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Village of Waterman Police Department Operational / Organizational Analysis





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April 18, 2024

Amy Nykaza
Village Manager
Village of Waterman
215 West Adams Street
P.O. Box 239
Waterman, Illinois 60556

Dear Ms. Nykaza:

Please find attached the final report on our assessment of the current operations at the Village of Waterman's Police Department. This report reflects the Waterman Police Department as it exists today and also provides a roadmap for the future delivery of effective services to the residents of Waterman.

The report contains more than 70 recommendations. We recognize that not all of the recommendations will be implemented. They are provided to assist the Village Board in making the best possible decisions. Some are relatively minor and inexpensive. They can be accomplished within the very near future. Others are more ambitious and will require additional time and expense. We are well aware of the financial limitations all communities face, and Waterman is no exception.

The Village Board and your office are to be commended for requesting an independent assessment of the WPD and for taking a very important step in planning for the future of the Village of Waterman.

We look forward to further discussing our report with you and the Village Board.

Very truly yours,

Jimmy A. Lee, Jr.
President
Gold Shield Detective Agency, Inc.

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Executive Summary

STRATEGIC CONTEXT: THE WATERMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT TODAY AND BEYOND

The corporate authorities of the Village of Waterman, Illinois decided that it is in the best interests of the Village to conduct an analysis of existing operations within the Waterman Police Department (WPD) and to plot a course for the future. This effort was undertaken in recognition of the community's growth potential and also to educate the Village Board and Manager on what the WPD currently does as well as the department's needs for now and in the coming years. By design, it contains key information for the elected and appointed officials, and acknowledges the inherent benefits of being proactive in maximizing the quality of law enforcement services for now, and in the future. The Gold Shield Team applied best practices recognized throughout the law enforcement community in arriving at the findings and recommendations contained herein. The intent of this project is to provide the corporate authorities and the Village Manager with an external, objective analysis of current operations and also provide specific recommendations for ensuring effective, high-quality police services, with long-term sustainability for years to come.

ASSIGNMENT: WHAT YOU ASKED US TO DO

The Village of Waterman requested assistance from Gold Shield Detective Agency, Inc. (Gold Shield) to conduct an analysis of current police operations, including, but not necessarily limited to the following:

- The patrol function
- The traffic function
- Investigations
- Personnel Administration, including recruitment, selection and promotion
- Policies, procedures, and written directives
- Staffing
- Community relations and crime prevention
- Records
- Property and evidence control
- Detention and booking
- Communications
- Governmental and internal relationships
- Equipment and facilities
- Risk management and compliance with state and federal regulations

OUR APPROACH IN COMPLETING THIS PROJECT

The consultants engaged in this project utilized the following methods to gather and retrieve information, and make our findings and recommendations:

- Performed a comprehensive review of the Police Department's written directives
- Compared current operations with recommended best practices
- Reviewed reports, meeting minutes, ordinances, files, training records and evidence
- Conducted on-site visits to do interviews, collect data and perform inspections
- Held meetings with and/or conducted interviews with multiple stakeholders, including elected and appointed officials, local school, sheriff's personnel, and WPD staff

OUR TEAM: GOLD SHIELD

The following individuals were involved in the completion of this analysis:

Jimmy A. Lee, Jr.

Jimmy Lee began his law enforcement career as a military police officer in the U.S. Army, enlisting in 1977. He has over 40 years of law enforcement experience with progressive levels of responsibility in the field, serving as a patrol officer, investigator, undercover drug enforcement agent, sergeant, detective sergeant/commander, Deputy Chief and Chief of Police. He obtained certification as a traffic accident reconstructionist investigating serious motor vehicle crashes and has testified as an expert witness in both criminal and civil matters. He has served as a Regional Planning Coordinator with the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarms System (ILEAS), assisting agencies planning for large community events or potential civil unrest. He is a graduate of the prestigious FBI National Academy and Northwestern School of Staff and Command. After his initial retirement he founded Gold Shield Detective Agency, Inc., a licensed private investigation agency focused on public sector investigations.

Daniel L. McCollum, MBA, CLEE

Daniel L. McCollum served as the principal consultant in this project. Mr. McCollum had a 42 year law enforcement career, including 30 years as a Chief of Police in communities ranging from populations of 2,000 to 45,000. He has served as president of multiple police command organizations and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy. In addition to his law enforcement career, Mr. McCollum has extensive experience as a part-time criminal justice adjunct faculty member at the College of DuPage and other community colleges. After retiring as a Chief in 2014, he served as a full-time Criminal Justice College Professor and the Title IX Coordinator at Sauk Valley Community College until 2021. Dan has provided consulting services to more than 35 units of local government over the last 25 years.

Notice and Disclaimer – Not Legal Advice

The information provided in this report does not, and is not intended to, constitute legal advice. Instead, all content is based upon: analyzing processes; reviewing files and records; interviewing various stakeholders; and conducting on-site observations at the Waterman Police Department and Village Hall, and throughout the Village of Waterman. In compiling this review, Gold Shield Representatives have provided multiple recommendations based upon our backgrounds and experience and also by comparing current operations at the WPD with best practices in the field of law enforcement.

Key Findings

Key Finding #1: The Village of Waterman corporate authorities are interested in retaining a capable and efficient law enforcement organization to provide quality services to the community.

The decision by the Village President and Board of Trustees to conduct an independent study of the current law enforcement operation demonstrates a willingness on the part of the Village leaders to do what's in the best interests of the community. It also acknowledges that having an outside assessment may ultimately be educational in learning best practices, while also providing a blueprint for efficient operations in the future. Several of those interviewed readily admitted that they knew little about what the WPD actually does. The elected officials and members of the department were willing to speak to us and share their opinions about the direction of the department. Many interviewees expressed the opinion that this effort might be a catalyst for better internal communications and building trust and cooperation. Mutual trust and respect appears lacking in various interactions. At no time did any elected or appointed official interviewed for this report express any desire or intention to eliminate the police department. There is strong support for a capable and efficient police department to be maintained. There's also a desire to know how the WPD operates and what it is that they do.

Key Finding #2: The written directives (policies) of the WPD are ineffective and need to be completely rewritten to match the services provided in Waterman and the size of the community.

The WPD is using an inefficient, 640 page written directive system implemented several years ago. The policies in place are largely being ignored and were purchased from an outside vendor without, in many cases, being modified to reflect the smaller organizational structure of the WPD. A strong written direction system is essential in an effective law enforcement agency. An

effective set of policies will guide, control, and educate the employees and also serve as a risk reducer to the officers and the Village. The rewriting of the department's policy manual should be given the highest priority. Once the manual is rewritten, personnel should be trained and tested on the content. Compliance with policies should be assured through inspection, supervision, and when policy is not followed, the initiation of counseling and progressive disciplinary measures.

Key Finding #3: The current police headquarters is unsuitable for the WPD and its personnel.

