two part-time officers lives in town as well.

The chief believes that crime in Thetford is down. He attributes that to the addition of part-time officers who now patrol at night resulting in greater visibility of the police. This is in contrast to the number of calls for service, which are up. In 2003 there were 280 calls for service. In 2006, it had risen to 800. He attributes this to the reality that, because of the increased police presence, citizens expected that their calls would get a response, wherein the past, they would not call because they were of the belief that there would be no response.

He believes strongly that police policies and procedures are not the responsibility of the Selectboard. He sees his job as determining policy and procedures for the police

department. He used his purchase of Tasers as an example. He purchased them to equip his officers and informed the Selectboard of his decision.

The chief is not required to live in town. He is required to live close enough so he can respond to a call within 15 minutes.

Notes from June 20th Meeting with Sargent Mike McGee

Challenges:

- b/c of social class of Norwich, people don't call police like they would in Hartford – police here seen as real last resort
- have one officer in charge of as much acreage as Hartford would have three on (in Hartford more homes, less acreage per home)
- many people who feel they deserve preferential treatment

Do you have resources required for you job?

- yes
- Chief Robinson does what he can to get us all the we need
- State gives them a lot of what they need

Ticket vs. Warning ratio, how do you feel?

- should be more tickets
- we don't ticket more b/c people complain to Selectboard
- all we do is our job – what the state says is our job
- ticket revenue has gone down b/c of towns people

Why the neg. vibe between youth + police?

- I don't know
- maybe b/c of tickets/arrests/raided parties
- feels like he has many positive interaction with kids (so not sure why the neg. vibe)
- told us of pos. experience with a young male who had raided party

What Improvements could be made to this Department + Town?

- we need a police station
- hopes internal problems (Select Board + police) get resolved
- currently Chief Robinson can leave on vacation w/no problem – but with the only other full time certified cop leaving this will not be possible
- w/no town manager and no police → who's in charge?
- Others (police departments) will/can assist, but will not handle the case
- With Phil being part time certified and the Chief full time – you can't get full coverage
- Chief Robinson is trying to get the part time to become full time certified

How has everything that's happened impacted on your family life?

- very affected
- paper doesn't help – it really reflects on family
- paper – they're trying to take away his credibility
- 15 yr. reputation is being tarnished

How do you feel your interactions with the Community have been?

- definitely comfortable w/community
- but when you see people drive by and look away – it really says something
- he's very outgoing – but definitely hurts him when people look away
- it would be great to have officers at Tracy Hall crossing – but that can only be done when you have enough officers...and we don't

Are you supported by Town Government?

- No
- how can there be good communication when they're not going to support you?
- we're being told we aren't making good judgment calls – how can they know this if they don't know what our job is/what we do?
- the \$11,000 truck ticket – the state set the amount not Chief
- we made to be the bad guy – but the law is set by the state

Selectboard

- I don't agree with what's going on
- feels they don't listen to the people they put in charge (Chief Robinson)
- Chief is at Selectboard meetings for hours and isn't getting any support (like taking your car to a mechanic, listening to what they say, and then choosing not to listen to them – when they know best)
- Robinson is not a dictator + he backs his employees – he's the kind of guy you want to work for
- I hope you don't lose him in all this
- Norwich has a very bad stigma right now

The Future

- I'm under contract, and going to challenge it b/c I don't see how I can lose
- Binding arbitration

Any people you feel are at risk of being lost?

- Chief Robinson
- Already lost Joe Temple
- Phil – could be lost

Any changes that need to be made so we don't lose people?

- need to listen to people you have in positions
- they (Selectboard) need to listen to the people in charge (Chief)
- they need to take Chiefs advice
- they're stabbing their own guy in the back – Need to support their own men + women (police)

Changes in general

- need bigger, more visible sign – better markings for police building
- a place that looks like a police station – not old house
- make it known where the station is

- need more visibility in community – but can only happen when you have more people, more police
- how you get people to vote – the more they feel good with how things are the less likely they are to come out and vote
- when people take issue that's when they vote

Concerns

- how do we get our citizens more involved?
- how can five people write a letter and make Selectboard cave-in?

Summary/Main Points

- 1) Should be more ticketing – ticket revenue has gone down because people in town complain to Select Board
- 2) Need more visible Police Station
- 3) Town governance should listen to Chief Robinson – after all they did hire him
- 4) His reputation has taken a hit
- 5) The police aren't making their own rules – the laws are set by the state

Interview with Phil Brunelle on June 12, 2007

Present: Demo, Claudine, Phil

He started with the force as PT but now FT. He has not completed his training at the academy yet. He became a P.O. by first serving on the Norwich Fire Department. He lives on rte 5 N. He has a 4th grader at MCS. Was in the Military for a while but stopped.

We asked the following in one form or another.

What is the present Chain of Command for the police force?

1. Chief, 2. McGee 3. Phil & Kim, Lamphere

Who do you feel really runs the force?

Chief runs department. Town manager & selectboard tell him what to do but day to day operations are finalized by the chief.

Who is ultimately responsible for any and all actions of the police force?

Chief of Police

What do you personally see as the force's "charge", mission and or duties?

Protect & Serve Town of Norwich. It's a community minded. Do community policing. I get out of the car and walk around and visit baseball games, go to Dan & Whit's and other common areas.

My daily shift consists of talking to day officer, checking e-mail and jumping into the car. Nightshift is quiet but stop and do paper work when needed.

What sort of calls do you respond to?

Dog complaints, domestic, motor vehicles, fast squad, vandalism, burglaries, mutual aid.

Motor vehicle enforcement is the main thing we do.

What is the most frustrating about your job?

When pull over Norwich citizens they are in culture shock. They stand there and argue with me on the side of the road. They think they are above law, exempt from law. Ask why getting tickets. Townspeople berate me.

How do you diffuse the problem?

I maintain composure and politely explain law and beyond that they can go to court.

How do you feel overall communications are with the police force? Within the force? With the community?

Communication is good with Kim, Doug & Sarge, have shift meetings.

Can improve relationship with Town and police force by increasing foot patrol, maybe bike patrol but do not know what else. Think should have Kid& Cops again more interaction at school. I have gone into the school. You can't always have a crossing guard because only 1 officer on duty during day.

How is the communication between the Town manager and police force?

His law enforcement background is good. He has lunch with day shift guy. He is good boss, and approachable.

I enjoy being a Police officer and serving a small town that I live in- like working where I live.

What would you like to see changed?

Nothing-Increase staffing by 1 in . Now only 1 person on . Would like extra officer on at busy times. Also make chief more available to build police presence. Job is not safe currently. No back up especially on busy weekends, would like 24 h coverage to decrease response time. Takes 20 min to get to police dept now.from my house when I am on call. 5 officers would be good.

Would like people to get to know us,

Is there a drug & Alcohol problem?

Yes! Alcohol problem with underage drinking. Marijuana and coke prevalent but not the other stuff.

Some parents ask for us to watch their house and some parents deny kids party. We work with Hanover, get tip lines and make strong presence in area of concern.

Being proactive is the best approach to problem.

What do you feel could be or should be, accomplished to make the Police Force more acceptable to the towns people?

Police relationship with Town is in shambles with PSC out there talking there can be an improvement. Talking with townspeople. Get people to know us

What other Training would you think would be beneficial to Police Force?

