

Locally Staffed Model

Introduction

The Shutesbury Police Study Group is charged with exploring various models that can provide police services to residents. Some residents have questioned the reasons behind such an exploration in regards to the past and current police department's ability to provide police services. This model is in no way an indication of any dissatisfaction with the functioning or operation of the police department nor the dedicated and professional service our police provide. It is an attempt to address some of the needs, desires, and wants of both residents and police department employees.

This model focuses on the high rate of turnover of Shutesbury officers and would require a greater level of commitment to the town, moving salary amounts closer to the top of those paid to other Franklin County towns, allowing more flexibility in the location where an officer is dispatched from, and giving officers more responsibility for their scheduling.

Residents benefit from this model by reducing reliance on Massachusetts State Police to answer calls, by knowing Shutesbury police officers are members of the community and are committed to remaining members of the town, by having an enhanced version of community policing, and seeing lowered costs of providing police services.

The overall concept of this model is loosely based on how the Shutesbury Fire Department has operated with a chief that lives in Shutesbury. The main aspects are having individuals who are available to respond in a timely manner to calls for assistance, have the flexibility to respond to these calls from various locations in town, are dedicated and motivated to answer calls at any time of the day or night, and are paid sufficiently to justify their being asked to respond to such calls for help.

Assumptions

Residents place value on having a quick response to their calls for assistance.

Some residents are uncomfortable relying on State Police during the times from 11PM until 7AM when Shutesbury Police officers are currently not present.

Residents place value on having police who they know and are part of the community.

Community Policing is an integral and important part of policing in Shutesbury.

Residents want to know their police officers and become familiar with each.

Shutesbury has a frequent turnover of officers in the Police Department.

Officers who Shutesbury have sent to the Full Time Police Academy are recruited by other towns shortly after the officer graduates from the Academy.

Low pay and leadership issues are two reasons for the rate of turnover.

Officers without Full Time Academy completion (or Bridge Academy) will not be certified to be an officer in Massachusetts after July 1, 2024.

Many police officers desire employment in a small town.

Some cost savings expected through reduced cost of cruisers, individual equipment, training, and supplies.

FY 22 Police Department salary and wages budget \$195,000.

The Police Department mans two shifts a day (7AM to 3PM, 3PM to 11PM). Annual hours of these shifts is 5,840. At \$21.21 (current rate) per hour the annual expense to man these shifts is \$123,866. Adding chief salary (\$64,768) brings the total to \$188,634.

Shutesbury median income 2019 \$85,000.

The Locally Staffed Model

-Two officers, equal status, no Chief.

-Each officer required to live in the town of Shutesbury.

-No set schedule. Officers expected to accomplish administrative, investigations, office hours, traffic/radar enforcement, patrolling and prevention measures, etc., for the number of hours per week/month/year that is acceptable to the Select Board and community.

-When not actively accomplishing administrative, investigations, office hours, traffic/radar enforcement, patrolling and prevention measures, etc., the officers can be located anywhere in town including at home.

-Potential division of responsibilities might be one officer primary responder from 7AM to 3PM, other officer primary responder from 3PM to 11PM. Then officer primary from 7AM to 3PM would be primary from 11PM to 7AM. There were 41 calls for assistance in 2021 from 11PM to 7AM. Twelve of these calls were medical emergencies, which the Fire Department responded to. Based on this call volume the average number of calls strictly requiring police response reduces to less than 3 per month. If for some reason the primary couldn't respond, there is still the secondary officer available. If both were unable to respond, the State Police would be another option. Currently only the State Police would respond between 11PM and 7AM. This model would have three opportunities for response instead of just one.

-Another division of responsibilities might be one officer primary responder from Monday morning at 6AM until Thursday at 6PM. The other officer would be primary from Thursday at 6PM until Monday at 6AM. At first appearance this seems quite burdensome. However, from the data above, calls from 11 PM to 7AM are less than 3

per month. And calls occurring between 7AM and 11PM average out to about two per day. Being able to respond to this number of calls seems to be reasonable.

-Two cruisers provided, kept at officers' homes when not on calls, and which will remain in town except for required maintenance.

-One officer can leave town as long as other officer is available in town.

Any circumstance that both officers need to be away from town; training, court, personal requirements; State Police or use of mutual aid would be expected to respond to calls.

Coordination of availability completed by officers themselves.

-Can attend social functions where the consumption of alcohol or legal drugs would impair officer's ability to legally answer calls, as long as other officer is available in town.

Coordination of availability completed by officers themselves.

-The use of vacation time to be coordinated between officers.

-Each officer would be paid a salary of \$65,000 per year. This is the amount currently budgeted for a Shutesbury police chief. Based on police department pay rates for towns in Franklin County, this amount would make Shutesbury police officers some of the highest paid police officers in Franklin County towns. This amount keeps pay rates for the Town Administrator, Fire Chief, and Highway Superintendent aligned. This provides an incentive for police officers to work for Shutesbury under nontraditional circumstances. Offering top level salaries would increase the pool of potential applicants. This model is not conducive to sponsoring an officer at the Full Time Police Academy. Shutesbury officers would be required to have Full Time Academy training completed prior to being hired. Eliminating the need to sponsor an officer at the Academy would be a cost savings for Shutesbury.

-This model enhances the concepts and actual execution of community policing tenets. By having the town police officers integral members of the community they have a continuous opportunity to interact with fellow residents. Living in town, sending their children to our schools, attending the Fire Department pancake breakfast, the Sixth Grade spaghetti dinner, Celebrate Shutesbury, going to Town Meeting, and other town activities would allow both the officers and residents an increased opportunity to get to know each other and to make community policing a truly community function.