The WPD facility is dysfunctional and may create an unsafe environment. There is little or no room for conducting interviews or speaking in confidence with employees, the public, or juveniles, who must, in many cases, be shielded from public view. A separate evidence vault of considerable size cannot be installed in the current evidence room. The overall appearance of the station is that of a cramped, disorganized mess. Compounding the problem is that in certain circumstances, arrestee processing is done on site. An intoxicated or mentally unstable individual who becomes combative can easily access the Village Hall. This could result in the endangerment of Village Hall employees. Considering other facility options should take place.

Key Finding #4: The chain of command, reporting responsibilities and organizational structure needs to be clarified and followed.

Through interviews it became apparent that key stakeholders are confused, uninformed or even disregarding the chain of command. Instances of seeking guidance other than through the established protocol and soliciting answers, (sometimes from outside the chain of command), is occurring. The Village Ordinance creating the Office of Village Manager indicates that she is vested with supervising all Village departments. Using the Manager's office as a central point of contact should be standard procedure. If utilizing the Manager as the point of contact is not an effective or desirable way to operate, then the ordinance should be modified to specifically describe how instructions are to be given, by whom, and under what circumstances an individual may circumvent the prescribed lines of authority. In any event, the expectations of the elected officials on this issue should be discussed, agreed upon, and implemented.

Key Finding #5: Training, included mandated training should be attended.

Training keeps employees interested and also is intended to enhance job performance. During the project, it was learned that the Chief of Police has never attended any formalized supervisory or management training necessary to prepare him for the important duties of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting. In addition, he is required by law, to attend at least 20 hours of approved courses each year. This has not been

happening. Thus far, the Illinois Law Enforcement Training Standards Board has not called the lack of training into question. Members of the WPD have not in all cases received legally required training in blood borne pathogens, Illinois Right to Know, or dealing with hazardous materials. Attendance at training schools should be documented in easily accessible master training files and contain a description on the subject matter, course provider, dates of attendance, and certificates of completion and/or scores. During interviews with Village staff, elected officials and WPD members, (including the Chief), there seemed to be a general consensus that the Chief would benefit from a 400-hour management course available from various providers and generally recognized as a command requirement. Given the lack of any previous supervisory training attended by the current Chief, such courses, based upon their regimented curriculum and the scholastic demands placed upon each student, might be a substantial challenge for him. Accordingly, some supervisory training, typically attended by sergeants and mid-level supervisors would be of greater benefit to the Chief at this time. Since many sergeants in other organizations supervise up to 10 subordinates every day, and the staffing of the Waterman Police Department consists of two (2) authorized full-time employees, a more basic supervisory training program could be beneficial. Additional management training could follow. Mentoring could also be beneficial.

Key Finding #6: The Property and Evidence Function is in need of substantial improvement.

During the field work performed in this analysis, it was learned that there is no master inventory of property and evidence maintained by the Waterman Police Department. The Chief readily admitted that he has not conducted any inventory or audit of the Evidence and Property Room since he was appointed as Chief. Stored items are not necessarily tagged when taken in, and determining when and how an item came into the possession of the Police Department currently requires much more effort than it should. In some cases, (like the untagged bicycle in the PD garage), the circumstances leading to the Police Department acquiring the item may never be known. The Chief, upon request, was able to produce a letter from the State's Attorney after one sample case was disposed of, and such letters and other dispositions should be the standard practice. There are no printed forms for documenting the chain of evidence. There is no entry log for the room. The current situation regarding evidence handling was considered so serious that Gold Shield alerted the Village Manager, resulting in the Evidence and Property Room being sealed. Until further notice, entry to the room requires two (2) separate locks to be opened. The Chief can access one of the locks and the Village Manager the other one. Neither one can enter without the other being present. A log has been created to document whenever the room is entered, the reason, and any items removed or added. A complete audit of the property and evidence operation, using an outside auditor, is absolutely necessary.

Key Finding #7: The Police Department needs to be more informative on their monthly reports.

The WPD should strive to provide better reports on its programs, policies and successes. The monthly report currently used is strictly statistical in nature and fails to provide meaningful information beyond the numbers. By adding a cover memo outlining key activities, events, training attendance and other items of interest, the Police Department would benefit by keeping elected and appointed officials and members of the community more informed of daily operations, trouble spots, commendations received, milestone events, etc. Elected and appointed officials all expressed a desire for more information in this regard. A new type of monthly report would also aid the Village in gathering more meaningful and precise data to determine staffing levels.

Key Finding #8: The Police Department needs to establish an annual list of goals and objectives.

The goals and objectives of the WPD are unknown. The WPD Mission Statement should be prominently displayed within the office and posted on the WPD website/Facebook page. By developing an annual list of goals and objectives for the Police Department, members will have a blueprint for success and provide the elected and appointed Village officials with a clear understanding of the agency's efforts in providing professional law enforcement to the community. Measurable dates and performance reporting are key components for these items.

Key Finding #9: A records retention schedule needs to be followed by the WPD in accordance with the requirements of the Illinois Secretary of State Local Records Commission, and other State requirements.

The Illinois Secretary of State oversees the retention and storage of public records and publishes a records retention schedule for municipalities. No application for any destruction or guidance of Waterman Police Department records has been issued since 2001. The records storage area is laden with boxes eligible for destruction. By receiving approval for destruction, multiple boxes could be destroyed, leaving the area less congested. The updated Illinois laws pertaining to retaining juvenile records makes it mandatory to destroy certain records on key dates after the reports were generated. This has not been done. Addressing this situation will need to be a dedicated project undertaken by someone working in concert with the Secretary of State. It will also require the filing of forms with SOS seeking the authorized disposition and/or destruction of affected files. Of paramount importance is that most of the juvenile records currently stored, (some dating back to 15 years or more), be destroyed as required by Illinois Public Act 100-0205. This should be given a high priority.

Key Finding #10: A determination should be made as to the authorized strength of the Police Department. It should be based upon available funds, attracting and retaining capable and efficient personnel and be supported by data. The role of Auxiliary Police Officers should also be clarified. Authorized WPD positions should be included, by number and position title, in the annual budget.

Because of the inability of one full-time officer to return to work, the WPD has 1 full-time employee and two part-time officers. In many cases, approximately 60 hours of patrol is being provided per week. When WPD personnel are not on duty, the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office does some patrolling as time permits. Currently, most of the WPD patrol hours are filled by the Chief, who also has oversight tasks to perform. As a result, he spends several hours per week in the station. Within the Police Department employees, there is a sensitivity because there were previously three full-time personnel and now there are only two. This has led to the mistaken belief that the WPD is being disbanded. None of the elected or appointed officials, who were specifically asked, expressed a desire to eliminate the WPD. One of the challenges presenting itself in the WPD is that when the Chief or anyone else is on leave for any reason, there are not sufficient personnel to fill the absence. Although this analysis was not dedicated to performing a staffing study, the fieldwork allowed our group to make certain observations and recommendations. (See pages 19-21). The elected officials, through the budget process, will ultimately decide the authorized strength of the WPD. The decision on staffing, though ultimately reflecting the desires of the Board, should be driven, in part, by data. At this time, because of limited information collected by the WPD, the necessary data is not available. Several people interviewed, who are not members of the WPD responded that they don't know what it is that members of the WPD actually do. Such data should be readily collected on a daily basis through the use of a Daily Activity Report. At present, no such report is being done. The future use of such reports will be outlined in the recommendations portion of this document.

