

The Deerfield Police Department Annual Report 2016

Mission Statement

"We, the members of the Deerfield Police Department, are committed to excellence in law enforcement and are dedicated to the people, traditions and diversity of Deerfield. In order to protect life and property, prevent crime and reduce the fear of crime, we will provide service with understanding, response with compassion, performance with integrity and law enforcement with vision."

I am pleased to present to you the 2016 Deerfield Police Department Annual Report. The officers, supervisors, and staff continue to deliver a superior product to the residents of Deerfield.

Staffing

The Deerfield Police Department is comprised of the Chief of Police, two full-time police Sergeants, six additional (6) full-time and twelve (12) part-time officers. Officers are organized into three shifts of two officers per shift who are accessible to the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. On each shift there is an officer assigned to Old Deerfield area (District Two), and one officer assigned to South Deerfield (District One). This ensures that residents all across town get equal response and patrol time.

The Police Department also employs a full-time administrator who is responsible for handling day-to-day administrative functions including: public information requests, payroll, bills, detail billing, emergency scheduling, equipment acquisition, fleet maintenance scheduling, and answering both the lobby and telephones, as well as other duties.

At the end of August 2015, an additional position of School Resource Officer (SRO) had been added. The individual, Officer Brian Ravish, who was born and raised in Deerfield, developed a rapport with all five schools. With well over 2,000 children and young adults in town on a daily basis, it is important to have a critical liaison. This position was possible due to Deerfield Academy providing a significant annual donation towards the position.

In September, Tyler Hersom was appointed as a full-time police officer to backfill the nearly year old vacancy. Tyler was born and raised in South Hadley and has been a part-time police officer for Deerfield for the past two years. He is especially good with residents and children alike.

October 1, Jacob Eugin was hired full-time. Jake was hired to backfill for the school resource officer position. While Jake grew up in Turners Falls, half his family is still in Deerfield.



Equipment

The police department continues to replace one cruiser on an annual basis. This is due to the annual mileage driven, idle time, and wear and tear on a vehicle. With two personnel on twenty-four hours a day, our annual mileage is around 140,000 miles.

In September 2013, I spearheaded a regional computer system for police and fire departments in Franklin County. This will allow for interoperability and sharing of information. This system will encompass 81 different agencies which all share the same regional dispatch center. It will save the Town of Deerfield several thousands of dollars a year in annual maintenance fees. My goal was to have the system operational in fiscal year 2017. Five hundred thousand dollars was allocated for this project through the state emergency 911 grant funds. Several meetings have taken place, and the project is moving forward. Like most large scale projects, they take time. This project is scheduled to be completed in the calendar year of 2017. As is the norm with technology advancements, several delays have been realized, however we remain optimistic.

Social media has become a standard with today's technology. Our agency started a Facebook web application page in 2011. Since last year, we have noted the individuals looking at our social media pages to be in excess of 4,400. Officer Adam Sokoloski routinely maintains both Facebook and Twitter. When significant events are posted, it is not abnormal to see in excess of 44,000 views.

Calls for Service

The Department is very active in responding to calls for service. Calls for service within this area are defined as requiring a police action; this does not include mere directions, or questions. Officers respond to all fire and ambulance calls. Officers assist at these scenes with traffic control, rendering medical aid and if needed are authorized to drive the ambulance to a medical facility. The total number of assigned calls for service for the 2016 calendar year was 18,319. This is an average of 50.19 calls for service on the average day.

There were 259 arrests, 247 active investigations, 2,300 motor vehicle stops, 782 motor vehicle citations issued, 60 parking tickets, and 414 medical emergencies in 2016.

Our Officers patrol all areas of the Town of Deerfield, watching for any unusual activity, while keeping all residents and visitors' safety in mind, making notifications to the utility companies as well as reporting any road hazards to the appropriate highway agency. We continue to have an open communication with business owners and perform business checks daily. Officers continue to perform vacant house checks and provide target traffic enforcement in problem areas.

Officers on road patrol perform law enforcement patrol activities including, but not limited to, arresting violators of the law, checks of property and persons, conducting security checks of buildings, and dwellings, investigate traffic crashes, and enforcement of traffic offenses, including Operating Under the Influence (OUI) investigations. Aside from road patrol, these officers also assist with criminal investigations, including searching for missing persons, runaways, and wanted persons. All of this activity is documented in reports, logs and calls for service as officers are responsible to present testimony and evidence in court.

For patrol activity and coverage of calls for service, we divide the Town into two primary patrol areas. District One is South Deerfield, and District Two is Old Deerfield. The line primarily follows Hillside Road, over Lee Road. This allows for the officers to be visible in all areas of the community.