This model is very much "outside the box". It has definite benefits and shortcomings compared to other models. It would require an incredible amount of responsibility, integrity, maturity, and desire to provide professional police services to the community from each officer. It would also require extremely close coordination between the officers, ability to work well with each other, and willingness to cover for each other to provide the policing services the community needs and expects.

Additional data

7 AM to 11 PM Calls for Assistance (not including administration, investigation, radar enforcement, prevention activities)



11 PM to 7 AM Calls for Assistance

2021



Extrapolating the data for the months not posted there were 41 calls in 2021. This is an average of 3.4 calls per month between 11PM and 7AM. With 12 calls being medical emergencies, which the Fire Department would primarily handle, the average number of calls requiring police response between 11PM and 7AM is 2.41 per month.



2020



Extrapolating the data for the days in October not posted there were 45 calls in 2020. This is an average of 3.75 calls per month between 11PM and 7AM. With 9 calls being medical emergencies, which the Fire Department would primarily handle, the average number of calls requiring police response between 11PM and 7AM is 3 per month.

Data from <https://www.shutesbury.org/node/2762>

Unmanned shifts Jan thru Dec 2021



Extrapolating the data for the months not posted out of a total of 728 shifts, 118 (16%) were not manned.

With the Locally Staffed model there is the possibility that both officers might not be available to respond to calls at any given time and reliance on mutual aid or the State Police would be required. In 2021 sixteen percent of the shifts from 7AM to 11PM were not manned and required reliance on mutual aid or State Police response. It doesn't appear there were any serious consequences or complaints made about relying on mutual aid or State Police resources during these times.

Unmanned shifts Jan thru Dec 2020



Extrapolating the data for the days in October not posted, out of a total of 728 shifts, 189 (26%) were not manned.

With the Locally Staffed model there is the possibility that both officers might not be available to respond to calls at any given time and reliance on mutual aid or the State Police would be required. In 2020 twenty-six percent of the shifts from 7AM to 11PM were not manned and required reliance on mutual aid or State Police response. It doesn't appear there were any serious consequences or complaints made about relying on mutual aid or State Police resources during these times.

Data from <https://www.shutesbury.org/node/2762>

Full Time Academy Costs

Shutesbury Police Department
1 Cooleyville Road, Shutesbury, MA 01072
Office 413 259 1279-Dispatch 413 625 8200- Fax 413 259 1772
Direct Academy Costs for Officer Sean Sawicki

Ammunition	\$294.00 \$120.00
AEIOU Occ. Health – Medical Exam	\$190.00
Academy Required Clothing/Equipment	\$1171.84
Academy Tuition	\$3000.00
Physical Agility Test	<u>\$150.00</u>
TOTAL	\$4,735.84**

** These costs are directly related to attending the academy and do not reflect payroll expense.

T. Harding

Chief of Police

Note: Expenses reflect costs from 2017.

Estimating cost of sending an officer to the MPTC Full Time Police Academy

Shutesbury has sent officers to a MPTC Full Time Police Academy. Upon graduation the officer is required to sign an agreement to serve for 5 years on the Shutesbury force. If they leave prior to five years the officer is required to return the cost of academy tuition (\$3,000) prorated for years served.

At \$21.21 per hour (FY2022 rate), an officer at the academy for 5 months will cost \$16,968. (40 hours/week X 20 weeks X \$21.21) An additional officer to cover shifts while one officer at the academy will cost an additional \$16,968, tuition of \$3,000 and equipment expenses of \$1,735 equals a cost of \$38,671.

Staffing



Data from Annual Town Reports, Select Board meeting minutes.

With the two officers living in Shutesbury the Locally Staffed model would provide stability in staffing. Having just two officers would make it easier for residents to know their police officers and for the officers to have continuity in community policing issues.

**Salary for highest paid police employee
in Franklin County towns**

**Pay rates for other than highest
paid police employee in Franklin
County towns**



Police chiefs are some of the highest paid police officers in Franklin County towns. Paying each officer in this model \$65,000 per year would put them in the category of highest paid police officers in Franklin County towns.

TOWN OF SHUTESBURY

FRCOG W&S Survey FY22

Police Department	<i>Chief</i>	<i>Sergeant</i>	<i>Officers</i>	<i>PT Officers</i>
Elected or Appointed (E or A)	A	A	A	A
Number of Members on Board	1	1	3	5
Annual Salary if paid by salary	\$64,768			
Hourly Rate if paid hourly		\$21.26	\$21.21	\$21.21
Hours per Week (average)	40	40	40	varies
Hourly Rate Outside of Regular Duties	\$48/hr	\$48/hr	\$48/hr	\$48/hr
Date of Hire (staff only)	2016			
Benefit Eligibility (Y or N):				
Vacation	Y	Y	Y	
Sick	Y	Y	Y	
Dental	Y	Y	Y	
Personal	Y	Y	Y	
Longevity				
Other				
Health Insurance Eligible?	Y	Y	Y	N
What Percent does Town Pay?	60%	60%	60%	
Retiree Health Insurance Eligible?	Y	Y	Y	
What Percent does Town Pay?	50%	50%	50%	
Retirement System Eligible?	Y	Y	Y	
Other (Def'd Comp, 401K, Quinn Bill, etc.)	N	Y	Y	
Union Employees (Y or N)	N	Y	Y	

Source: <https://frcog.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/FY22-FRCOG-Municipal-Wage-and-Salary-Survey.pdf>

Submitted to the Shutesbury Police Study Group February 3, 2022 by Mike Vinskey