The use of Auxiliary Police Officers and whether to allow them to carry firearms should also be decided. (See page 20).

Overall Assessment

The Village of Waterman, Illinois covers approximately 1.5 square miles with a population of approximately 1,600. It is in a largely rural area in DeKalb County, Illinois, and is approximately 63 miles west of Chicago. According to yearly statistics provided by the Waterman Police Department (WPD), there were 19 criminal arrests during 2022 and 22 arrests in 2023. There were two burglaries reported in 2022 and one the next year. A total of 1,928 incidents came to the attention of the WPD in 2022 and 1,557 in 2023. Traffic enforcement is the most commonly recorded activity by the WPD (approximately 62% of everything they do). Realizing that the agency has been short-staffed due to an extended leave by one member of the Department for over a year, the decline of some 240 incidents from 2022 to 2023 must be evaluated in that context. Fewer patrol hours can translate into less officer-observed incidents. The data supplied indicates that the Village of Waterman has a very low crime rate. Staff members and elected officials all expressed the opinion that crime is low and that hopefully it will continue to remain that way.

1. PATROL

The WPD currently provides approximately 60 hours of patrol per week. This varies, depending upon the availability and assignment of part-time officers. According to information provided by the Village Manager, the goal is to provide 110 hours of WPD patrol per week. The department's authorized strength is two full-time officers, (including the Chief) and an unspecified number of part-time officers. Because of the extended leave of one full-time officer, and a current lack of available part-time officers, less patrol time has been the norm for quite some time.

When there is no WPD officer on duty, the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office provides unstructured patrol coverage and handles any emergency calls.

Officers in the Waterman Police Department, (as is the case in most similarly sized agencies), are generalists. A great deal of specialization is not desirable, because the providing of patrol services is the main thrust a law enforcement organization and is often referred to as the "backbone" of a police department.

One officer in the WPD has achieved specialized training and appropriate certifications as a Juvenile Specialist, Elderly Service Officer and Field Training Officer.

Patrol duties also include occasional walk-throughs of the Indian Creek Middle School, random residential patrols, motorist assistance, traffic enforcement and service requests. Crime reports and criminal investigations are a very small part of an officer's activities in the WPD.

Officers on patrol receive frequent hand waves from motorists and residents. It appears that residential patrol is appreciated and encouraged by the department and those in the community.

Patrol officers are expected to locate and enforce Village ordinances (nuisance violations, abandoned vehicles, etc.) and take appropriate actions through verbal notice, written notice, or, in cases of continued noncompliance, a citation is issued to the violator. Annual reports indicate 3 ordinance citations were issued in 2022 and 8 were issued in 2023. During the course of this report, it was mentioned several times that ordinance violations (using warnings as a first step) should be an activity to be increased by WPD personnel. One of the key activities for anyone assigned to patrol is to be vigilant and proactive in addressing matters in need of attention.

Recommendations

- 1.1** Finding suitable part-time officers to allow the WPD to reach the goal of 110 hours of dedicated patrol per week should be pursued. Further outreach and enhanced efforts should be provided to recruit part-time officers. If the current list of part-time officers reveals that they are not able to work patrol shifts for WPD, then they should be removed from the available roster of personnel.
- 1.2** WPD personnel should be encouraged to regularly do walk-throughs of Indian Creek Middle School and also to exit their patrol vehicles and mingle with residents and visitors at parks and businesses in the community. This is a key part of community policing.
- 1.3** A process should be developed by the Chief to determine the availability of part-time officers and to schedule their work hours in advance and to provide that schedule to the Village Manager.
- 1.4** Members on patrol should be vigilant for Village ordinance violations and provide guidance and warnings when such violations are observed. The use of police cadets or community service officers to address these issues could be considered. The Village Manager's office should be kept apprised of violations and follow-up actions.

2. TRAFFIC

The safe and expeditious movement of traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular, is a primary responsibility for law enforcement officers. The WPD spends a substantial amount of time on traffic enforcement. There are very few actual traffic accidents in Waterman, with a total of 8 reported in 2022 and 5 in 2023. The low accident rate can be attributed to several factors, some measurable and some not. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration attributes a large percentage of fatal accidents to excessive speed. Intoxicated drivers contribute to some

50,000 deaths per year. It is quite possible that some drivers are more cautious because they know Waterman takes traffic enforcement seriously. Speed enforcement should be a part of any traffic safety program. The tolerance level for speeding is always a matter of individual discretion, custom and practice. Typically, the courts and juries will frown on unrealistic enforcement of speeding violations, where little tolerance is applied. School zones and residential areas with proper signage are often areas for less tolerance, due to the increased likelihood of children playing, at recess, etc.

The WPD utilizes The DeKalb County Sheriff's Office or the Illinois State Police to investigate major traffic accidents. These agencies have the necessary technical equipment and expertise.

One of the more common concerns expressed by various respondents in this study was the need to use education and warnings as the primary tools for minor violations and to concentrate actual enforcement actions on the more serious violations. One example given was a commonly disregarded stop intersection, where stopping violators and issuing warnings for a first offense would be an excellent educational opportunity. If violations of the stop sign are not resulting in any enforcement, (including the use of warnings), then the signs should be considered for removal. Without enforcement of violations, stop signs become suggestions, versus requirements. This may imply that stopping is "optional", versus being required.

The Village of Waterman does not rely on revenue generated from the issuance of traffic citations to fund its budget. This fact was unanimously verified through interviews with the elected and appointed officials. Officers are not expected to write citations for the purpose of generating revenue. No professional law enforcement organization supports the enforcement of traffic violations for the purpose of generating revenue. It appears that members of the Waterman PD, for the most part, are commonly using warnings to gain compliance. 370 written warnings were issued in 2022, and 246 were issued in 2023. The statistical reports provided do not include verbal warnings. One WPD member said that all warnings are written (or at least tabulated that way). More vigilance for unregistered golf cart violations was also suggested.

Some informal research conducted before and during this project by our team revealed a common theme: Many Illinois officers who stop drivers for minor traffic violations issue warnings instead of actual citations. Actually, it seems that approximately two-thirds of drivers stopped for such violations receive a warning.

The WPD has multiple radar units for monitoring speeding violations. Such units should be recertified as required, using existing standards and best practices by a qualified service provider. Fire extinguishers are carried in each of the patrol vehicles.

The current layout of the WPD monthly report does not have a category for DUI arrests. The enforcement of intoxicated driving laws should always be a high priority and publicized in reports.

Patrol vehicles do not currently have traffic cones in the storage area. While roadway flares are very useful in nighttime situations (accidents scenes, disable motorists, etc.), traffic cones provide greater visibility in many instances and are recognized by motorists at greater distances.

