

Village of Trumansburg
Law Enforcement And Public Safety Committee (LEAPS)
Meeting Notes
October 21, 2021

Introduction (Mayor Hart)

- Purpose of the committee: To be an open forum for interested/engaged members of the community to be able to discuss *all aspects* of public safety – police, emergency response, undefined safety concerns – in a safe, informal setting.
- The safety of all residents and visitors to the Village is of utmost importance, and safety encompasses much more than police. All issues which impact safety of any kind deserves the attention of local government.

“Police Reform” Report Updates (Chief Nelson, Trustee Hannon)

- Body camera implementation completed this summer
 - Chief Nelson shared a couple of instances where the use of the new body-worn cameras protected the Village from false complaints
- Officer mental health and wellness
 - Chief Nelson has recently attended seminars discussing the rise in officer suicide and self-harm
 - The group discussed the stresses of all first responder professions and the post-traumatic stress that comes with handling certain types of calls
- Collection of demographic data
 - The County is seeking to implement this in the shared, county-wide police database
- Search for a 2nd full-time Village officer continues
 - Typically 300 people take the annual police officer’s exam administered by the County
 - Roughly 10% make it from exam to academy graduation
 - This year only 17 people took the exam
 - Chief Nelson is unwilling to hire “just anyone”, so the search continues

Committee Member Questions/Comments/Concerns

- How do we reduce speeds on Village streets?
 - Can residents report speeding vehicles?
 - What options are available for increased/targeted enforcement?

- Chief Nelson outlined what is possible with current staffing and the pros/cons of additional signage, speed bumps, etc.
- Do we have a partner/resource for mental health calls?
 - Yes, Tompkins County Mental Health has staff on-call for certain types of incidents.
 - These staff are not able to respond on a short notice/quick response basis.
 - These staff will not respond without law enforcement personnel present
- Have there been complaints about racial/equity issues against the Village, or in/around the Village in general.
 - We have not received any such complaints against the Village or its personnel during Chief Nelson's tenure.
 - We occasionally hear anecdotal stories of racial bias from within the community.
 - One committee member shared a personal story of one such interaction.