Can't really answer that because I have not yet been to the academy.

In the military learn leadership, chain of command which can be beneficial for policing but in a town like Norwich you have to tame it down and find balance.

Respectfully submitted by,
Claudine Louis
6/18/07

Vitt Chad interview in his office--Finer & Sarah Reeves
6-20-2007

Trucks

Setting: initially grain truck stops/sawdust stops/hay truck stops but no tickets

This resulted in meeting requested by Sigler with Soares and Robinson asking for explanation for stops; Soares reportedly the primary speaker in this regard explaining that Road Commissioner (agent) Andy Hodgdon had expressed concern that trucks were damaging roads, that weight limits were needed. Both Soares and Robinson stated in this meeting that the stops were to warn trucks regarding the damage they were doing and that weight limits were being entertained.

Milk Trucks stopped: Robinson and McGee stopped trucks and asked if they had obtained "permits." Response by truckers was, "No." At or about this time the milk truck company for milk pickup was changed by Norwich Farms.

2nd Meeting at Tracey Hall: Steve Soares informed meeting that milk trucks had to have permits in order to pickup milk in town. [those at meeting included Soares – Candon – Vitt – Sigler – and Robinson]. "Milk trucks need permit like anything else." Sigler informed Soares that if this goes forward that he will go to court so that the validity of this requirement could be tested. Candon reportedly upset by precedent of milk trucks being stopped.

Milk Truckers (out of Barre, Vt): they are not required to have permits in any town that they pickup milk – i.e. Norwich would be the 1st. Vitt_ there may be some validity for Soares point of view – "it is not totally crazy." The question as Vitt sees it is, "Why are we doing this in Norwich?"

Trucks stopped and warned at farm by Chief Robinson (Vitt was not sure if this was being done by Robinson or someone else). Vitt has no idea as to why Norwich (Soares and Robinson) are scrutinizing milk truckers in Town.

Additional Meeting with Soares/Robinson: coincident with issues relating to other truckers in Town. Town Manager made commitment that Milk Trucks did not need permit although Soares left open possibility of revisiting this commitment at a later date.

General Trucking Issues: related to large \$11,000+ fine for truck delivering grain/sawdust: in 2007 – court hearing (4 hrs) at which under oath there was testimony by Town Road agent Andy Hodgdon that he was never approached by Soares or Robinson regarding the condition of the roads and stated that he could not support testimony that Soares and Robinson had been told by him that roads were being damaged by trucks. Poulin Grain Trucker (from Newport, Vt) delivering grain several times per month and also hay from time to time – testified at hearing: that he had been stopped by Officer McGee and delayed for 45 min and then told by McGee, "if you come back to

Norwich, I'll own Poulin Grain." After stop Norwich Police called to Poulin Grain office complaining of ruts created by their trucks on Turnpike Road. The regional director for Poulin Grain came down to Norwich to see for himself what damage had been done.

Chief Robinson was told by Vitt about the threats from McGee both at meeting with him and in public meeting. At a public meeting Vitt cites that Soares accused this as "hearsay." McGee's quote was also repeated at selectboard meeting about issues of Police Behavior. According to Vitt nothing was done to investigate police attitudes and behavior despite this complaint. No statement was made by selectboard during meeting.

Threats to employees of Town: a question is raised whether some town employees have been either coerced or threatened by Soares in order to either give/ or not give testimony. There is a question as to whether the purpose of this is to limit any testimony that may go against the "party line" that the Town Road Agent felt that trucks were damaging town roads (testimony in court under oath did not support this).

Conjectures by Vitt: this is all being driven to make money. This is a revenue enhancing item.

Other item with 6 adults having dinner on outside deck: [July 2006] "someone" called police. Chief Robinson arrived at house – told adults, "you better take it inside." Evidently wife got quite upset and argument ensued with Robinson. Since that time family has felt worried regarding their children being harassed. A son later had his driver's license removed from his car –(HE WAS GOING TO GO TO A PARTY, NOTICED THE POLICE CRUISER, AND DECIDED NOT TO GO INSIDE,. INSTEAD, HE TOOK A WALK. When he came back, his wallet was still in the car, but his driver's license was missing. He called the police to ask, if they had it. SDR) after car was searched outside a teenage party that police came upon. Son went to police station when he learned that police had searched his car and taken his license. Son – age 18 – detained at NP station for 1 hr and was accused by police of drinking. Son denies that he was. License was returned. It is not clear whether car was locked. However police searched the car. Another son (age 13) was told to move on when he showed up at Mascoma Bank barbeque, this despite having the right to be there. (HE WAS ASKED BY THE POLICE, IF HE HAD AN ACCOUNT THERE, AND RESPONDED, THAT HE DID.) Father is becoming upset at why his kids are being given a hard time.

Additional concerns: according to Robinson the police adopted permitting/etc regulations based on recommendations from the highway department (Andy Hodgdon) – this is not true i.e. there was no such recommendation (testimony under oath). Concern: "dishonesty at this level can not be tolerated." Selectboard is also culpable here also for their inactivity.

Jim Barlow interview and Vermont Law
September 18, 2007

I have just gotten off the phone from talking with Jim Barlow, an attorney in the answers-to-municipal-law questions department of VLCT. We talked at some length and he confirmed my understanding of the hierarchy within a Vermont town having the town manager form of government: the select board establishes policy and appoints the town manager. The town manager is accountable to the select board, is an employee of the select board and is responsible for the day-to-day running and administration of the town. The police chief is appointed by the town manager. The police chief is accountable to the town manager.

The only piece of my/our information to which Jim Barlow took minor exception was Steve McQueen's characterization of the autonomy of the police chief: indeed, according to Mr. Barlow, the PD is invested with the implementation of the laws but the town manager "officially" hires and fires everyone in the department. (In some sense this is probably hair splitting; my impression of the recent hiring of our new officer is that the chief did all the advertising, interviewing and deciding about whom to hire. The town manager endorsed what was a fait accompli.)

I have attached, for your edification, two relevant pieces of Vermont law: one deals with the responsibilities of the town manager, the other with police officers. If you'd like more, please Google "Vermont statutes on line" and you can be treated to endless hours of entertainment.

Alison Lauter

Dominick Cloud interview and (more) Vermont Law
September 24, 2007

Dominick Cloud is an attorney with VLCT. I asked him whether or not the creation of a grievance committee or ombudsperson by a Vermont town was allowed under Vermont statutes. His answer:

Vermont is a Dillon's Rule State meaning that statutory authority is needed for any actions taken. There must, in other words, be a statute that enables a given procedure. There is no statute under which these people, as I described their function, could be elected. It would, however, be possible for the selectboard to appoint them under their general authority. Additionally, there is the problem of where an ombudsperson or grievance committee fits into the chain of command (selectboard to town manager to police chief.) The insertion of another body or individual into that chain creates, in effect, a new governance model.

Alternatively, the selectboard could appoint an advisory or oversight commission to take up issues of public safety. This individual or group would serve as a sounding board to help the selectboard, town manager and police chief; it would be available more as a group to consider policy than to be involved in disputes between police and town residents. This commission would work on the model of a planning commission and provide an opportunity thoroughly to vet public safety issues in the way the planning commissions presently consider, in depth, land use questions. At present, Mr. Cloud is aware of public safety commissions in Brattleboro (Betty Elwell is contact person) and Hinesburg.

