

**TOWN OF GUILFORD
EFFICIENCY TASK FORCE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY MAY 18, 2010
7:00 P.M. – GUILFORD TOWN HALL**

Present:

Task Force Members: Martha Carlson, Michael Dowley, Chairman Gary Gilbert, Jim Galvin, Mark Matlosz

Town Officials: Selectman Veronica Wallace (arrived 7:35 p.m.)

Police Department: Chief Thomas Terribile, Deputy Chief Jeffrey Hutchinson, Lucy Krauchick, Administrative Assistant

Police Commissioners: Chairman Joseph Ametrano, Thomas Cole, Rose Dostert
Clerk Karen Quercia

Mr. Gilbert called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. 7:02 – 7:03 p.m. Approval of minutes of the May 4, 2010 meeting.

Motion: Upon a motion by Ms Carlson, and seconded by Mr. Galvin, the Efficiency Task Force voted to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2010 meeting.

*Approve: Carlson, Galvin, Gilbert,
Oppose: None
Abstain: Dowley, Matlosz*

2. 7:03 – 8:30 p.m. Discussion with Chief and Deputy Chief of Police and Police Commissioners.

Mr. Gilbert began by explaining the purpose of the Task Force. He noted that the Police Department was probably the most efficient and best managed of all the Town departments, and complimented them on the outstanding job that they do. In learning about how the Police Department functions, the Task Force hopes to capitalize on what they are doing and share their efficiencies with other town departments.

Ms Carlson, also a member of the Police Commission, noted that the Task Force is interested in the business processes the Police Department has developed, as well as the cost efficiencies that can be applied to other departments.

Chief Terribile reviewed the Police Department Organization Chart which had previously been supplied to the Task Force. He explained that it is a complex chart, as they are a small department. One officer may have multiple duties, and report to a different supervisor for each of those duties. For example a patrol sergeant on midnights will report to Lieutenant Robinson; that same patrol sergeant may also do training, and report to the commander of support services for that function. A single person may do three jobs: Sergeant; SWAT Sergeant; and Training Sergeant. Each area of responsibility is overseen by a different supervisor. It is a complex system but it works.

One of the reasons that it works so efficiently is because the department has a Duty Manual, which is updated every year. The Duty Manual includes a Code of Conduct, Job Descriptions, reporting structure and the qualifications for each job. There are operational orders for every situation. Every officer receives a duty manual and has it at their fingertips. The duty manual is reviewed with each new hire.

Guilford is one of 16 towns in the State which is federally accredited by CALEA. In order to be accredited, the Department has to meet 570 standards, and provide documentation on how those standards are met.

Performance evaluations are done every six months by an employee's immediate supervisor, in accordance with the department policies. If an employee has two supervisors, they are evaluated together. There are overall staff meetings where performance evaluations are done in groups. This works well and is good for the employees.

Deputy Chief Hutchinson explained that there are four separate evaluation forms: supervisor, dispatch, patrol and civilian. The Chief also meets directly with the patrol staff without the supervisors present. Evaluations are done from the top down. Commissioner Cole explained that the Commission evaluates the Chief and Deputy Chief. The Commissioners see all the performance evaluation scores; they can view all pertinent documents and see the matrixes. Deputy Chief Hutchinson clarified that his position is evaluated by the Chief of Police.

As regards the budget, the goal is to start at the bottom and work through to the top. For example, when the Noise Ordinance was passed, the department looked at what was needed to enforce the ordinance, including training. The department sets yearly goals and asks for input up and down the chain of command. Getting input from all employees gives everyone ownership of the department's goals.

Three years ago, the Department was able to negotiate Light Duty into the Police Contract. This has helped tremendously with Worker's Compensation costs. Until that time, if an officer had a work related injury, they could not return to work until they were at 100% work capacity. Now if an employee is cleared for light duty, they can get back to work faster, which helps them to feel better. Recently, three officers were injured on the job, but were able to come back to work once they were cleared for cleared for desk duty, (i.e. dispatch). The Police Surgeon evaluates the injured employee and uses a form to check off what the employee's limitations are. Then the department can assess whether the light duty can be accommodated. This has been working out very well.