There is no evidence in the training files to verify that WPD personnel have had any training beyond the police academy in directing traffic. Traffic safety vests were found in 2 or 3 cars.

Recommendations

- 2.1** The WPD should continue to utilize warnings as a valuable resource in enforcing traffic violations.
- 2.2** New and experienced WPD members should be counseled and guided on the need to use their experience and discretion in enforcing regulations related to traffic. Warnings for minor violations should be encouraged.
- 2.3** Officers should take a current inventory and conduct an assessment/evaluation of existing traffic control devices (signage) within the Village to determine the visibility and condition of these signs. Where signs should be added or replaced, such information should be communicated to the Village Manager. All requests for installation of new (non-existing) traffic control devices must be in compliance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- 2.4** Traffic safety cones should be stored in each of the WPD vehicles.
- 2.5** WPD radar units should be certified in accordance with regulations and equipment specifications.
- 2.6** A traffic safety vest should be stored in each WPD vehicle.
- 2.7** A category should be included on each WPD monthly report to indicate the number of arrests for DUI.
- 2.8** Refresher training should be provided on Traffic Direction to all members of the WPD.
- 2.9** The WPD should continue to utilize the expertise of the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office and/or the Illinois State Police for the investigation of major traffic accidents.

3. INVESTIGATIONS

The WPD, by virtue of being a smaller law enforcement agency, utilizes either the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office or the Illinois State Police to conduct complex criminal investigations. No officer on the WPD is designated as an Investigator, because of the generalist nature of an officer's daily duties and also because of the very low crime rate. Such a designation is

unnecessary, especially with the capable assistance of the previously identified agencies. Most initial investigations of property crimes and crimes against persons are investigated by WPD. Reports are well structured and are typed in a professional manner. The narrative portions of reports are used to outline the actions taken and the elements and circumstances of each offense reported.

Because actual offense reports are rarely completed, WPD would benefit from the use of investigative checklists to assist officers and ensure that proper investigative steps are taken. Such lists are invaluable to smaller agencies.

The WPD does not routinely make any follow-up contact with property crime victims to see if there has been any new developments or change since the initial report was taken. In cases of theft or mislaid property, the property may be found or recovered by the owner after simply being misplaced or forgotten. A follow-up telephone call or personal visit could result in finding that there is no need for additional investigative work to be performed because the item is no longer missing. Also, such contacts may reveal additional investigative leads. At a minimum, it would inform the victim that the case will not be the subject of follow-up investigation unless more information is developed.

Recommendations

- 3.1** The WPD should continue to utilize the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office and the Illinois State Police to assist in the investigation of major crimes.
- 3.2** Investigative checklists should be available for such crimes as burglary, arson, criminal sexual assault, armed robbery, etc. to assist in making sure that proper protocols are followed.
- 3.3** At least one follow-up contact should be made within thirty (30) days of a reported criminal case by a WPD member to see if any new information pertinent to the investigation is available. In cases of unsolved crimes against persons, the number of contacts and 30-day time frame should be extended.

4. PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING RECRUITMENT SELECTION AND PROMOTION

The WPD uses a detailed application form for interested applicants to complete. Most openings are for part-time police officers. Advertising is done primarily through the *Blue Line*. Additional recruiting is done through word of mouth and networking of WPD personnel with other officers in the region.

The Village Manager and the Chief of Police review applications and identify those applicants

who are invited for interviews. The candidates are then interviewed by a Village Committee (in Executive Session). If the consensus of the Committee is that a candidate should be considered for appointment, the recommendation is brought to the Village Board. If the Board approves the appointment, the candidate is appointed.

Several persons interviewed during this analysis expressed concerns that the applicant pool tends to be slanted toward friends of members on the WPD. The Village Manager and the Village Committee are concerned that a wider applicant pool is not being considered.

Within the WPD, there is skepticism about the use of a Committee as opposed to the Chief recommending hiring of part-time officers based solely upon his evaluation.

The hiring process is within the purview of the Village Board, and ultimately all appointments require their approval. Many communities in Illinois operate under a Fire and Police Commission or Civil Service Commission, where hiring decisions are vested with those boards. The process in Waterman for hiring is not totally inconsistent with that concept. It would benefit the WPD and the Board to work on building mutual trust and also to make sure that candidates presented for consideration are not viewed as friends, or friends of friends, and ensure that appointments are based upon merit.

Those considered for full-time or part-time police officer positions, in addition to passing an interview, are required to undergo psychological, polygraph and background evaluations. Full-time new hires also are required to take a medical examination.

Virtually all law enforcement agencies are experiencing difficulty in finding applicants. Waterman is no exception. The WPD has, for the most part, tried to find already trained officers, thus saving the cost of paying for the academy tuition costs and the officer's salary while attending the academy. This is understandable, but may need to be reconsidered. It may prove advantageous to formally contact other area law enforcement agencies within a radius near Waterman and advertise openings in order to enhance recruiting efforts.

Personnel and training files are maintained in the Village Clerk's Office. Release of any information is done in compliance with the Illinois Personnel Records Act.

Recommendations

- 4.1** Recruitment of WPD personnel should include current methods of advertising as well as networking with other agencies to attract a wider pool of applicants.
- 4.2** Steps should be taken to alleviate any appearance that friends and acquaintances of WPD members are given priority in hiring.
- 4.3** A Village Committee, composed of elected officials should continue to interview (in Executive Session) applicants for full and part-time positions.

- 4.4 Although it will be more expensive, consideration should be given to sending acceptable candidates for academy training at Village expense, which would include paying a salary for training hours attended. Some communities use a contract to bind new hires to remaining with the department for a specific period after completion of the academy. If the new hire doesn't fulfill the agreed upon commitment, the employee must repay the Village for the amount specified in the pre-employment contract.

5. POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND WRITTEN DIRECTIVES

The current Waterman Police Department Policy Manual is a confusing, outdated, largely ignored set of written directives which is supposed to guide the members of the department. The rewriting of the Policy Manual should be among the highest priorities for the WPD. The manual in use today contains over 640 pages. The word "should" is used to cover many key tasks, which tends to suggest that such tasks are recommendations instead of requirements. A strong written directive system is essential in the management of any police department and serves as a source of reference when questions arise, as well as a liability insulator when issues are raised as a result of accidents, alleged misconduct or injuries. The current manual was approved in 2018 and was purchased through a third party provider, who supplies similar manuals and updates to many law enforcement agencies within the U.S.

The current Waterman Village Code requires the Village Board to approve rules and regulations for the Police Department. This arrangement could delay the issuance of new policies, orders, etc. Such language in many communities has been modified to eliminate the requirement of Board approval and simply allow the Chief to issue directives as part of his/her duties. If the Board desires a level of oversight, they could add language to the Code to remove the Board and simply add the words "subject to the approval of the Village Manager."

