



**Town of Webster
Police Department**
"Improving the Quality of Life"
Chief Timothy J. Bent

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REPORT OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Personal Message

As my first year as Chief of Police comes to a close, there are many individuals I wish to thank. I would like to thank the residents of Webster, as well as the surrounding communities, for their support and encouragement of this department. The well being and safety of our community members is our purpose and mission. I need to thank the men and women of the Police Department for their commitment to our purpose, and their patience as well. We get somewhat frustrated when we cannot achieve our goals as quickly as we would sometimes like to. I would be remiss if I did not publicly recognize the patrol division for the outstanding job that they performed throughout the course of this busy year. Thank you to all the Sergeants who have gone the extra mile and given more than asked. A well earned thank you to Detective Hoover for his tireless efforts in solving most of the cases in an overwhelming case load. A special thank you to our Reserve/Auxiliary Division for their voluntary efforts which sometimes seem to go unnoticed. Many thanks to our various department heads who have shared their experience and knowledge throughout the year. A thank you to the Board of Selectmen, past and present, for their understanding and commitment to our community; a special thank you to our current Chairman of the Board, Chuck Cormier, for his assistance. Thank you to our past Interim Town Administrator, Dana Kennan, for his guidance and leadership. We look forward to what the future holds and anticipate great progress under the leadership of our newly appointed Administrator, Raymond Houle.

Report

As the Webster Police Department continued to make great strides forward in many areas, the department was once again hampered by budget cuts which resulted in a shortage of officers. Through grants and drug seizure monies, the department was able to purchase several valuable pieces of equipment. Lap top computers for the cruisers, M4 rifles, and a digital finger print system top the list. We also received donations for a mobile video system. The department also updated its computer software system that should take us several years into the future. We were also able to update radio communications by installing a new tower, thereby providing safer working conditions for officers on the street. We worked diligently updating departmental policies and procedures. We continued renovations in the dispatch area, as well as the two booking rooms. However, as mentioned so many times in the past, the building is inadequate for our needs as we have long since outgrown it. The cell block area continually fails state inspection, the basement is full of asbestos, there remains a lack of office space, and there are inadequate facilities for the male/female personnel who must share changing, and sometimes bathroom facilities. If we are to be effective, a new police station is of utmost importance.

The year also saw a change in personnel. Officer Shanetia Miller, a transfer from the Springfield Police Department, transferred out. Veteran Officer Brian Barnes

transferred to the west coast. Thank you to both officers for their service to the citizens of Webster. The department hired three full time Patrolmen, Officer Toby Wheeler, Officer James Young Jr., and Officer Joshua Collins. We also experienced a well-deserved promotion, as Officer Michael Shaw was promoted to Sergeant. The department also hired Permanent Intermittent Officers, Michael Lee, Joseph Reed, Stephen Yurkevicius, and Travis Gould. We also experienced the departure of Permanent Intermittent Officers Greg Sullivan, Michael Luby, and Michael Corriveau. Permanent Intermittent Officer Richard Walcek resigned and joined the Reserve/Auxiliary Unit.

Statistically, the town experienced a rise in violent crime. Despite our newly appointed officers being in the police academy, and several officers being out on injury status, there was an increase in arrests from previous years. Collectively, the department made 787 in custody arrests and requested 1,170 criminal complaint summonses. As police personnel increases, we will focus our efforts on our community policing initiative, Main Street presence, and illegal drug investigations.

During the course of the year, the Chief's Office received seven complaints regarding police conduct. Three complaints resulted in Internal Affairs Investigations with two sustained findings, and one not sustained finding. Four citizen complaints resulted in three not sustained findings, and one unfounded finding. Citizen complaints regarding police department personnel may be directed to the shift supervisor, who, in turn, will either investigate the complaint or forward the same to the Chief's Office for further investigation.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy J. Bent
Chief of Police