When an employee is injured, the employee's supervisor completes a report of what happened, and those reports are reviewed by the Chief and Deputy Chief to see what corrective action needs to be taken. For example, Guilford is one of the few towns in the State that mandates wearing bullet proof vests.

Mr. Dowley asked what the compensation level was for an employee that is out injured. The Chief explained that the Town makes up the difference between what the employee receives from Worker's Compensation and their normal salary. While out on a Worker's Compensation injury, the employee gets paid from the Town, and the department salary account is reimbursed by WC.

In response to a question regarding the history of the Town providing full salary to an injured employee, the Chief responded that he did not know the reason why, only that it has been a town wide policy for the past 35 years. He added that if officers are willing to risk their lives to keep the Town safe, the town should recognize that and take care of the officers when they are in need.

Overtime is strictly accounted for within the department. The Chief and Deputy Chief monitor overtime very closely. The same is true for replacement salaries. In response to rumors that have been

circulating in Town, the Chief made it clear that there is no “padding of overtime”. Each day and night shift is examined before anyone is paid overtime.

Outside service jobs are paid by the vendor, and none of that pay goes towards an officer’s pension. Donated police service includes the parades and graduation. Guilford Handcrafts pays for police services for their annual handcrafts fair on the Green.

Currently there are 46 employees, including civilians, in the Police Department. Only the Chief and Deputy Chief are not in the Police Union. Because the department is almost fully staffed, they have been able to stay under budget with overtime and replacement salaries. They use VSS software to keep track of the scheduling. It is a big job to keep track of time off. The department is the only one in town that utilizes the MUNIS system to track their payroll. The system tracks the use of vacation, sick and holiday time. The department would also like to move forward with utilizing the functions of the MUNIS system, such as purchasing.

The Police Department would like to upgrade their current AS400 green screen computer system with a more efficient system that would help provide better manpower allocation. There is no money currently in the budget to do this. It would cost approximately \$147,000 to upgrade to a Windows based system. This would provide more efficient dispatching, complaint investigation and report review. This system populates forms, which saves officers time and would help to reduce overtime as well. The AS400 system is a complicated system which is no longer being supported.

Mr. Dowley asked if an analysis could be done to justify the cost of a new system. The Chief responded that it would be difficult to figure out the exact dollars, but they could try to determine the time it takes to type out a complaint v. using a point and click system, and then multiply that time by the number of complaints.

In 1991 the department started to put laptops in the patrol vehicles. The department was a leader in the State in this regard. It is much more efficient to have an officer be able to run a name or warrant from his vehicle, instead of driving miles back and forth to the station. This has also improved response times. An officer can type information into the laptop in his car, and the information automatically goes into the station system.

The Police department responds to between 13,000 and 14,000 complaints per year, and administratively responds to 66,000 incidents per year. An officer’s time is tracked from minute to minute. The department has the ability to track trends and place personnel in the sectors of town where they are most needed. Ideally they would like to have a minimum manpower of four, but right now they have three.

Two positions were just lost to budget cuts. The Police Department is always looking for ways to save time and money while still providing service to the town

Currently, the Police Department is working with the IT departments for the Town and BOE to discuss the possibility of having a town wide IT position. This would help to provide IT support town-wide, instead of the current compartmentalized system, and provide off site backup for each other. This is a complicated undertaking, but they are working together to try to resolve this issue. Mr. Gilbert stated that the Police Department is moving in the right direction by opening up communication with other town staff.

Deputy Chief Hutchinson reported that each year each unit in the department sets goals. Quarterly reports are submitted and the Lieutenants track whether those goals are being met. This is a big part of establishing what the department will do for the year, and also helps in budgeting.