Several pages of this report could be dedicated to the multitude of problems with the existing Policy Manual, but in the interest of being brief, yet informative, we will provide an overview of some of the things that were discovered during this project:

- The following positions/titles are included within the manual, but do not exist:
 - ✓ Rangemaster
 - ✓ Armorer
 - ✓ Supervisor
 - ✓ Manager
 - ✓ Auxiliary Coordinator
 - ✓ Part-Time Coordinator
 - ✓ Detective Lieutenant
 - ✓ Detective

- ✓ Traffic Sgt.
- ✓ Investigations Patrol Sgt.
- ✓ Administrative Patrol Sgt.
- ✓ Community Relations Coordinator
- ✓ Community Advisory Committee Volunteers
- ✓ Firearms Restraining Order Coordinator
- ✓ Field Training Officer Administrator
- ✓ Crime Analysis Unit
- ✓ Fiscal Agent
- ✓ Forfeiture Reviewer
- ✓ Civilian
- ✓ Property and Evidence Technician
- ✓ Evidence Custodian
- ✓ Supervisor of Evidence Custodian
- ✓ Protected Information Officer
- ✓ Exposure Control Officer
- ✓ Cadet
- ✓ Training Bureau Manager
- ✓ Chaplain
- ✓ Wellness Coordinator
- ✓ Peer Support Advisor

- The following policies, and policy contents (not to be considered a complete listing) are problematic because they are not being followed or are in need of rewriting to adhere to best practices and/or legal requirements:

- ✓ Training Plan (Does not exist.)
- ✓ Use of Force Report (Does not exist.)
- ✓ Handcuffing Training (None is provided.)
- ✓ Intergovernmental Agreement on Death Investigations (Does not exist.)
- ✓ Emergency Call-Out Procedure (Does not exist.)
- ✓ Auxiliary Meetings (None have been held.)
- ✓ Auxiliary Evaluations (Do not exist.)
- ✓ Field Training Manual for Auxiliary Officers (Does not exist.)
- ✓ Regular training on Custodial Parent or Guardian Arrests (None has been provided.)
- ✓ Emergency Management Plan (Does not exist.)
- ✓ Auxiliary Training of 284 hours for new officers (Does not occur.)

- ✓ Annual Police Department Community Relations Surveys (Not conducted.)
 - ✓ Rapid Response Training (Not conducted.)
 - ✓ Immigration Training (Not conducted.)
 - ✓ Operations and Deconfliction Policy (Does not exist.)
 - ✓ Annual Respirator Fit Testing (Not conducted.)
 - ✓ Wellness Program Audit (Not conducted.)
 - ✓ Community Relations Survey (Not conducted.)
 - ✓ Community Advisory Committee (Does not exist.)
 - ✓ Annual Report on Bias-Based Policing ((Does not exist.)
 - ✓ Roll Call Training Topics (Do not exist.)
 - ✓ Documentation of Haz-Mat Training (Does not exist.)
 - ✓ Monthly Evidence Room Inspections (Do not exist.)
 - ✓ Employee Assistance Program (Does not exist.)
 - ✓ Body Armor Replacement Schedule (Does not exist.)
 - ✓ Village Indemnification/Hold Harmless Agreement (Does not exist.)
 - ✓ Cadet Program (Does not exist.)
 - ✓ Safety and Health Committee (Does not exist.)
 - ✓ Illness and Injury Prevention Plans (Do not exist.)
- It would appear that the current policies need a massive overhaul and that a new manual, specific to the duties of members of the WPD, is absolutely necessary.

Recommendations

- 5.1** The existing WPD Policy Manual should be totally rewritten and updated. New directives should be developed. The revised directives should rely upon best practices and try to closely resemble the recommendations found in the ILEAP Accreditation Program followed by many agencies within the State of Illinois.
- 5.2** WPD personnel should be trained and tested on the new manual. Documentation attesting to the training and testing should be placed in each member's training files.
- 5.3** The revised policy manual should be reviewed annually. In cases where laws are changed affecting policy, revisions should be made as they occur.
- 5.4** There should be a paper copy of the policy manual available for review/access stored within the police department headquarters. A PDF or similar non-editable version should be available as well.

- 5.5** Consideration should be given to amend the current Waterman Village Code and to no longer require rules and regulations for the WPD to be approved by the Board. If oversight is a concern, the Village Manager could be utilized for review of policies prior to implementation.

6. STAFFING

Currently, the WPD is operating with a full-time Chief, a full-time Officer who is on medical leave, and two part-time officers. The return to work date of the officer who is on medical leave is uncertain. The Chief is compensated for additional patrol hours through monies dedicated in the budget. As stated in Section 1 of this report, the current goal is to provide 110 hours of WPD service per week. This allows for the possibility of two full-time personnel (including the Chief) and 30 hours distributed between part-time officers.

Various methods have been utilized in law enforcement to determine what the appropriate staffing levels should be for an agency. One such technique is to establish an officer per 1,000 population as a baseline. For years, using the population approach, communities came to the conclusion that they needed one officer for every 1,000 residents. Some communities went slightly higher or lower. The population per 1,000 approach has limitations and must be viewed with caution.

By way of illustration, two Communities in Illinois are listed below with their population and the number of officers. They are listed to show the problem of equating population with the number of law enforcement officers.

- Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois has a population of approximately 2,100. They have 21 full-time officers. They are located in a densely populated area with substantial vehicular traffic and a shopping mall nearby.
- Rosemont, Illinois has a population of approximately 4,000. They have a daytime population often exceeding 50,000. The community has a large convention center, entertainment venues and an outlet mall. They have 41 full-time officers and 200 auxiliary officers.

The absence of a Daily Activity Report and accompanying data typically available through such reports makes it difficult to determine how busy (or not) members of the WPD are. Simply stated, it's difficult to determine how much patrol time, handling calls, etc. is actually performed. No one interviewed during this report voiced any support for the WPD to provide 24 hour coverage, and the current arrangement with the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office seems to be an acceptable strategy.

The listed deficiencies in the areas of policies, training, records disposal and evidence handling outlined in this report raises important issues: How much time does/should the Chief spend in the handling of management tasks? Is he too busy to attend to these necessary functions? Is he being asked to do too much and still maintain a patrol presence? A Daily Activity Report would also offer more information regarding the questions posed.

If it is determined that the Chief is overworked, then delegating some administrative tasks to another position might prove beneficial. Potentially, a part-time civilian aide might be hired to complete some of the routine tasks not requiring a sworn police officer to accomplish. Without a clearer picture of how much of the Chief's work day is spent on managerial duties versus patrol, traffic enforcement, etc., it is pure speculation on what the best solution is. Many police chiefs spend considerable time on personnel issues and budgeting. These issues should be minimal in Waterman because of the size of the community and the department. One thing is clear: There is a substantial amount of administrative work currently not being done and there are significant challenges to be addressed.

With the goal of 110 hours of WPD patrol per week, the situation with the officer on medical leave creates the greatest challenge. Combined with the inability to find part-time officers, the goal of staffing to achieve the stated goal should be afforded a higher priority.