Alison Lauter

The Vermont Statutes Online

Title 24: Municipal and County Government

Chapter 37: TOWN, CITY OR VILLAGE MANAGERS

24 V.S.A. § 1236. Powers and duties in particular

TITLE 24 Municipal and County Government

PART II Municipalities

CHAPTER 37. TOWN, CITY OR VILLAGE MANAGERS

§ 1236. Powers and duties in particular

The manager shall have authority and it shall be his duty:

(1) To cause duties required of towns and town school districts and not committed to the care of any particular officer, to be duly performed and executed;

(2) To perform all duties now conferred by law upon the selectmen, except that he shall not prepare tax bills, sign orders on the general fund of the town, other than orders for poor relief, call special or annual town meetings, lay out highways, establish and lay out public parks, make assessments, award damages, act as member of the board of civil authority, nor make appointments to fill vacancies which the selectmen are now authorized by law to fill; but he shall, in all matters herein excepted, render the selectmen such assistance as they shall require;

(3) To be the general purchasing agent of the town and purchase all supplies for every department thereof; but purchases of supplies for departments over which such manager is not given control, and of the

town school district shall be made according to requisition therefor by such departments or school directors;

(4) To have charge and supervision of all public town buildings, repairs thereon and repairs of buildings of the town school district upon requisition of the school directors; and all building done by the town or town school district, unless otherwise specially voted, shall be done under his charge and supervision;

(5) To perform all the duties now conferred by law upon the road commissioner of the town, including the signing of orders; provided, however, that when an incorporated village lies within the territorial limits of a town which is operating under a town manager, and such village fails to pay to such town for expenditure on the roads of the town outside the village, at least fifteen percent of the last highway tax levied in such village, the legal voters residing in such town, outside such village, may elect one or two road commissioners who shall have and exercise all powers of road commissioner within that part of such town as lies outside such village;

(6) [Repealed.]

(7) To do all the accounting for all of the departments of the town and of the town school districts when the board of school directors so request;

(8) To supervise and expend all special appropriations of the town, as if the same were a separate department of the town, unless otherwise voted by the town;

(9) To have charge, control and supervision of the following matters:

(A) The police department, if any, and shall appoint and may remove the officers thereof and shall fix their salaries;

(B) The fire department, if any, and shall appoint, fix the compensation of and may remove all officers and employees thereof;

(C) The system of licenses, if any, not otherwise regulated by law;

(D) The system of sewers and drainage, if any, except the making of assessments therefor;

(E) The lighting of streets, highways and bridges;

(F) The sprinkling of streets and highways and laying of dust, except the making of assessments therefor;

(G) The maintenance of parks and playgrounds;

(10) To collect all taxes due the town and to perform all the duties now conferred by law upon the collector of taxes, if the town so votes. Such manager shall continue so to do until the town votes otherwise at a meeting duly warned for the purpose of voting on such question. For the collection of taxes, a town manager may charge and collect the same fees as a collector of taxes, and the fees so collected shall be paid into the treasury of the town. (Amended 1967, No. 147, § 53(b), eff. Oct. 1, 1968.)

The Vermont Statutes Online

Title 24: Municipal and County Government

Chapter 55: POLICE

24 V.S.A. § 1931. Police officers

TITLE 24

Municipal and County Government

PART II

Municipalities

CHAPTER 55. POLICES 1931. Police officers

(a) The legislative body, and in its stead, the town manager, when appointed pursuant to chapter 37 of this title, of a municipality as defined in section 2001 of this title may establish a police department and appoint police officers and a chief of police who shall be a police officer. Such legislative body or town manager may temporarily appoint qualified persons as additional police officers when necessary, or appoint qualified persons as temporary police officers in the event no police department is established, shall specify the term and duties of such officers and may fix their compensation, which may be paid by the municipality. They shall be sworn and shall hold office during good behavior, unless sooner removed for cause, or in the case of temporary police officers, for the term specified. Such appointment, oath and removal shall be in writing and recorded in the office of the clerk of the municipality.

(b) The direction and control of the entire police force, except as otherwise provided, shall be vested in the chief of police. If the chief of police is absent or disabled, or if the office of chief of police is

vacant, the appointing authority may appoint another officer to discharge the duties of the chief of police. (Amended 1969, No. 282 (Adj. Sess.), § 3 1971, No. 194 (Adj. Sess.), § 1.)

Appendix D: The Forum

1. Consolidated Forum Themes
2. Breakout Comments
3. Introduction

Norwich Police Services

Consolidated Forum Themes:

1) Community Policing:

A) Public Relations

More community involvement with regard to the schools, kids of all ages, coaching, mentoring and teaching

CPR, self-defense, first aid in general, fire safety, etc.

Presentations could also be given to service clubs, women's organizations and other groups of citizens.

Create a regular newsletter that comes from the "Police Station".

B) Policing Style

Foremost the force needs to operate with the community in mind. Helping should be the major focus.

Move away from overzealousness, overenthusiastic policing, and militaristic attitude.

Yet be demanding, understanding and conduct your business with empathy.

Common sense, how would I like to be "policed".

Believe that all want to obey law, not break law.

Create a new and fresh Mission Statement.

C) Respect Goes Both Ways

Know the community members (and cars they drive).

Officers live in the community, understand what it is all about.

Be available for activities other than writing tickets, speed stops, etc.

D) Ombudsman

Create a Grievance Committee, Five members with Town Manager, Chair of Select board and three citizens.

2) Enforcement of the Law

A) Consistent enforcement.

Be ever present...in cruisers, on bikes or on foot. BE THERE!

No staking out or lurking, just open touring on duty. Be seen whether in car, in shoes or no scooter.

Set the tone and action desired.

Be considerate of locals...the locals will establish correct actions & patterns for all others.

Be helpful and not always "police".

Should the uniform styling be changed to less threatening?????

Consistent and respectful under all demands and calls. Basically conduct business the same way all the time and toward everyone.

Establish regular speed traps till patterns established and overall speed comes down.

B) Truck Stops...enough has been said and done. Seems to be behind us and common sense has taken over.

C) Speeding...see above.

D) Lurking...see above.

E) House checks.

Though many said this service should be stopped, we on this sub committee believe the service should be continued as a way for the police force to be available and part of the community. It is accomplished during regular tours and does not take excessive time. A good deed leads to better relations.

3) Leadership Style

A) Micromanaging

This seems to be a major problem, at least far as the Town Manager is concerned, YET the opposite situation from the Select board.

Let the chief run his police force and take on more responsibility.

Answer less to the Town Manager.

The chief should establish his/her own force with "some" input from the Select board and Town Manager. Note, not too much!

Regular reviews.

Needs to be well trained and versed in a variety of directions such as EMT, Search & Recovery, Tracking, Canine handling, etc.

Also regular sensitivity and communications training...telephone communications, email writing, etc.

4) Cost Benefits

A) Number of Officers.

Minimum of Five (5) officers supported by part time help if needed.

Maybe four full time and two part time but five seems to be the prevailing number.

Training and coverage has to be top of the line.

Subsidizing officers to live in town if at all possible.

Officers becoming a part of the community is an excellent idea.

B) Number of Hours.

24/7 seems to be the prevailing request.

20/7, as it is now, seems to be OK.