One other area the department focuses on is monitoring the stress of the department members, which may be caused by the job and/or outside factors. The appraisal system helps identify an issue an

employee may be facing, and there are department members who are trained to identify colleagues who may be facing difficulties. The Town has an EAP provider and all referrals are confidential. Most years, the usage is about 4%. This year the usage has been 9%. The Department values its employees and pays attention to them and their needs. Addressing problems at their onset can go a long way to prevent larger problems. The EAP service is a small thing that goes a long way to show the department cares about its people, both on and off the job.

Because the department rules are clearly stated in the Duty Manual, discipline is not an issue. There are daily observation reports that insure that any matters are dealt with as they occur.

Mr. Galvin asked about the Police Department outsourcing its custodial services. The department found it was more costly to have a full time custodian than to hire a firm to provide cleaning service. The department went out to bid several years ago for cleaning services for the Police and Fire Departments and Animal Shelter. It currently costs the Police Department \$24,000 per year to have a custodian come in for 4 1/2 – 5 hours a day 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Having a vendor provide the service also means that there is always coverage. They are very satisfied with the service, the building is always pristine. Lt. Hocking coordinates with the vendor to clean the carpets, furniture, etc. The building was built as serviceable as possible without having large maintenance costs. For instance the rubber floors cost more initially, but they are resilient and low maintenance.

The cost for custodial service recently went down to \$24,000 per year. At one time it cost \$41,000.

Landscaping services are also outsourced. Park and Rec provided the service at one time, but their priority had to be keeping the ball fields maintained.

The Police Department actively pursues regional opportunities when possible. They work regularly with Branford, also a CALEA accredited department, as well as with Madison. The Crisis team, SWAT team, negotiator and sniper all work with Branford. Regionalizing services helps to save money. When working with other area departments, the Chief makes sure that they share the same standards and have the same quality of officers.

State statutes impose some limitations on what the department can do, for instance a Guilford officer cannot make an arrest in Branford. The departments do provide mutual aid in the form of car stops and DWI. Currently they are working with the Town's In-House Counsel to formulate a mutual aid policy within the next six months. This could also provide a great cost savings.

Mr. Dowley asked what the Police Department would be like without the organization charts, job descriptions and performance evaluations. The Chief responded that without the org charts and duty manual it would be unfair to expect the employees to know what to do. You could not tell a new employee what to do and how to do it. The civilian staff pay scales are not as clearly defined which creates friction between the employees. There is no consistency or clear definition of duties. The Town needs to come up with a standard.

There are two separate dispatch centers in Guilford. The 9-1-1 center is in the basement of Town Hall. When a call comes in the caller's address and phone number are identified for the dispatcher. The Town Hall has a hard line to the police department. The system is redundant to the PD system. When the police department had to close due to an anthrax scare, they were able to move to another area and use a radio dispatch system.

There are pros and cons to combining the two dispatch systems. In terms of security, combining the two would make for one area of vulnerability area as opposed to two. Also, if there was an incident such as a lightning strike, having two centers would provide a back up system. Currently police dispatchers are COLLECT certified, whereas the 9-1-1 dispatchers are EMT certified. Policies and procedures would also have to be reviewed and amended. State statutes mandate that by 2016 any town with a population under 40,000 will have to combine their PSAP system with another area town (Branford or Madison).

The State will tie funding into meeting this requirement. This also raises the issue of where to locate a regional dispatch center.

The department is currently investigating how to meet the State requirement and still keep a dispatcher at the PD. At night the dispatcher is the only person in the building, the officers are on the road. A person would still be needed at the window, but it would not have to be an officer. The dispatcher also keeps an eye on the prisoners through the security cameras.

Mr. Gilbert asked if the Police Department was aware of any other efficiencies the Police Department might be aware of. Chief Terribile mentioned a regionalized SWAT team.

