



## ***Town of Adams*** • Massachusetts 01220

TOWN HALL  
8 PARK STREET – Room 210  
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**Thursday, October 29, 2020, 5:30 p.m.**  
**PUBLIC SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER:** On October 29, 2020 the Public Safety Sub-Committee met in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Town Administrator's Office of Town Hall. Members Blanchard and Duval, Town Administrator Green and Interim Police Chief Bacon were present. The meeting was called to order at 5:07 p.m.

**PUBLIC CALL-IN NUMBER:** (413) 743-8300 x201

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes for October 7, 2020 were submitted for approval. *Consensus was reached by Sub-Committee Members to approve the minutes as submitted.*

### **OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

**Police Chief Search Process:** It was reviewed that Interim Chief Bacon is leaving, the Chief of Police job has been posted and the Interim Chief is doing the pre-screening. He will review his assessment of the applicants with the Town Administrator before putting candidates into an initial interview pool. It was noted that there were five viable candidates so far and more applications coming in. Once it is narrowed down a deep background check can be done on candidates before presenting finalists to the Board of Selectmen. Concerns were expressed about qualifications of applicants and Committee Members advised that the Board of Selectmen should have access to all resumes and applications to review. The positives and negatives of having an Interim Police Chief position were outlined. It was noted that the Town may have another person from out of the area or out of the state. The interview process was reviewed and it was suggested to have the process span two different days to allow applicants to stay in the community and give them an opportunity to talk to people. The solicitation of public comment was discussed and a statement could be made that a decision would not be made for a week or two to allow for comments to be received. The timing of the hiring and transition was also considered and it was noted the process would be quick once the candidates are narrowed down.

**Sergeant's Assessment & Job Description Review:** It was explained that the Sergeant assessment is over and the Interim Chief is reviewing the results. He advised he will post the results at the Police Department and then will write a letter to Town Administrator Green to make a formal recommendation. The parts of the assessment were reviewed and scenarios were formulated to be unique to Adams. It was suggested that the Sergeant job description be updated, and it will be worked on by the Town Administrator and Interim Chief before it is given to the Personnel Sub-Committee for review. The process of hiring a Sergeant was reviewed, and it was explained that those who are passed over will be notified in writing. The Chief will give a list and recommendations to the Town Administrator for his consideration. The Board of Selectmen will ratify the selected candidate.

**Reserve & Special Police Officer Policy:** It was noted that the Reserve Officer job description is old and examples from other communities in Massachusetts were received and recommendations were made for changes to the current one. The most recent Full-Time Officer posting was updated with new wording so the Reserve Police Officer position may be advertised. Discussion took place on the ways available to pay this position. It was explained that the Reserve Officer or Special Officer positions are on the detail work list. The union agreement and job descriptions were reviewed in reference to Reserve and Special Officers. It was pointed out that sometimes Reserve and Special Officers may be called to come in to work and don't come in but are available for details at a higher rate of pay. A recommendation was made to put a policy in place for these positions to have work requirements to serve the Town in order to be made available to be on the detail list. It was noted that this would give enforcement ability and remove entitlement. It was explained that once the policy was formalized and the job description updated, those currently in the positions can apply if they meet the qualifications to be a Special Officer. Age requirements for insurance coverage was noted as an obstacle. Incentives to have Special Officers meet 24 hours of work in a month were touched on. The need to have a mechanism in place for emergencies was pointed out.

**Detective Position Update:** It was explained that there has not been a job description for the position of Detective, and there needs to be one created. Interviews for this position will take place next Thursday, and two people applied for it. Interview questions are being put together. It was noted that the Town Administrator has the final decision on who is hired, which may not be grieved. The Detective position pay was proposed and agreed upon by the Union. It was pointed out that if a second person was brought in as a Detective, a different compensation mechanism may be desired. The work expectations of a Detective in comparison with a Patrolman and the responsibilities and flexibility were discussed. A recommendation was made to contact similar departments and to identify training and skill requirements for the position of Detective. Interim Chief Bacon will work on creating a job description.

**Communications Assessment Result & Solution:** It was explained the communications issues were both from cruiser to cruiser and from the cruiser to the station. Repeaters were put in the cruisers, but they were not able to solve every problem. Officers reported that the communication system was not working as intended. A brief synopsis was given of the coverage area, and that as a test the repeater location was changed. It was found that the change of location allowed for communication to every location in Adams, and it was proposed to be moved to the tested location on a permanent level. This would require wiring and cable costs, at approximately \$1,800. It was noted that the equipment is good, and a change in antenna cable from the console to the roof was necessary. A recommendation was made for the Chief to come to the Board of Selectmen and to give them an opportunity to ask questions. It was explained that previously when the system was tested, it was tested from inside the building and it therefore did not perform to proper levels. It was explained that the move of location will not require new licensing, and the cost would be able to be absorbed in the budget or possibly go to the Finance Committee for approval. The importance of having the equipment operable off of the battery was emphasized.

**Interim Chief's Remaining Tasks:** Reviewing and updating the department policy was noted as the remaining task. A proposal from Lexipol was \$8,000 annually, and information was provided regarding a review in line with best practices and in alignment with Massachusetts General Laws. The options of updating the policy internally was also an option. A sample policy recommendation by Massachusetts Chiefs of Police with forms, communications and training was reviewed. An accreditation program was outlined and included specific requirements, a certified program and full accreditation. A study was done in the 1990's to see if the standards met departments of ten staff and below, and it was noted that the officers should be performing them anyway. An annual accreditation fee of \$1,800 would be assessed to become accredited, with an insurance discount of \$600.

For changes in legislation or policy alerts would be sent out and links provided to departments to take the policies and make them personalized to specific departments. There is a self-assessment checklist and links to the policies and the Chief would adjust the current policy accordingly for accountability. A suggestion was made to hire a consultant to discuss the route to get it accomplished and to put together a baseline. It was explained that in the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) in the cruiser an officer would be able to look up policy quickly if Lexipol was selected as the option. Daily training bulletins were outlined and there would be a constant refresh of daily training memos. It was explained that the Town does not have to go out to bid for anything under \$10,000, and it could be in the budget going forward for standardization of policies and procedures as well as annual fees. Program benefits and the reduction of insurance fees may result from becoming accredited. A 3-year reassessment evaluation would take place for continued accreditation. It was noted that more than one proposal was needed for consideration, and the Board of Selectmen would work with the Chief to train officers to meet accreditation standards. It was pointed out that a lot is being done already but it has not been reflected in the policy. It was explained that typically there is an accreditation manager. Policy based training was reviewed, and it was pointed out that if someone doesn't know the policy they should know where to look it up.

**Departmental Update:** A brief review of the plan for Halloween took place for Saturday. It was explained there will be two people assigned per car, volunteering their time as Town staff. A press Release will be on the Facebook Page for the Town and Police Department.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER:** *There were no announcements made.*

**ADJOURNMENT:** *The Public Safety Committee Meeting adjourned at 6:38 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,  
Recording Secretary



Richard Blanchard, Member  
Public Safety Sub-Committee



John Duval, Member  
Public Safety Sub-Committee