The desired use of Auxiliary Police Officers should be clarified by the Village Board of Trustees. Auxiliary officers in Waterman currently carry firearms. Section 4-1-10 of the Waterman Village Code states that auxiliary officers are not conservators of the peace. This raises the question as to whether or not they should be armed. Their training is nowhere close to that of a full-time or part-time officer. As such, their actions in making an arrest or conducting searches is a matter of concern. A false arrest or unconstitutional search or seizure could be very costly.

Recommendations

- 6.1** The Village Board and Village Manager should agree upon a staffing proposal (to include numbers) for the Waterman Police Department. The hours (times of day) of WPD patrol coverage should not be publicly disclosed.
- 6.2** The continuing employment status of the officer on extended medical leave should be resolved through consultation with the officer, the Village Attorney(s) and the appropriate insurance carrier(s).
- 6.3** Each member of the WPD, including the Chief, should complete a Daily Activity Report. This will provide useful data to determine the need for additional administrative assistance. This report should provide information on how much administrative time is actually required, as well as determine non-essential tasks.
- 6.4** Consideration should be given to hiring a civilian administrative aide for 16-20 hours per week to assist in completing administrative tasks, including records disposal, collating Daily Activity Report data, etc.

- 6.5 See Section 4 of this report for recommendations on recruiting and hiring additional part-time officers.
- 6.6 The desired use of Auxiliary Police Officers should be clarified by the Board. Whether or not they should be allowed to carry firearms should be determined as well.

7. COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND CRIME PREVENTION

The WPD established a Police Explorer's Post. The program has been inactive due to the coordinator being on extended medical leave. There is no WPD directive outlining the objectives of the program or any of its activities. Funds collected and distributed are maintained in a separate fund and not through the Village. According to a member of the Illinois Police Explorer's Board, as a result of the discovery of substantial mismanagement and improper use of funds in one Illinois Explorer Post, some communities, in the interest of transparency, have created a municipal account for Police Explorers overseen by the municipality and audited annually. This may be worth considering in Waterman.

Additional programs previously conducted by utilizing WPD personnel included Trunk or Treat and Toys for Tots.

No recent specific survey of the community regarding the performance of WPD has been distributed to residents. Such surveys can be very informative. Electronic and traditional paper surveys can be used for this effort.

The WPD can use monthly Board reports to highlight the department's activities. The Village of WPD Facebook page may also be utilized for crime prevention tips.

Recommendations

- 7.1 The WPD should attempt to re-establish the Police Explorer Post and conduct Toys for Tots and Trunk or Treat if sufficient personnel are available.
- 7.2 A written directive should outline the WPD Explorer Programs' objectives, eligibility requirements and activities.
- 7.3 A survey should be made available every 2-3 years for Waterman residents to offer feedback and suggestions to the department.
- 7.4 The WPD monthly report should contain information of interest to the community regarding training attended, crime patterns or other items of interest.

- 7.5 A decision should be made on whether or not the Village will oversee the funds collected and disbursed by the WPD Explorer Post.
- 7.6 Facebook and other social media avenues should be used to offer crime prevention tips and to seek community assistance.

8. RECORDS

The WPD utilizes the Village Police RMS System. The system is used as the basis for compiling data included on the WPD monthly reports. Juvenile records are only accessible to a Juvenile Officer.

Incident reports are completed at the station. They are unsigned once completed. The typed reports project a professional appearance.

There is a massive backlog of stored records eligible for destruction. Records eligible for disposal and over 20 years old are in the records storage area. Juvenile records, some over 15 years old, are being maintained in the WPD storage area. This is contrary to the Illinois Compiled Statutes.

Recommendations

- 8.1 Officers completing an incident report should be required to affix their signature to the report. Electronic signatures are acceptable.
- 8.2 Those records eligible for destruction or disposal should be. Approval must be received by the Illinois Secretary of State prior to any action being taken.
- 8.3 Juvenile records must be disposed of in accordance with the Illinois Compiled Statutes. Their access should continue to be restricted to authorized individuals only.

9. PROPERTY AND EVIDENCE CONTROL

This area of the WPD is woefully in need of action. The Chief readily admitted that he has not conducted any inventory or audit of this area since assuming the duties of Chief. The Waterman Village Code, Title 4, Section 4-1-2 C 3 designates the Chief of Police as the custodian of lost, abandoned and stolen property. There is no master inventory (not even a hand-written journal) outlining what items are in the evidence room.

There are untagged items, including a bicycle in the common area of the garage, leaving no

clue as to where the item(s) came from, no originating case number, date(s) the item(s) were received, no suspect or owner's name, disposition, chain of custody, etc. There's no telling what will be learned when the recommended outside audit is conducted (and it should be). The task of reorganizing the property and evidence function is going to be a formidable one, and time consuming as well.

At the time that this report is being completed, the evidence room has been sealed and requires two keys to open the room. The Chief of Police has one key and the Village Manager has the other one. Neither the Chief nor the Village Manager can enter the room without the other. A log has been created to document when the doors two locks are opened, the date and time when opened, and the reason for entering the room. In addition, when the room is exited the date and time must also be logged. This arrangement should remain in effect until a complete outside audit is conducted.

Training is needed in the area of evidence packaging and storage. A list of materials unsuitable for storage in the area must also be compiled (commercial fireworks, combustibles, etc.). Addressing the evidence room situation must be given the highest priority.

Recommendations

- 9.1** At the earliest available opportunity, a complete, and independent, outside audit should be conducted of the WPD property and evidence room.
- 9.2** A written directive establishing procedures for receiving all evidentiary and non-evidentiary property obtained by WPD personnel and requiring full documentation as to the circumstances, date, time, agency case number, employee's name and ID number and full description of the property must be developed. This directive must include disposal procedures, methods, etc.
- 9.3** A WPD Evidence/Property Control Form should be created to facilitate the organized retention, disposal, required testing or analysis, etc. of all property coming into the possession of any WPD personnel.
- 9.4** A master inventory (journal) should be prepared and maintained listing all property coming into the possession of WPD personnel.
- 9.5** Proper storage containers for perishable items and flammables should be obtained for use in the evidence/property room. This would include items such as a fire-resistant vault, refrigerator, etc.
- 9.6** To ensure that items are disposed of as required, a procedure should be developed to comply with the disposition of unclaimed property as outlined in the Illinois Compiled Statutes. This would include getting court orders for disposition, as necessary.

- 9.7 Regular, ongoing audits of the property and evidence room must be conducted. Documentation of all audits must be retained. Discrepancies must be documented and investigated.
- 9.8 WPD personnel should be trained on the proper handling, marking, cataloging and storage of evidence and found or recovered property.
- 9.9 The WPD should maintain sufficient packaging materials to facilitate the proper storage of evidence and found or recovered property.