He further explained that his officers are often the first to respond to a medical call. For that reason, he feels it is worth the \$6,000 - \$7,000 a year the department spends to certify their officers in CPR and critical medical treatment. You cannot put a value on a person's life. The Guilford Fire Department is the best on the shoreline, but many lives have been saved because the Police Department has been able to respond so quickly.

Selectwoman Wallace asked if the Police Department could elaborate on their relationship with Youth and Family Services. In cases of domestic violence, a counselor from the Youth and Family Services department aids the police officers in dealing with the psychological trauma the victims and family members may face. They team with counselors to go to the scenes, and go back to make sure protective orders are in place. The goal is to break the cycle of violence. The counseling and interaction between the two departments has been indispensable.

Those type of interactions and follow-ups do not show up in the department -statistics or in the number of administrative calls. A complaint can involve hours of follow up time that are not logged as individual incidents.

The department also provides house checks when residents are away. Every car on the road is required to make two checks per day, meaning they physically walk the property (which sometime leads to injuries, especially patrolling a property at night). They also have an elderly visiting program where an officer will stop in to check on an elderly resident.

The department provides a child safety seat program and free fingerprinting service. They register all businesses in town and keep the contact information up to date.

The Police Department also has a crime prevention team, and provides programs on cyber bullying, babysitting classes, and teen safety. They coordinate programs with the Women and Family Life Center as well.

All of these programs provide invaluable community service and help to provide a good relationship with residents, none of which can be measured in dollars and cents.

The department is very service oriented. Many of the officers volunteer in the community, even those who reside outside of Guilford.

The School Resource Officer was recently cut due to budget considerations. That officer will now be placed in one of the four sectors the town is divided into. The SRO office will remain at the high school, so that the officer assigned to that sector can still have a presence at the school. The current administration has addressed many disciplinary issues, and the Chief feels that the schools are more secure than they have been in the past. He is personally invested in making sure the schools are a safe place.

Chairman Ametrano stated that he has worked in management most of his adult life, and the Police Department is the most efficient operation he has seen. It is a tribute to Chief Terribile and Deputy Chief Hutchinson. They know where their officers are at all times. It is a well run operation.

Commissioner Cole stated that each month the Commissioners are provided with a work analysis and results and progress are narrowly charted. Reports of trends and benchmarks are provided at every Police Commission meeting.

The Chief stated that the Police Department has a reputation to uphold.

The Efficiency Task Force thanked the representatives from the Police Department for their time and input.

3. 8:30 – 8:35 Old Business

Mr. Gilbert reviewed the preliminary recommendations report which was presented to the Board of Selectmen. He stressed the need to improve on the deliverables such as the performance evaluations and job descriptions which were requested back in March. The Task Force noted that there is a time lag due to the lack of clerical resources. Ms Carlson suggested that the First Selectman instruct the Human Resource Director to devote a certain number of hours each day to working on the items the Task Force has requested, and assign clerical help to this task as well. The Task Force discussed whether they need to change their deliverables to recommendations instead of product.

Mr. Dowley stated there is a sequence to the requests that needs to be followed. There are performance evaluation systems available, which the Human Resources Director can utilize. The Task Force agreed that they devote time at their next meeting to the job descriptions.

4. 8:35 – 8:45 New Business

The Task Force discussed the impact of staff reductions through attrition. The Task Force discussed whether it should recommend that all Town departments work a 40 hour work week. Currently the GEA works a 35 hour week. Mr. Dowley suggested that this is an efficiency issue which should be considered during collective bargaining.

After a discussion among the members, it was agreed that the Task Force will invite the Board of Selectman to their meeting to get a sense of the BOS priorities and a sense of the direction in which they would like the Task Force to head.

Ms Wallace stated that she would like to see cost savings, and ways to deliver services more efficiently.

The Task Force discussed whether their September deadline should be extended. Ms. Carlson suggested that the Task Force prepare their report for September, disband, and the BOS should then appoint an Ad Hoc Human Resources Committee.

The Efficiency Task Force meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Quercia
Clerk