The forum said no part time policing but we feel there is a place for properly trained part time officers.

C) House Checks.

Seemed to be 50/50 argument from the forum

The sub-committee thinks there is a place for house checks.

Good for community relations.

Excellent way to be more involved with the populations.

Can easily fit into each tour of duty and takes no time at all.

D) Unreasonable Truck Stops.

Enough said...seems to have been taken care of.

Logical checks would be good in coordination with the town Road Agent.

Common sense must prevail.

E) Canine Patrols.

An interesting potential.

Goes many ways.

Good for community relations, in school training, etc.

Not too many negatives.

Worth talking about.

5) Training & Education.

An absolute must.

Training and Education in, and not limited to, the following:

Counseling

Listening

General communication skills

Personality profiling

Sensitivity
CPR, EMT, Search & Recovery, BECOME THE BEST
TRAINED FORCE IN THE UPPER VALLEY. Create Expertise and
Pride.

Cross training for other skills and other forces in the Upper
Valley...just in case.

Submitted by:

Don McCabe
Demo Sofronas
Ned Redpath

Forum Breakout Comments

Group #1

Question 1

1. Lack of communication and responsiveness.
 - a. How to talk to young people?
 - b. Clarify investigative process.
2. negative impact: deadend road parties
3. Too much money spent.
4. Negative publicity is making a strident issue worse.
 - a. Weight limit problem lingers
 - b. Overzealousness and overenthusiastic policing (police personality.)
 - c. Letter
5. Very biased reporting by Jim Kenyon and letters from 5 having negative impact on community; feeds rather than solves problem.

Question 2

1. End of deadend road parties.
2. Proactive as oppose to reactive: police go out and remove kids from class 3/class 4 so they don't get hurt in that area.
3. Helpful at accidents: calls, clearing scene.
4. Doug Robinson professional and effective: in altered mental state situation, e.g.
5. Police end parties at Gile Mountain.
6. Present force doing just fine.

Question 3

1. P.D. will have relationships like that of Larry Ranslow: firm but fair.
2. Police will know residents' names; residents will know officers' names
3. Norwich will have 24/7 coverage.
4. There will be a cost benefit analysis of community needs to carry out the law.
6. Police will be friendly, neighborly and highly trained.
7. Where there is controversial enforcement police will follow a known process.

Question 4

1. People need to lose entitled feeling.
2. 24/7 police force that is friendly and interacts with the community.
3. Information regarding benefits and costs is known to the town.

Group #2

Question 1

1. Ambiguity: rules of ambiguity unclear.
2. Focusing on rules that community won't think are important.
3. Overreacting: police are returning military people and overreact in some situations.
4. Inconsistent enforcement of rules; now fearful.
5. Looking for someone to break rules.
6. More of an assumption that cops will bet both sides of story.
7. Vehicle management all above issues.
8. Officer did not respond how individual wanted or needed.

Question 2

1. Holley family happy with way police dealt with James' going missing.
2. Officer spent morning with individual after incident; very compassionate.
3. Officer spoke and spent time with child and listened; compassionate.
4. Co-operative, congenial.
5. Good experience with children when needed; gentle, compassionate, adapted to situation.
6. Brittner good in eyes of people but not liked by police for his ability to write reports.
7. Worked collectively with school on Bike to School Day.

Question 3

1. Define responsibilities of police.
2. Security and civility and respect, correct use of judgment for different situation.
3. Change statistics to be consistent and meaningful.
4. To serve and protect:
 - a. To serve us when not protecting us.
 - b. Patrolling peoples' homes when not there; maybe make residents pay for that.
5. 3-5 years ongoing process goals of community input to police of what community wants.
6. Attitude
7. Adapt their skills to Norwich services.
8. Learn about community

9. Community should also have compassion for police.
10. Community based policing: have police be able to get training for community based policing.
11. Want classic English Bobbies.
12. Better communication, maybe new group that hears ombudsmen for grievances from both police and community.

Question 4

1. Needs of community: process for identifying what community wants.
2. Identify how police can fulfill what town wants.
3. Community friendly police.
4. Ombudsman.

Group #3

Question 1

1. Truck ticket for \$11,000.
2. Perception of too many speeding tickets.
3. Disrespect between police and youth.
4. Officer tailgated me: complained to Chief.
5. Privileged families want special treatment.
6. Police not adequately trained to do groups.
7. Police not recognized out of uniform.

Question 2

1. Our housebreak was handled well.
2. My dog bite was handled well.
3. My speeding warning was OK.
4. Two incidents handled well.
5. My son treated well.
6. Visibility at crosswalk helpful.
7. Trails/roads clear of trash.

Question 3

1. Community youth involvement (events, teams, clubs.)
2. Fund Police activities with youth.
3. Subsidize housing for officers: tax rebate.
4. Chief assign officers to attend community events.

5. Maintain 20 hour/day coverage (except 3:00-7:00 am.)
6. Forum (town meeting) to report police activities.

Question 4

Group #5

1) Activities & behaviors having a negative impact.

1) A Structural problem, because the town manager is the former police chief. Need some isolation between the town manager and the police, just as when a former dean of a department at Dartmouth recused himself from being involved with that department, when he was promoted to a position over many departments.

Need a citizen's committee or some other body.

So far, either because of training or direction, the chief he has not yet assumed his role.

2) Severe lack of leadership. It's needed to guide the police force to become part of the fabric of the town. Now kids think of the police as an enemy, an adversary. They are not in the community, in contrast to Hanover, where the police chat with people, have a cup of coffee with them, know the kids. They need a friendly relationship with teens, Marion Cross School kids & parents, and the elderly, i.e., with all.

Their motto is not protect and serve, but enforcement.

2) Police chief & officers disrespectful of citizens

One woman told: "you don't have the money to live in Norwich..)

3) Enforcement of traffic violations creates an unfriendly "welcome" to town.

- "I'm afraid I'm going to make a mistake."
- Enforcement re drivers of trucks is class issue,
- Inconsistent enforcement
- A 23 year old was stopped for a sticker violation, taken to the police. Stopped again 3 days later (for no reason.)

4) Don't know where we stand. Would like to be able to walk down and ask: what are the rules?

5) Both Soares and Robinson are almost militaristic in approach. (When Doug Robinson was on duty at Hartford High, people raved about him, he knew the kids and had rapport with the community.)

5) Why do we need this level of protection?

2) Activities & behaviors having a positive impact.

1) Examples of police being approachable, considerate, courteous, kind and responding swiftly.

- When sticker out of date, stopped & advised, not given a ticket. courteous

- When a woman ran a stop sign, she was just advised and not given a ticket. (She wondered if being middle-aged and it being in the middle of the day made a difference.)
- Glad to see them prevent speeding, especially with kids biking. (but need more enforcement further out where kids bike, as on Turnpike.)
 - When a woman saw a teen-ager driving 80 mph, she called the police. She never saw the jeep again! She called, asking for advice about the need to register a trailer to take stuff to the Norwich Market, and was given simple instructions on how to go about it.
 - When Karen Miller's husband, Bart Miller died, the chief went and talked with her, until friends and neighbors arrived.
 - A person's car was rear-ended on Route 5. The chief responded, giving the person offending a ticket. He was civil to both.
- 2) Response to emergencies
- 3) Presentation at the bank re identity theft was well done—a good community service.