10. DETENTION AND BOOKING

The WPD reported 31 criminal and warrant arrests combined in 2022 and 27 during 2023. Typically, most of these incidents require the taking of fingerprints and a photograph of the arrestee. The current WPD facility allows for taking fingerprints at the station, but the “booking” area is relatively insecure and poses potential security risks to the officer(s) as well as anyone in the Village Hall who may be present in other offices within the building. The DeKalb County Sheriff’s Office has a secure booking area and can accommodate the booking of WPD arrestees. Prisoners are transported in WPD vehicles equipped with a shield to separate the transporting officer from the arrestee.

Recommendation

- 10.1 For security reasons, arrested persons should not be fingerprinted or photographed at the WPD. They should instead be booked at the DeKalb County Sheriff’s Office in Sycamore. If the WPD moves to another location having enhanced security features, this matter should be revisited.

11. COMMUNICATIONS

Each of the three (3) WPD vehicles contains a computerized mobile data terminal (MDT). Two of the current MDTs are older and should be considered for replacement. The WPD owns 7 portable radios. Radio dispatches originate from the DeKalb County Sheriff’s Office. During office hours, non-emergency telephone calls can be answered at the WPD. If no one answers, the call is routed to an automated prompt and answerable at the Sheriff’s Office. WPD Officers have radio access with area patrol units from the DeKalb County Sheriff’s Office and other local law enforcement agencies as well. They also have access to the Illinois State Police through I.S.P.E.R.N. (Illinois State Police Emergency Radio Network). In the event that more than one WPD officer is on duty, officers may contact each other by radio, cell phone, text or MDT message.

Recommendations

11.1 The aging MDTs should be considered for replacement.

12. GOVERNMENTAL AND INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

There is a level of friction between members of the WPD and the Village Board and Manager. This is evidenced by the unwillingness of the WPD to use e-mails to confirm and document matters requiring attention. In another case, a WPD employee expressed reluctance to enter the Village Hall without having someone accompanying them, after previously stating they wouldn't go into the Village Hall at all. Various personality conflicts were noted during this project. We learned of an unwarranted outburst by a WPD employee in the workplace. The tantrum was disruptive and contrary to expected levels of decorum. Allowing such workplace behavior to go unchecked may well invite future unacceptable behavior to take place as well. Counseling was not documented by the Chief and should have been. Without documentation, progressive disciplinary action, if warranted, is more difficult to administer.

The Village of Waterman is a very small organization and cohesiveness and trust are key components of any efficient operation. The use of e-mails to confirm actions and to memorialize requests is a common and efficient means of enhancing efficiency. Management should expect cooperation from everyone, including WPD personnel.

There is a rift between the WPD and the Village Board and Manager relating to the hiring of personnel to fill officer vacancies. In local government, the Board sets policies, the Manager implements the policies, and the employees are expected to comply with the policies. Anything else will not be effective. Nothing in this section is meant to suggest that policies are implemented without a period for comment, review, etc. In many cases, mutual collaboration develops and grows from feedback and discussion of policies prior to their implementation. Compliance with policies and the acceptance of direction are keys to efficiency and a requirement for everyone within the organization.

Members of the Village Staff, Village Board and WPD interviewed for this report were cooperative, open and accessible, with one exception. A member of the WPD was unwilling to offer any opinions on anything and instead said they would only answer with facts. When told that opinions on subjects would be helpful in preparing the report the member again reiterated that they would not provide any opinions, just facts. This rigid, uncooperative demeanor could be a real detriment if it is something the member brings to work and exhibits in daily interactions when representing the WPD.

Because of the individual's reluctance to cooperate, the interview was stopped at 13 minutes. As a result of the member refusing to offer opinions on anything, the opportunity to gather useful information was lost. Here are some of the areas intended to be explored through inviting the member's opinions:

- What other training opportunities would you like to see?
- Does the agency need more equipment? If so, what?
- How could internal communications be improved?
- How could police community relations be improved?
- Are more speed limits or stop signs needed? How about street signs in general?
- Do you think the existing PD headquarters is adequate?
- What percentage of minor traffic violations should be warnings?
- Should someone at the PD focus on ordinance violations?
- How would you staff the WPD? Hours? Number of officers, etc.

The reluctance of the WPD member to cooperate was very disappointing. The “just the facts” response was not indicative of someone who seemed willing to assist in addressing the needs of the WPD today or in the future.

Recommendations

- 12.1** The use of e-mails to memorialize requests, actions, approvals, etc. should be utilized and encouraged as a common and necessary business practice.
- 12.2** Notwithstanding the recommendations in 12.1, face-to-face communication between Village employees in all positions should continue and be encouraged. Such encounters should be polite, congenial, and cooperative and conducted in the spirit that everyone is on the same team. Those refusing to cooperate should receive corrective counseling and progressive disciplinary action. WPD should not operate as a non-member of the Village of Waterman team. They are a key component part of the entire Village operation.
- 12.3** The Board and the Village Manager should reaffirm the hiring process and have a dialogue with the Chief on their commitment to hiring qualified people to fill vacancies and share their concerns on the hiring process. There should be a clear explanation of the process and the component parts, including recruitment, advertising, and selection.

13. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

The current headquarters for the WPD is connected to the Village Hall. This is a common type of arrangement for smaller municipalities. The area was recently renovated, but remains very small and dysfunctional. There is little space for confidential interviewing, very little storage space and the desk arrangements are not consistent with contemporary office settings. Evidence and records are stored within the same room. This is not a good practice.

There is a small area for booking within the WPD (See Section 10). Booking prisoners in the WPD is a security risk, and there is very little chance of actually detaining someone who wishes to escape. In such instances, the security partitions in each of the patrol vehicles would be a more secure option for temporary holding, while also being mindful of the need to keep the prisoner under surveillance and to monitor temperature and climate inside of the vehicle(s). An alternate location for the WPD headquarters, perhaps use of a former construction or school trailer, would be a considerable upgrade. The overall appearance of the current facility is dismal and could be improved with a more modern atmosphere.

The WPD currently has three vehicles used for patrol. One of the vehicles has approximately 170,000 miles on it. The newest vehicle has approximately 30,000 and the other one has approximately 70,000. The mileage is impacted by the department's staffing (or lack thereof), and with the vehicles sometimes travelling less than 1,000 miles per month, setting a mileage threshold for replacement a vehicle is somewhat of a daunting task. The involvement of a qualified and reputable mechanic to evaluate each vehicle could be very helpful in trying to assess their future longevity. Regular, scheduled maintenance and inspections would also be useful. The recommended Daily Activity Report would also contain starting and ending mileage for each shift, and a checklist for serviceability, lighting, fluid levels, damage, etc.

The WPD has one AED (defibrillator) deployed. Additional units would be advantageous. Only one of the vehicles has a first aid kit.

There is a 1991 Chevrolet Police vehicle titled to the Village of Waterman that is stored off-site by an auxiliary police officer. This vehicle is used for special events, parades, funerals, and police shows, and is not used for regular patrol duties. This vehicle was a topic of discussion at the Regular Village Board Meeting held on March 11, 2014. A decision should be made as to the future of this vehicle and whether or not it should be sold or retained under the current arrangement.

