

**Rutland Town Select Board
Police Committee Meeting
July 13, 2020
Town Offices, Center Rutland, VT**

The meeting was called to order at 8:30. Present were Select Board members Sharon Russell and Mary Ashcroft, as well as Police Chief Ed Dumas and Deputy Chief Ted Washburn. Select Board member and constable JP Faignant joined the meeting mid-way through.

Body cameras:

Recent legislation has mandated body cameras for Vermont State Police; it is recommended that the RTPD also follow the intent of the law by completely outfitting our law enforcement officers, including our constable. The RT Police department presently has 3 body cameras, so we need two more at a cost of \$1,000 each, plus two charging bases for \$100 each. We also can extend the charge in each unit by purchasing plug-in chargers that can be used in each cruiser in the cigarette lighter. Each charger unit is \$100 each.

Our current system is with Watchguard. If we went out to bid, the new cameras would not be compatible with the cameras we already have, so we would have to purchase 5 completely new units. That is not cost effective.

The Police Committee agreed to recommend to the full Select Board that the town purchase from Watchguard 2 new body cameras with bases, and 5 plug-in chargers, for a total cost of \$2705.

Tasers: Recent legislation in Vermont limits use of force law enforcement officers may use. Tasers would give local officers a non-lethal weapon as an option. The town last purchased tasers in 2008. They are each good for 4-5 years so are now all out of date. They need to be replaced.

We have two options:

a) The town can buy 5 tasers outright. Total cost would be \$7,688.50 for 5 tasers, holsters, battery packs and cartridges. We would also need training cartridges, at an additional cost, as all officers would need to be recertified and would use training cartridges as part of that course. **Total estimated cost for the full package is \$8833.75.** It is unclear whether there is a warranty, and of what duration, on this outright purchase package.

b) The town could also enter into a five-year lease program for tasers. This is what Rutland City does. The cost per year for 5 units, a five-year warranty on each unit, battery, holster 2 cartridges per year per unit and a training cartridge each year per unit would cost the town \$501 per officer, or **\$2505 per year.**

It would appear that the better deal would be outright purchase; however, that depends on how long the warranty runs. The Police Committee will recommend to the full Select Board that the town enter into a five-year lease program for tasers unless there is a full five-year warranty for outright purchase.

Dash Camera: RTPD cruisers have dash cams but JP's truck, which he uses for his constable work, does not have a dash cam. The cameras can be set to run a continuous loop to capture evidence of a violation. Ed and Ted will get prices for a dash cam.

RTPD Policy Updates: Recent Vermont legislation has changed the standard for use of lethal force from reasonable to necessary. The Vermont State Police had already moved to that standard a few year ago, and RTPD usually follows VSP policies are they are already vetted. Ted, Ed and the other officers will review our policy on this matter and report to the full Select Board on whether a policy change is needed.

Other Discussion:

--There may be some adjust in billings for the School Resource Officer's time as the school closed due to COVID-19.

--Ted Washburn is outfitting a shot gun to shoot beanbags, as it is less lethal and less risky to the officer and public.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40AM.

Respectfully submitted: Mary Ashcroft