3) Ideally, what the relationship between police services and Norwich community members in 3-5 years?

- 1) The Structural problem will be solved, with clear lines of separation between the police and town manager.
- 2) Police will know the town, its character, and its people. They will "live with us" and help raise our children. There will be seen around town, engaging kids; they will be at D & W's, and at the schools, and not always in a cruiser.
- 3) The chief of police will step into his leadership position. He will be friendly, warm and easygoing, as the chiefs of police in Hartford and Hanover Estey and Giacone, are.
- 4) Re enforcement of traffic violations: Better if advised or warned, and not given a ticket the first time.
- 5) House checks are not a function of tax payers' dollars.
- 6) Size? Prefer 4—as good coverage for the size of our town.

Group #6

Question 1

Negative Activities: Norwich Police officers working outside town limits.

Chief's reply: they are not more than 10 minutes away

Poor management skills on part of Chief Robinson

Belligerent behavior, in your face

Bad attitude

Guilty until proven innocent

Poor leadership is systemic

Too close a relationship between Town Manager & Chief

Professional hypocrisy
Poor management skills

Positive Activities: Crossing guards; good relationship with children
Automotive un-lock; very professional and courteous
Accident scene, non-confrontational
Personal touch reference dead cat (pet) Recognized
and returned dead animal to owner (owner very
pleased)
Very professional regarding missing child
Positive personal contact

3 - 5 year outlook: Protect and Serve
Keep peace; not just enforce laws
Better Judgment
Better Leadership
Better relationship with young people
Respond with respect
Re-evaluation of police duties
Greater transparency of police activities (i.e. log)

Group Summary : MANAGEMENT - get evaluation
-make good judgment, not just enforce
laws, thereby protecting and serving.
- understanding small community policing
Lack of management skills was the underlying theme

Group #7

Question 1

1. Perception that police aren't fully occupied; people assume they're off doing other things; these people need to find something to do.
2. Issuing citations, overly aggressive, young people not treated particularly well.
 - a. Perception that young people need to be watched closely.
 - b. Pulled over for "driving while young."

3. Police force has power attitude/ what kind of person becomes a police officer?
4. Chief not enforcing 20 year old restraining order against friend.
5. Don't get sense of respect coming from police resulting in fearful feelings; threatened by police presence.
6. lack of training.
 - a. Knocking and opening of door: officer could have been killed
 - b. How to approach situation/person.
7. Children treated aggressively, roughly acrimoniously by police.
8. Perception of police as guys sitting in office looking up stuff, an old problem.

Question 2

1. Quick response to 911 and, when it was a mistake, wasn't yelled at and made to feel stupid.
2. Holley family appreciated how suicide was handled by and with police.
3. Handled several sensitive situations very nicely/respectfully (gracious, courteous, kind.)
4. Kids and cops: cops distributing cars seems like such a good program.
5. Robinson sat down with rowdy 6th graders individually and spoke to them about what good behavior looks like.
He handled situation so well that they didn't need to call parents and situation did not occur again.
6. The police are as professional as you are going to find.
7. Thorough and considerate.

Question 3

1. Police who are residents of Norwich, coaching and sending kids to our schools.
2. Police being fully occupied (when working); more structure.
3. Retain Chief Robinson; make it worth his while to stay.
4. Coverage 24/7; get staffing so this can happen (cost concern.)
5. Respond in timely manners.
6. Positive feeling/perception about force.
 - a. Whatever the issue: e.g. ticket to warning ratio.
 - b. If coverage is statistically linked to what is actually needed, positive perception will flow from that.
7. Police will know town residents.
 - a. Police will walk around town.

- b. Police will be more involved in town affairs, more visible, make more effort to get to know people (as others have in the past): e.g. Lions Club.
- 8. Take course in community policing.
 - a. Training in interpersonal relations.
 - b. Nonviolent communication.
- 9. Residents make police feel appreciated, welcome: find ways to let police know positive feelings.
- 10. Possibility of changing personnel.
- 11. Higher police pay.
- 12. Need to leave policing up to police.

Question 4

1. Create relationship with police so that they know we appreciate them; we want to keep Doug Robinson.
2. Relations go both ways.
3. Training in community relations and communications
4. Fully occupied, engaged.
5. Selectmen establish policy.
6. Increased police visibility.

Group #8

1. What activities, behaviors and values do you perceive as having a negative impact on the community?

harassment, strongarm attitude, negative attitude, excessive pullover of kids, excessive pullover of out of state drivers, stern and overbearing, truckers being stopped for 'bad-tires' when the truck is less than 6 months old, communications gap, negative relations with teens.

2. What activities, behaviors and values do you perceive as having a positive impact on the community?

Giving warnings instead of tickets, it is good for teens to learn that they need to follow the rules, it is good to have a police presence near our house (on Main Street), good to have a professional vs. stern and overbearing attitude, good for teens to know the police and have communication with them, good to be able to bike to school with support of police. Sometime the police are hard on teens regarding alcohol because they fear telling their parents of their deaths (which they have sometimes had to do).

3. solutions: (1) Have the police follow their own guidelines (their own Mission Statement).. (2) Do role playing with the police to teach them less aggressive

behaviors. (3) Have more police working and teaching in the schools (including the Hanover School).

(4) We need an Ombudsman/Citizens Review Board that works like this: it should be made up of civilians and not be too formal. It should not consist of either policemen or selectboard members. It should have about 3 to 5 people. There should be a formal complaint system. If people have a complaint or problem, they should first go to the Police Board. If they do not feel they have been heard there, they should then go to the Town Manager. If that, too, is not satisfactory it should then go to the Civilian Group..(5) The police and townspeople should get together more socially.

4. Our three key points were: (1) The Civilian Review Board idea. (2) Have the police teach and be around the school more. (3) Police/community get together.

Group #9

1. What activities, behaviors and values do you perceive as having a negative impact on the community?

A There is selective enforcement of laws according to economic status. An example is the moving of tractors. There is no support by police when tractors experience recklessness by cars in going around them. Many tractor operators are harassed by the police when they are moving along or stopped on town roads. Other tractors are permitted to operate without police interference. For instance, Jay Van Arman seems to have blanket support for operating without police interference. Others are harassed any time they operate on town roads.

B Help has been stopped when driving thru Norwich on the way to work. An employee who was driving an old car thru town to work was stopped by the police and questioned about what he was doing in town.

C There have been many issues involving Sgt. McGee. His mental state was questioned because of the way he has handled incidents. An example cited was when he pulled a motorcyclist over without observing any law-breaking behavior because he had nothing better to do.

D If there is a climate within the community that permits behaviors like those exhibited by Sgt. McGee, many end up feeling intimidated and harassed.

E There is a leadership problem from the Selectboard on down. With the truck issue, they all said things were taken care of, then the police pulled over a truck in Hartford. Cannot trust the Town Manager.

