

RUTLAND TOWN SELECT BOARD

POLICE COMMITTEE MEETING

THURSDAY MAY 27th, 2021

The Police Committee of the Rutland Town Select Board met at 4:30 PM on Thursday May 27th at the Rutland Town Municipal Town Hall. Present was Board Chair Mary Ashcroft, Board Member Sharon Russell, Board Member John Paul Faignant, Town Police Chief Ed Dumas, Town Deputy Police Chief Ted Washburn, Wendy Loomis from the Child First Advocacy Center, Senator Joshua Terenzini and Town Administrative Assistant Bill Sweet. There was a conference call line with a publicly accessible and warned phone number in use.

- 1) The committee discussed a request to reconsider providing a police officer to the Child First Advocacy Center
 - a) Chief Dumas left CFAC in March of 2021 to increase patrol time in the town.
 - b) Deputy Chief Washburn discussed the reasoning behind leaving CFAC. If this proposal is accepted there would still be 3 patrol positions for the town. The CFAC position will be a separate position.
 - c) The money received from the grant in the past has been \$60,000. Up to \$90,000 is available now with some additional funds being received. Ms. Russell asked if their reimbursement covers benefit costs. Chief Dumas said that it would cover the full cost of the employee.
 - d) Wendy Loomis said they have 1 full time officer from Rutland City and another from the Vermont State Police. Both those positions are funded by their respective agency. The funds which are available are to help smaller departments, like ours, provide an office to this agency.
 - e) Mt. Faignant stated the board had already decided it did not want to staff a position outside of the town. The money being offered would not change the position of the town. Mr. Faignant and Ms. Russell said they do not want to reconsider this decision.
 - f) DC Washburn said Officer Houle has officially resigned and a posting for the vacancy will be done. Chief Dumas said Amber Houle could be hired for the express purpose of filling this contracted position.
 - g) There was a plan in the past to move Ms. Houle from the School Resource Officer position to the position at CFAC, on Chief Dumas retired from there.

- h) The contract position would be limited to 2 years or until the funding runs out whichever came first. There would be no risk to the town.
 - i) The patrol position would still be posted.
 - j) The cost for Ms. Houle to be assigned to CFAC, as a Town of Rutland employee would be zero.
 - k) Chief Dumas said it is very important to have this position filled. Ms. Houle would be an excellent candidate for this job.
 - l) Ms. Loomis reviewed training that has been provided to Town of Rutland officers which was done at no cost to the town.
 - m) There are funds remaining from this fiscal year and even more available for next year for this position.
 - n) Ms. Loomis said the Rutland County Sheriff Department was approached about someone, but they are unable to provide a candidate right away.
 - o) Mr. Faignant stated the board had decided and discussed about CFAC being able to contract with Ms. Houle directly. This would not be possible.
 - p) When asked about the source of the funding, Ms. Loomis said none of their funding comes from the CARES or ARPA acts.
 - q) Discussed the circumstances at which Chief Dumas left CFAC. It was not at his request, rather a request the Select Board had made.
 - r) The committee will recommend to the full board denying reconsideration of this offer.
- 2) The committee discussed the draft of the Assigned Vehicle Use Policy.
- a) DC Washburn reviewed the policy, and that it would be at the discretion of the Chief to allow a vehicle to be taken home by any of the officers, and that it would not be a right. Certain requirements would need to be met to be eligible.
 - b) The current practice is that only the Chief and Deputy Chief take vehicles home.
 - c) Vehicles are sitting unused and have had debris on them as a result of their storage location.
 - i) There is no other suitable location to store them.
 - d) There are 3 active vehicles in the fleet, and 1 that has been decommissioned. The decommissioned vehicle is being offered for sale, and there is a new cruiser on order which should be delivered soon. There will be 3 marked units and 1 unmarked. We have 3 officers currently.
 - e) A list breaking down the vehicles and their status will be provided to board members.
 - f) Discussed the pros and cons of officers taking home and / or leaving cars.

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- g) Ms. Russell said it could help get an officer to a call faster if they had them at home.
 - h) Mr. Faignant was concerned it could establish a practice of allowing take home cars. Chief Dumas said this policy would prevent that expectation.
 - i) There is no intention to provide a car to every officer.
- 3) Senator Terenzini was present and provided the committee with an update on the invoice sent to the Department of Children and Families seeking reimbursement for calls for service by the Town Police to the Holiday Inn during the time homeless residents have been housed there.
- a) The Commissioner said there would have had to have been a contract between the Town and DCF. Senator Terenzini said this is not how it was communicated during the discussion where this had come up.
 - b) The commissioner said he was looking into other options to be able to provide reimbursement, and to account for additional expenses occurred since the invoice was sent, relating to the same issues.
 - c) Senator Terenzini said he will keep the committee updated with any new updates.

The meeting adjourned at 5:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bill Sweet