

RUTLAND TOWN SELECT BOARD

POLICE COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 16th, 2021

The Police Committee of the Rutland Town Select Board met at 5:00 PM on Tuesday February 16th at the Rutland Town Municipal Town Hall. Present was Board Chair Mary Ashcroft, Board Member Sharon Russell, Board Member JP Faignant, Town Police Chief Ed Dumas, Town Deputy Police Chief Ted Washburn, and Administrative Assistant Bill Sweet. There was a conference call line with a publicly accessible and warned phone number in use. Emily Linehoff and Chris Howland joined the call as members of the public.

- 1) The committee discussed current legislation S.63 in review with the State Legislature.
 - a) There did not seem to be a lot of interest or support for this bill, which would eliminate School Resource Officer positions in schools.
 - b) The discussions being had seemed to indicate the legislature would want the towns to decide for themselves.
 - c) Chief Dumas and Deputy Chief Washburn will follow the discussions and report back if anything significant develops.
- 2) The committee discussed the current application process for a new Police Officer.
 - a) One application has been received so far since opening the hiring process.
 - b) There has been some interest but no firm commitment from other officers. Deputy Chief Washburn said the initial pay seemed to be the biggest challenge.
 - c) Deputy Chief Washburn reported the salary line will see an approximate \$41,000 surplus since 1 Full Time officer has resigned their position and the Part Time position is also vacant. Discussed the possibility to use a portion of these funds for a sign-on bonus to attract new officers to our department. Chief Dumas commented that several other municipalities already offer this.
 - d) Discussed a scenario where someone was hired and given the bonus and then left shortly thereafter. This could be handled by creating a contract with specific language regarding that.
 - e) Ms. Russell asked if a bonus were offered, could it be paid at the end of the probationary period. The intent was to pay the bonus out of this current fiscal years funds and the probation would not end until the next fiscal year.
 - f) Discussed the amount of any potential bonus. The committee agreed an amount up to \$5000 was appropriate for a certified, pre-qualified level 3 candidate being hired prior to June 30th, 2021. All committee members agreed.
 - g) Chief Dumas asked about having the Town Attorney help draft the language in a potential contract agreement. This was approved.
 - h) The committee will recommend this to the full board.
- 3) The committee discussed the purchase of a new cruiser.
 - a) Deputy Chief Washburn solicited bids from 3 separate sources.
 - i) Ford Fleet Services quoted \$36,958 for a Explorer SUV and offers a 3 year lease to own option
 - ii) Goss Dodge quoted \$42,640 for a Durango SUV.
 - iii) Rutland Dodge quoted \$36,550 for a Durango SUV.
 - iv) Ford offered state bid pricing, Dodge Durango SUVs are not available through state bid.
 - v) Ford said the vehicle could be delivered in 90 days; Dodge stated 5 to 6 months.

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- b) The intent of the purchase of this vehicle is to replace the oldest vehicle, currently being used by the SRO.
 - c) The new vehicle would be used for the K9 program.
 - d) The other charger in the fleet would be reassigned to the SRO.
 - e) The new cruiser would be used by Deputy Chief Washburn, who would be the K9 officer.
 - f) Ms. Russell asked if these prices included a trade in credit. Chief Dumas said the cruiser being replaced would not be traded in, and a sale to another department was being looked into as this would yield better results.
 - g) The committee agreed the state bid process satisfies our purchase policy guidelines.
 - h) Mr. Fagnant recommended purchasing the Ford SUV with the 3-year lease to own program, the committee will make this recommendation to the full board.
- 4) The committee discussed the future purchase needs of equipment.
- a) The current expected timeline is for Chief Dumas to be leaving his assignment at the Child First Advocacy Center by June of 2022. It is expected our current SRO, Officer Houle, would take over this role.
 - b) Deputy Chief Washburn discussed using equipment from the oldest cruiser, which is planned to be replaced by the new vehicle being ordered. This could help reduce the cost of the new vehicle. Currently, the plan would be to remove the radar and cameras system in addition to the roof mounted lightbar and reassign those to the new cruiser. The lettering on the cruiser is all vinyl and could be removed allowing the car to be used for a variety of assignments.
 - c) Discussed the timing of removing the equipment to allow the car to be used in its current role as long as possible. After further discussion, Ms. Russell said she felt this should be a full board discussion.
 - d) Mr. Fagnant expressed concerns about removing it from the fleet altogether.
 - e) There was discussion about the assignment of cruisers to individual officers and allowing them to take the department vehicles home instead of parking them and driving their personal vehicles as they do now. DC Washburn commented that Officer Houle would be attending classes, conducting off site interviews and responding directly to scenes all of which would require transportation.
 - f) Take home cars would be for the Chief of Police and the K9 officer and patrol officers would drive their own vehicles to where the cruisers are parked, take them from there and return them at the end of their shift.
 - g) The topic of take-home cars will be added to the PD committee list for discussion at a future meeting.
- 5) A proposal to purchase mobile printers was discussed.
- a) Mr. Fagnant would like the Police Department to purchase printers out of the current budget. These would be used in the patrol vehicles to print tickets at a traffic stop. This is expected to save administrative time in entering tickets. DC Washburn stated he has looked into these and has solicited pricing from 2 separate vendors but has not gotten pricing back yet.
 - b) Ms. Ashcroft asked for the cost, when received, to be brought to the committee.
- 6) DC Washburn discussed creating a health and wellness program. This could help them establish a fitness qualification program. This will be discussed at a future meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:34 PM

Respectfully submitted, Bill Sweet