- F There is a communications problem. The community desires professional/courteous behavior by our Police. The police interpret this to mean they should be more strict.
- G The Selectboard, Town Manger, and police need sensitivity training.
- H Police officer should assume that citizens want to obey the law. Some, but not all teenagers do not always want to do the right thing. It is wrong for the police officers to assume that teenagers are up to no good just because they are teenagers.
- I We have a punitive-oriented police department that treats teens disrespectfully - as criminals. This treatment will cause the teens to lose respect for the police and perhaps turn into bad citizens.
- J Kids do stupid things. We should want kids stopped for bad actions. Some people say that police officers are harassing teens when they are misbehaving. They can't treat them like buddies.
- K Given police officers should stop bad teen behavior, they shouldn't do it like they sometimes do. For example, Sgt. McGee followed a young lady over a long distance with his cruiser only about 18" from her back bumper.
- L The Police Chief and Town Manger respond to complaint calls from some people but do not respond to calls from other people.
- M The way the police problem has evolved is troubling. There is a communications problem. There were too many problems/incidents that happened without proper response by leadership. It took too long to get to the point where there was a discussion of the problems.
- N Sgt. McGee did not comply with our laws. He would speed if he wanted. He was observed running the stop sign at Church and Main St.
- O A teen who breaks a motor vehicle law should get a ticket.. If not, he should not get one.
- P Some "entitled" parents are upset about their kids being stopped by the police. Are they the ones who are speaking out against the police department?
- Q House checks are seen by some as their "right".
- R As an example of selective enforcement - if you are driving a rusty vehicle or truck you will get a ticket.
2. What activities, behaviors and values do you perceive as having a positive impact on the community?
- A When a teen is using alcohol or drugs the community should support

the police in firm dealing with the teens.

- B Participant had some shelving stolen and called police. The officer who responded and was extremely professional and helpful.
- C Students were observed drinking alcohol. Police were called. Hartford police responded. They were extremely professional. Officer Bob Brittany was also very professional.
- D Doug Robinson and officers were very responsive and professional in dealing with neighbors who were thought to be dealing drugs.
- E 3-4 years ago an officer, who is no longer on the force, was very professional and helpful when participant skidded off the road as a result of black ice. He provided assistance, called for tow, and sheltered participant in his car until tow arrived.
- F A neighbor called police to report a suspicious car at participant's property when she was out of town. Officer responded timely and professionally. Suspicious car belonged to participant's son who was in the house. He reported the officer was professional and friendly.
- G Participant has known Doug Robinson for a long time. He reached out to youth in Hartford. He also observed him reaching out to people from an abusive background.
- H A participant was stopped, but not ticketed when officer noticed registration on vehicle had expired. Told to take care of it. Given warning.
- I Appreciate what Police Department has done to get drivers to slow down.
- J The family was very appreciative in the support and actions of the police in the recent case of a missing teenager.
- K Tickets do no good if the police officer does not show up in court. Rob Brittany was famous for giving out tickets and then not showing up in court.

3. Ideally, in 3-5 years what will the relationship look like between Police Services and Norwich community members?

- A Larry's style of communications. Friendly, open, considerate, personable and as professional as possible. Doug is this way.
- B Need a definition of what professional" is. It should include Equal treatment. Respectful.
- C Do not want P.D. to be obnoxious or rude.
- D Mutual respect and equal treatment.

- E Selectboard will take action on complaints. We need a place to take a complaint where we feel something will happen. The town needs an effective way to deal with complaints.
- F Need training to allow P.O. to discern between what is going on and arrive at an appropriate response.
- G The police officers need to get to know people in the community.
- H Sensitivity training and training in communications is needed.
- I Redefinition of their role to include meeting with teens from time to time.
- J Members of the community need to know what fears police officers have.

4. Regarding question 3, what are the key points that this group wishes to present when the Forum reconvenes?

These were presented by the guide at the forum.

Group #?

Question 1

1. Overly aggressive behavior: verbal tone and aggressive behavior.
2. Making presumption of being guilty
3. Flashing lights are too much.
4. Presentation to children was very authoritative: no comfort, roughness.
5. Attitude
6. Comfort level with teenagers: start younger.
7. Knowing the balance point.
8. Understand situations.
9. Less "by the book" enforcement.
10. Better understanding (dialogue) between police and citizens.

Question 2

1. Personable, caring, helpful, thoughtful, courteous, tone of voice.
2. Proper dealing with different situations.
3. Body language, showing concern.
4. Appreciating situations positively.
5. Getting to know townspeople (proactive): being familiar face.
6. Having enough officers to participate in proactive activities.
7. Joining youth based groups.
8. Great job at fires: hours on scene, looking out for fire fighters.

Question 3

1. More communication between the department and citizens.
2. Have an in between man between police and community.
3. Kindness and softness in voice.
4. Redirect energy and time toward community relations.
5. Being around when groups of people are around.
6. We, as community members, helping find out what we can do to strengthen relationship/get to the common vision.
7. Have good times together so that there is a mutual respect for one another when the "bad times" happen.
8. Being there for as many people as possible.
9. Maybe make the police department more centrally located: visible.
10. Fleet of radar speed buggies.
11. Possible professional EMT department in place of more officers.
12. Mutual common courtesy and respect.
13. Having each officer in the happenings with interests, hobbies, etc.
14. Increased familiarity.
15. Better coverage spots.
16. Educating the public in what is happening/ who they are.

Question 4

No recorded response.

Good Evening. Welcome to the Police Services Forum. My name is Alison Lauter and I'm a member of the Police Services Committee.

As many of you are aware, the committee has made itself available for your comments on police services in Norwich for the past several weeks. We have sponsored 5 evenings of listening posts at the Historical Society which 28 residents have attended. We have gone to the homes of several individual Norwich residents who preferred that venue for talking to us. We sent to every Norwich household a survey form, of which have so far been returned, and all of which has been read by at least one member of the committee.

Tonight, rather than focusing on what has happened in the past we are looking for solutions to the problems of which we are all aware. Our view of the past actions and attitudes of the police department are truly all over the lot from "couldn't be better" to "couldn't be worse." While we don't share the same view of what has happened in the past, we clearly share the view that enough is enough.

We want a police force that we can respect and that respects us. The police want to be of service to the community, and learn better how to accomplish that. And the selectboard would like very much to stop revisiting this issue and their preferred form of achieving that, I believe, is to have us reach consensus on what it is we would like from our police force, help the police and selectboard understand our needs and move forward from there.

There is one point I would like to address before all of us here tonight invest one more bit of energy in this process: it is the concern, voiced by many of you, that the report generated by this committee will do nothing more than gather dust on a shelf, placed there by the selectboard. This committee, the same folks that manned the listening posts, put together the survey and website, interviewed the members of the police department and planned this evening's Forum, still have ahead of us: analyzing the data we've received, examining the rate and type of crimes committed in Norwich, comparing our police department to similar forces and trying to figure out how many police officers are required to do the job we would like done. We are not, after all that, going away quietly. We have told the selectboard that we accepted the charge we were given, to recommend possible changes to policing in Norwich, but that we expected our work to be taken seriously.

We are assuming that that is what will happen. If it does not, they are on notice that we are prepared to be a long-term thorn in their collective sides.

I'd like to introduce the members of the committee:

Rose Addante	Don McCabe
David Cahill	Ned Redpath
Bill Lamb	Sarah Reeves
Luke Lindberg	Demo Sofronas
Claudine Louis	Jay Van Arman
Terry Lyons	and Chad Finer who will join us shortly

Here also are members of the selectboard: Ed Childs, Alison May, Jack Candon, Gerard Chapdelaine and Suzanne Lupien.

Steve Soares, Town Manager.