The WPD supplies a list of assets and equipment to the Manager's office as part of its participation in the Illinois Municipal Risk Management Program. The list includes vehicles, weapons, cameras, computers, monitors, body armor, etc.

Recommendations

- 13.1** Consideration should be given to finding a new police headquarters. It's unknown how much could be done to remodel existing garage space or the cost to allow for more room. This recommendation recognizes the financial constraints of a small community. However, what is now being used is inadequate on many levels.
- 13.2** The current police vehicles should be inspected thoroughly to determine their serviceability. The one vehicle having accumulated approximately 170,000 miles should be considered for replacement when funds are available.

- 13.3** The acquisition of two additional AED devices should be considered.
- 13.4** A vehicle replacement schedule should be considered. This would allow for budgeting and put a plan in place to control expenditures.
- 13.5** Identical first-aid kits should be placed in each of the patrol vehicles.
- 13.6** The continued ownership of the 1991 Chevrolet Police vehicle used for parades, etc. should be revisited. The Village may wish to consider selling the vehicle or otherwise disposing of it.

14. RISK MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS

Law enforcement agencies are driven by policy. An agency's policy and procedures manual is the foundation for guiding and controlling the actions of employees. Employee adherence to established policies is strengthened with training, reinforcement, and in some cases, testing. Most people don't jump at the opportunity to read several hundred pages of policies, and sometimes the only time that the manual is accessed is if there is a question of performance or in the application of corrective measures for non-compliance. A strong written directive system is one of the most important risk management tools available to any law enforcement organization.

Participation in training programs, (those mandated as well as elective) can be very effective in keeping employees abreast of changing laws, court decisions, technology and best practices. It also keeps them interested. WPD personnel have access to the Police Law Institute online training program and participate in completing monthly online sessions. This is an affordable, accessible program and is used by many law enforcement agencies.

Some of the greatest liability issues arise from the areas of law enforcement driving, use of force (not limited to firearms), and arrest, searches and seizures. The records obtained for this report indicate that WPD members qualify with a firearm once per year on the State of Illinois Mandated Course of Fire. No records provided indicated any refresher training (with testing) on the following issues relating to firearms:

- ✓ Low light firing
- ✓ Firing in residential areas
- ✓ Firearms safety procedures and storage
- ✓ Judgmental firing (Shoot-Don't Shoot) training
- ✓ Dangers of ricochet or missed rounds
- ✓ Dangers of warning shots
- ✓ Dangers of shooting at or from a moving vehicle
- ✓ Firearms modification issues

- ✓ Off-duty considerations
- ✓ Firearms range rules
- ✓ Firing at extended distances
- ✓ Cover and concealment
- ✓ Liability for unnecessary display (pointing a firearm)

Various legal decisions have faulted law enforcement agencies for limiting their firearms training program to proficiency (qualifying only) and not training and testing on other areas identified on the preceding list.

Law enforcement driving is another high liability area. The training files provided do not list any in-service driver training for WPD personnel. Courses are available from various training outlets offering behind-the-wheel driver training. Such courses also address the dangers inherent in high-speed and pursuit driving. Not every Illinois law enforcement academy consistently provides behind-the-wheel training. Many veteran officers surveyed over the years have reported that the last behind-the-wheel driver training they attended was in high school.

Use of force issues are not limited to the discharge or display of a firearm. Topics to be covered through refresher training include: verbal persuasion as a technique, use of force options, the use of impact weapons and electronic control weapons, the use of improvised weapons, dealing with resistance, use of police canines, and the risks associated with carrying unauthorized weapons.

The laws regarding arrest and search and seizure are constantly changing. Although the Police Law Institute regularly covers such topics, additional online and in-person training courses are recommended. Mobile Team Training Units are an excellent source for such classes.

The training records supplied do not contain evidence of members of the WPD attending Illinois Right to Know Training, Haz-Mat Training or Bloodborne Pathogens Training. All of these courses are required and not optional.

The WPD Chief indicated he has attended modules in the Incident Command series offered through the N.I.M.S. program. He has not updated his training and should do so. In addition, he has not attended the 20 hours of training required for Police Chiefs every year.

The WPD has respirator masks available for use by its officers. OSHA requires an initial fit testing and an annual testing as well. There is no evidence in the materials provided that such annual testing has occurred.

One of the most fundamental issues relating to training in a law enforcement organization is the creation of a single source or log showing annual training per WPD officer. A simple journal, created through WORD or EXCEL would allow for quick and easy access to show who has attended training, the date(s) of the training, where the training occurred, how long the training lasted, the course provider, and any final grade, certificate, etc.

Illinois and Federal labor law posters are displayed as required in the Village Hall.

Although the current WPD Policies refer to both a Use of Force Report and a Use of Force Review, Board, neither of these currently exists.

Recommendations

- 14.1** Upon the development and issuance of new policies, WPD personnel should sign an acknowledgement of receipt and be periodically tested (open book) on the policies.
- 14.2** The WPD should continue its participation in the Police Law Institute online training program. Other programs aimed at risk avoidance should be considered as a supplement to the Police Law Institute.
- 14.3** The WPD firearms training program should be revised to include periodic documented training and testing on issues such as night firing, firing in residential areas, firearms safety procedures and storage, judgmental firearms training, dangers in ricochet rounds, dangers in warning shots, dangers in shooting at or from a moving vehicle, firearms modification issues, off-duty considerations, firearms range rules, firing at extended distances, and cover and concealment.
- 14.4** WPD members should attend refresher training on driver training, including behind-the-wheel training. This training could be scheduled in 3-5 year intervals.
- 14.5** WPD members should attend documented training on the use of force, including deadly force and less-lethal alternatives. Unless otherwise mandated by the ILETSB, this training should take place every 3 years.
- 14.6** Training records of WPD members should be kept in a master file or log, in addition to the employee's personnel and training file. These records should include the student's name, date(s) of training, training location, hours of attendance, the course provider and copies of any certificate and/or final grade.
- 14.7** WPD members should attend courses on arrest and search and seizure. This training could be scheduled for each officer every 3-5 years and should serve as a supplement to taking the online Police Law Institute courses.
- 14.8** All members of the WPD, including the Chief should maintain their compliant status on Incident Management Training (N.I.M.S.) courses.
- 14.9** Annual respirator fit-testing should be completed by all WPD members.

- 14.10** A Use of Force Report needs to be created and a Use of Force Review Board needs to be comprised of individuals other than the Chief of Police. The Chief is the final authority under most current policies and his presence on the Board could be detrimental to the process. In a Department the size of WPD, the current Use of Force Policy is not a workable one.
- 14.11** The pointing of a firearm at any person should require the filing of a Use of Force Report.
- 14.12** The Chief of Police must attend the required 20 hours of annual training for Police Chiefs as prescribed by the ILETSB.
- 14.13** WPD should conduct an Active Shooter Training Exercise in cooperation with area public safety agencies at the Indian Creek Middle School.