The Police Department daily logs have been placed online. They are accessible through the Department's website, on the bottom right hand corner, under "Weekly Logs". This will allow the residents to view the day to day activities, as well as research events that may have transpired in your area.

Major Events

Deerfield is a hub of activity with several events taking place throughout the year. It's not uncommon for these events to draw hundreds if not thousands of visitors and participants to our town. With the constant fluctuation of our population for these events it is imperative that we maintain an active role to insure the safety of all. Our participation in these events can range from traffic control to community policing and everything in between.

Stillwater Bridge was closed to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic for four and a half weeks, from Monday, October 24, 2016 to Wednesday, November 23. On Wednesday, October 19 the Town received a bridge inspection report stating there was significant undermining below the northern pier. The bridge was deemed unsafe by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (DOT) engineers, and therefore was closed for emergency repairs.

This resulted in multiple temporary action plans for police, fire, EMS, highway department, schools busses, and home health care transportation for the safety of all that were affected.

Our Highway Superintendent Kevin Scarborough worked closely with officials from the Conservation Committee, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Army Corps of Engineers, Structural Engineers from Mass DOT, and the Mass DOT Dive Team. With just over four weeks of closure, all necessary permits were filed, funding approved, and work was completed. This is normally a two or three year project. We thank both Kevin and the Mass DOT officials that made this happen.

In July, August and September, we received multiple 911 calls for shots fired. Without notifying the police department, several farmers in Deerfield purchased a piece of equipment called a “bird cannon”. These are propane fired cannons that do not shoot a projectile, however are extremely loud, and scare away the birds that normally feast on the sweet corn. Several farmers had to be advised that the cannons need to be shut off at night in order for residents to sleep. An informational letter will be provided to all farmers in 2017 with recommended guidelines that several other states have adopted.

Throughout the spring, summer and fall, several road races are held in town. Some of these races are the 2nd Annual VFW-SMAC Run Round the Mountain 5K and 10K, Old Home Day 5K Run/Walk Road Race and The Deerfield Mile. In August, the Deerfield Dirt Road Randonne. (D2R2) Each year, this event brings more than 1,500 riders to our area. In November, 93.9 The River’s radio host Monte Belmonte walks 26 miles from Northampton, through Deerfield to Greenfield to raise awareness and funds for hunger in Western Massachusetts. Officers direct traffic and block roads so that participants and spectators can relax and enjoy the day.



With the town utilizing two fire districts, the police department has taken a more active role in facilitating communication in regards to emergency management. This has been accomplished through a team atmosphere with the South County EMS, South Deerfield Fire District, Deerfield Fire District, Board of Health/Building Inspector, and Selectmen’s Office. In October 2016, the Selectboard appointed me as the Assistant Emergency Management Director.

Training

Both Tyler Hersom and Jacob Eugin graduated from the full-time police academy. As both officers self-sponsored to better their education and training, they paid the full tuition out of their own pockets. The academy is 26 weeks of rigorous and challenging training. Personnel who graduate are better suited to serve the people of the community and we are proud of this extraordinary accomplishment.

Sergeant Harry Ruddock, Sergeant Krusiewski, and Officer Adam Sokoloski attended basic arson investigation which was provided by the North Western District Attorney’s Office. The conference provided a base line on cases of Arson.

The North Western District Attorney's Office started a program called, Juvenile Fire Setters. It is a program that provides valuable education and intervention to Juveniles with potentially destructive thoughts or actions. It is not a criminal action; it is a diversion program that focusses several partners, psychologists, psychotherapists, local fire department representative, and others. It has been of extreme value to Deerfield over the past few years.

We are in constant partnership to make sure the schools are as safe as possible. As most are aware, this is challenging being that Deerfield has five schools; Deerfield Elementary, Frontier Regional High School, Bement, Eaglebrook, and Deerfield Academy. In total, there are over 2,500 students in Deerfield, this does not include school staff. The schools including students and staff bring in a daily influx of over 4,000.

As always the Deerfield Police Department is dedicated to serve the community, residents and visitors of the Town of Deerfield. As the days, months, and years continue to pass, please do not ever hesitate to contact us if you have a question or concern.

Sincerely,

John P. Paciorek, Jr.
Chief of Police

"PROTECTING AND SERVING OUR COMMUNITY"

The Law Enforcement Oath of Honor

On my honor, I will never betray my badge, my integrity, my character, or the public trust.

I will always have the courage to hold myself and others accountable for our actions.

I will always uphold the Constitution, my community and the agency I serve.



Photo courtesy of Officer Adam Sokolowski