Doug Robinson, Chief of Police, and members of the force: Mike McGee, Phil Brunell, Larry Lamphere.

We are shortly going to break into small groups. Our guests, the selectboard, members of the police department, and Town Manager Soares have been invited not to participate in those groups. We would like to avoid any potential chilling effect of having someone present in front of whom you might not feel comfortable speaking openly. They will reconvene with us to hear the ideas the small groups would like us to consider. I have, however, been assured by Chairman Childs on behalf of the selectboard, Chief Robinson and Manager Soares that they are available at any time to hear your concerns.

Doug, a few words...

Before I introduce tonight's facilitator, there's one other detail I'd like to raise. There has been a lot of acrimony surrounding the police services issues in Norwich. This isn't new, it's just been nastier lately than it has in recent memory. Tonight we are all about civility. We want to get the most out of you, your thoughts, your ideas, your potential solutions for creating a police force on which you can comfortably rely. We're not trying to turn you into Pollyannas; we know we have a problem here. We just don't want to waste time on unpleasantness, we want to work on finding solutions.

We ask that you keep that in mind. If there are additional past problems about which we have not yet heard, or you'd like us to hear your version of a problem you know we've already heard about, please get in touch with any member of the committee and we will arrange to get together with you.

Facilitating our Forum this evening is Cotton Cleveland. She is president of Mather Associates which explains why I keep referring to her as Cotton Mather. The firm, founded by her in 1981, specializes in leadership and organizational development for businesses, as well as public and nonprofit organizations. Her client list includes:

The Concord Chamber of Commerce

Christa McAuliffe Planetarium

Granite State Electric

Hanover-Dresden School District

New London Trust

New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women

And lots more.

She serves as the moderator for the town of New London, has established various Leadership Programs and, frankly, has been very helpful to the Norwich Police Services Committee in our job of approaching a large task with lots of tentacles.

Cotton is going to explain to us the logistics of the next part of the evening and get us started in thinking about how to move forward with police services in Norwich.

Appendix E: The Survey

I. Survey Description

The Norwich Police Services Committee (“NPSC”) drafted a survey consisting of four open-ended questions intended to elicit a broad spectrum of public sentiment about the police. Those questions are:

- (1) If you voted on the Article concerning the size of the police force, why did you vote the way you did?
- (2) During what hours would you like to see local law enforcement on duty in Norwich?
- (3) What is your impression of the relationship between the police and the community in Norwich?
- (4) What changes, if any, would you personally like to see happen regarding the manner in which police services are provided?

The survey was mailed to the every household in Norwich in June 2007 and also made available on the NPSC website at www.norwichstudy.com. The NPSC received a total of 205 completed surveys (170 via mail; 35 through the website) as of the writing of this report, all of which are attached to this report as Appendix _____. Because the NPSC intentionally utilized open-ended questions in drafting the survey, it received a broad range of responses that escape easy categorization and hence quantitative analysis. What follows is our best effort to fairly and accurately summarize the survey responses and the community sentiment contained therein. We have consciously avoided pie charts, bar graphs and scatter plots because they could not accurately portray the various shades of gray that characterize community sentiment about the police.

The surveys contain many thoughtful responses that are not summarized below because they did not rise to the level of recurring themes. That being said, all responses were considered by the NPSC in formulating its final recommendation to the Selectboard.

II. Question 1: “If you voted on the Article concerning the size of the police force, why did you vote the way you did?”

We received 169 answers to this question. Of those, 97 respondents indicated that a negative perception of the police force factored into their decision to vote as they did. Recurring negative themes included a perception that the police were overzealous in performing their duties, that the police lacked “enough to do,” and that the size of both the police force and police budget was disproportionately large relative to the population of the town and its perceived crime rate.

On the other hand, 72 respondents indicated that a generally positive perspective of the police factored into their decision to vote as they did on the warrant Article. Recurring positive themes included perceptions that the police were courteous, professional and effective at controlling crime and speeding.

A significant number of respondents indicated that reducing the size of the police force would be an ineffective means of "reigning-in the town budget;" but many respondents echoed a general concern that their tax dollars were not "spent efficiently" by the police.

III. Question 2: "During what hours would you like to see local law enforcement on duty in Norwich?"

We received 174 answers to this question. Of those, 59 respondents explicitly indicated they wanted 24 hour (local) police coverage in Norwich. Forty-two respondents stated or implied that they wanted the current hours¹ of coverage to be continued, while an additional 57 respondents advocated for something else. Typical "other" responses included "school hours," "peak travel times," "same hours as Dan & Whit's," "daytime plus some random evening/night coverage" and "weekend nights." Some "other" responses did not directly address hours of coverage, but implied something altogether different from the current police model, e.g., "use Hartford," "State Police," and "a constable is fine." This last category of respondents could fairly be characterized as calling for a net reduction in police presence. Another significant minority declined to state specific hours of desired local police coverage and deferred to "the statistics" (A date/time report of calls for police service and police "incidents" is attached as Appendix ____.)

Respondents who advocated for 24 hour coverage or a continuation of the current level of coverage tended to cite Norwich's affluence and presumed vulnerability to property crime; they also cited a desire to maintain Norwich's low crime rate and relatively idyllic quality of life. Respondents who called for a reduction in police hours were more likely to express their concerns in financial terms ("the police budget is out-of-control relative to the size of the town") and in nostalgic terms ("We didn't need this many police officers ten years ago, so why do we need them now?"). Some respondents indicated that it made sense to have a Norwich officer "on-call" during off-peak hours, but not actually on patrol.

IV. Question 3: "What is your impression of the relationship between the police and the community in Norwich?"

Ninety-eight respondents said the relationship between the police and the community was poor or strained. Sixty-one disagreed and said the relationship was satisfactory or good. Of the negative respondents, 45 blamed police behavior for the poor relationship they perceived. They said the police lacked common sense, were overly aggressive and needed to solve problems instead of creating them. Representative responses include "they should be working for us, not against us," "they should not treat teenagers like the enemy" and "the police fail to exercise adequate discretion." Thirteen

¹ At the time the surveys were distributed, police coverage in Norwich was "currently" 20 hours per day, seven days per week. Responses were thus categorized as advocating "current coverage" if they expressly called for 20/7 coverage or if they deferred to the judgment of "the Chief," "the Selectboard" or "the professionals," all of whom presumably concurred in then-current hours of coverage.

negative respondents blamed Steve Soares, while nine blamed the Selectboard for police behavior.

Twenty-two respondents characterized police behavior rather differently – as professional and courteous; a few singled-out individual officers for praise. Five respondents said the police were respectful. Nine said respect was lacking in both directions, while eleven respondents said it was their fellow townspeople and not the police who most lacked respect for others.

A significant number of respondents stated or implied that Norwich had a perception problem rather than an actual problem with the police. Some said or implied the Norwich Five and the news media took a handful of negative incidents and blew them out of proportion, creating the current controversy.

V. Question 4: “What changes, if any, would you personally like to see happen regarding the manner in which police services are provided?”

Approximately forty respondents called for improved police training – particularly in the area of “community policing.” Some respondents also advocated for improved training in niche areas such as drug enforcements and domestic violence response.

Forty-one respondents hoped for a change in police attitude. In specific, they called for even-tempered law enforcement and equal treatment for all, regardless of age or station in life. Forty respondents identified police treatment of teens and children as most in need of improvement. Many respondents indicated that the police should be more supportive of the Norwich community and its values rather than simply enforcing state statutes.

Thirty-five respondents specifically called on the police to exercise greater discretion when responding to a technical violation of law. Another thirty-five respondents hoped for the police to become better integrated into the community. They proposed that the police engage in more foot patrol, crossing guard duty and other activities intended to generate positive contact with townspeople and children in particular. Many said that police officers should be encouraged to live in town and join community organizations.

A minority of respondents indicated or implied that reducing the size of (or altogether eliminating) the police force was desirable. Others called on the Selectboard and Town Manager to “do their job” or “establish guidelines” to assist the police in determining how to best serve the town of Norwich.

Appendix F: Listening Post

REPORT FROM THE "LISTENING POST"

The Listening Post Committee is a subcommittee of the Norwich Police Services Committee. Its purpose has been *to let people tell them: 1) what has happened in their experience with the police, and 2) what suggestions they would like to make re police services. Their target audience is those who preferred to speak individually to members of the sub-committee (or full committee) and perhaps anonymously, rather than in a public meeting*

The interviews were conducted at five listening post sessions held at the Norwich Historical Society on May 21, 22, 24, and June 12 & 14, 2007, in citizen's homes, offices, by e-mail or by phone, and in written notes left in a box at Dan and Whit's. The comments made are to be kept confidential. A total of 27 people were interviewed at the Listening Post sessions; 28 communicated through other means.

Five major themes emerged from these communications and interviews: community relations, town leadership, trucking in Norwich, traffic enforcement and response to crime. Their most salient points are discussed here. More descriptive notes from the actual interviews are found at the end of this summary with any personal identifying data removed to protect the confidentiality of the individual

Community Relations. The most common theme to emerge from the interviews was community relations, more specifically, the current relationship between Norwich citizens and its police force. The spectrum of comments about police conduct was broad, common terms include polite, professional, aggressive and hostile, The two latter terms were often made when referring to traffic enforcement. On a few occasions there were insults reported to those considered of lesser stature or of greater wealth. Interviewee's were also concerned with the police's relationship with the children and teenagers of Norwich. Again, responses varied from 'my children do not have a problem with the police' to 'my children are afraid of the police therefore do not seek their help. 'Several individuals would like to see the police get involved with kids and teenagers at the Marion Cross School. It was said was that the police are poorly known and should be more service oriented and accessible to the public. In short, the Norwich community desires a Police force who respectful and whom they can respect in turn. Many individuals recommended that the Norwich police could benefit from more training in subjects such as, communications and community policing.

Town leadership was the second largest theme that emerged from the interviews. The majority of respondents felt that leadership is a problem in the Town of Norwich, and that it occurs at three levels of Town Government: Selectboard, Town Manager and the Police Chief. In reference to the (former) Selectboard, the majority of comments was negative and similar to these: the Selectboard lacks leadership and direction, Selectboard does not want to listen or just does not care; the Selectboard has failed to oversee the Town Manger's performance; the Selectboard should set the policies for the Police and the Town Manager should enforce them. Similarly, although a few were appreciative, comments were predominantly negative in reference to the Town Manager. They

questioned his role, his lack of qualifications as a Town Manager, citing that he was trained as a police officer, and his micromanagement of the Police. It was suggested that that the Town of Norwich should pay enough to hire enough an experienced Town Manager and that he be able to live in this town.

In short, current issues with the Norwich police department are not just confined to the police force but also involve the Selectboard and Town Manager.

Truckers and trucking. Another theme that emerged from the listeners' sessions and communications was truckers and trucking in Norwich. The problems that existed between the Town and truckers eighteen months ago have not gone away. This is because it was not only about the ordinance regarding the weight of the trucks, but about harassment, permits and registrations. As a result of no public statement from the Selectboard, Town Manger or Police, truckers, farmers and business people do not yet know where they stand or what will happen next. Truckers are still fearful of coming to Norwich to do business.

Traffic Enforcement. Speeding was another theme from our listening post. Citizens interviewed *want* and appreciate enforcement of speed limits. They want them enforced in a courteous, consistent, and professional manner. They would prefer that citizens are given one time warnings before being issued a ticket, as has often, but not consistently happened. A couple of individuals were concerned about the placement of speed traps on private property and impeding traffic flow in a public access.

Response to crime. The final theme that emerged as we listened to Norwich citizens was the police department's response to calls and crime. Comments regarding the Police department's response to calls were often positive: "they responded quickly", "they were professional and courteous"; however, occasionally comments were negative: "they were delayed", or "they failed to respond", causing citizens not to call another time. In a couple of instances citizens spoke of frightening, aggressive behavior by the police, lying to cover tracks and encouraging another to lie and of subsequent insulting words. In another case, issues regarding a property boundary and a neighbor's behavior have remained unresolved,

A few citizens felt that the Police Department should remain at the current level of funding to deter crimes from being committed in Norwich a population growth continues in the Upper Valley. Other think there are too many police officers, so they seek out things to do.

In sum, Norwich citizens whom the "Listeners" interviewed and heard from are united in their desire for a police force that is an integral and appreciated part of the community. They desire that the police chief live in town, that he and other officers get to know the community, spending time out of their cruisers, in informal conversations, and in public and school events with residents and non-residents of all ages and walks of life. They appreciate consistent enforcement of speed limits. They dislike unwarranted stops (i.e.,

stops for no visible offense) of people of any age. They are concerned with occasional lacks of judgment or aggressive behavior, or unresolved problems. Response to calls and crimes by the Police department needs to be more consistent. They would like the officers to be trained in community relations. Norwich citizens would like to see the trucker issue resolved and speeding enforced but to reasonable levels. However, problems are not just confined to the Police Department but also exist at the Selectboard and Town Manager level. As mentioned in the introductory paragraph, notes from the interviews are found at the end of this summary.

Members of the Listening Post Sub-Committee: Chad Finer, Claudine Louis, Terry Lyons, Don McCabe, Demo Sofronas, Sarah Reeves, Chair,

Appendix G: Model Mission Statement

The Mission of the Norwich Police Department is to work with all citizens to preserve life, maintain human rights, protect property, promote individual responsibility and enforce our laws while supporting the underlying values of our town's residents. To fulfill this mission each of our police officers is committed to:

- 1) Promote community policing to deal with law enforcement problems and education.
- 2) Establish and maintain a broad reputation for being respectful, friendly, professional, effective and fair while enforcing the law.
- 3) Respond to emergency calls immediately and professionally and in a manner that will minimize personal injury or loss of property while maximizing the likelihood of apprehending offenders.
- 4) Conduct or participate in criminal investigations and assist in the prosecution of all crimes committed in Norwich using nationally recognized police investigation tools and techniques.
- 5) Undertake prevention and other patrol tasks with sufficient frequency and diligence to reasonably deter criminal activity.
- 6) Limit motor vehicle accidents by conducting an on-going campaign of traffic law and speeding education and enforcement.
- 7) Respond to and follow through with non-emergency demands of residents and businesses in a timely and professional manner.
- 8) Operate in a manner that insures the safety of both the public and their fellow police officers.
- 9) Proactively reach out to young members of the Norwich community to help them understand and internalize their civic responsibility to both respect the property and rights of others and to obey the law.