

**VILLAGE OF RED HOOK POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**PUBLIC SAFETY SEMINAR**  
**JANUARY 21, 2012**  
**2:00**

Present: Mayor Blundell, Deputy Mayor Kovalchik, Chief Truitt, Sergeant Hildenbrand, Officer Patrone, Officer Sterritt, Officer Van Wagner, Officer Mirabella, Officer Wagler, Supervisor Crane (Town of Red Hook), Legislator Traudt, Councilwoman Cagle (Town of Red Hook)

Mayor Blundell opened the meeting at 2:00 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Blundell began the meeting with an introduction of the seminar and a pop quiz regarding how many cars go through the Route 9 and Route 199 traffic light. According to the NYS DOT, 14,500 cars go through with just over 3,000 on Linden Avenue.

Sergeant Hildenbrand introduced the officers present. Mayor Blundell introduced the Chief and spoke about his background and qualifications (mixture of street and academic). Mayor Blundell went on to discuss the reason for holding the meeting – had been hearing negative talk about the police department on the street. He went on to take a poll of the audience – who are Village residents and who are Town residents. He then turned the discussion over to Chief Truitt.

Chief Truitt started off the presentation talking about his background – born and raised in Dutchess County, entered the Coast Guard at age 17, resident of Red Hook for the past eight years. He then went on to give an overview of police function. He spoke about American Policing and the many layers of policing: Federal, State, County and local. There are three main functions of policing: 1) order maintenance; 2) law enforcement; and 3) service delivery. In the United States, there are mostly local law enforcement officers. In Red Hook we have community policing which focuses resources proactively and preventively. He went on to discuss the mission statement for Red Hook (comprised of six goals). They proudly provide the same services to everyone – there is no special treatment. The services provided are as follows: public safety through preventive patrols; emergency response and first aid (AED's); School Resource Officers; criminal investigation; residence and business security checks; bike patrol officers; drug take-back initiatives; child ID as well as quality of life services. Some of the school issues discussed focused mainly on the middle and high school. The main problem in the middle school is truancy. The police will check up on a student that is truant and have been known at times to transport the child to school. The police will provide bullying presentations as well as speak in health classes (discuss drunk driving).

Chief Truitt went on to discuss the hours and organizational structure of the police department. The Village of Red Hook Police Department provides their services to Village residents 16 hours a day for 7 days a week; totaling 112 scheduled service hours. The New York State Police serves

as back-up to the Village (dispatching). The Town of Red Hook contracts with the Village – serves the Town approximately 16-26 hours a week.

The organizational structure is as follows: 1 Chief P/T; 1 Sergeant F/T; 1 Officer F/T Competitive; 1 Officer Hourly Competitive; 10 Officers P/T Competitive.

Chief Truitt discussed the organizational benefits of a small, but effective organizational structure:

- increased communications;
- managed consistency;
- increased accountability and responsibility;
- formal and informal training;
- attracting good quality officers;
- small community based police department – keeping it that way;
- productivity has increased 240% from 2008; and
- costs less money and less officers.

He then displayed a chart of Red Hook Police Department incidents handled (2008-2011) together with a breakdown of types of incidents handled (does not include vehicle and traffic) in support of the above. 9% arrests (152); EMS/Fire (93); and Services (625). Arrest categories are as follows: 16% ABC/Public Order; 28% Drug Offenses; 17% DWI (average about 2 a month); and 32% Other Vehicle and Traffic Offenses.

At this point a member of the audience questioned why the police are no longer patrolling in Tivoli. Chief Truitt advised that they had gone with the County. Another audience member hopes that Tivoli reconsiders for more coverage in Tivoli.

A question was raised as to how much of the Town and Village is covered by the police department. 1.1 square miles for the Village and 40 square miles for the Town (24 hours out of the week by contract).

A Village resident, Ms. Diamond, spoke out on how great the police had responded when her home was robbed. She said the police had responded in 5 minutes of the call and an arrest was made in two days with most of the stolen property recovered.

Traffic tickets were the next item discussed. The amount of tickets in the Village was broken down as follows: 2008 – 893 tickets; 2009 – 973 tickets; 2010 – 1,149 tickets; and 2011 – 1,224 tickets. DWI arrests were broken down as follows: 2007 – 17 arrests; 2008 – 14 arrests; 2009 – 14 arrests; 2010 – 14 arrests; and 2011 – 24 arrests.

The Red Hook Police Department currently has four working patrol vehicles and one unmarked car. Police vehicles are purchased through bids. They get state contract prices at a bond rate. Every two or three years a new vehicle is needed. Cost - \$33,000. As far as people resources,

there are two full-time officers (benefitted); 1 hourly officer (non-benefitted); 10 part-time officers (non-benefitted); and 1 part-time administrator (non-benefitted). They run one officer per shift.

The budget for police services has been declining. For 2011-2012 the budget amount is \$423,772. The budget is broken down as follows: salary – 69%; vehicles and fuel – 5%; NYS Retirement – 13% and medical.

Police services cost off-set; return on investment. Village taxpayer portion – 57%; donations – 0%; grants – 2%; outside government – 20%; fines and court fees – 21%; approximately 43% of the cost is off-set by officers' activities. Officer Wagler stated that if they do not get the grant it goes to someone else.

There is a shared services dilemma. 68% of services go towards the Village while 32% go to the Town. Town provided resources are 16% while Village provided resources are 84%. Town services received vs. amount contributed – demand is going up while resources are going down.

Chief Truitt went on to discuss future public safety goals and initiatives. He also discussed local village police comparisons.

Mayor Blundell further discussed shifts as well as complaints that have been made about the Police Department. He emphasized that if there is any kind of complaint to please see him about it or anyone in the Police Department. They are available to discuss any concerns.

Meeting ended with a question and answer session. Adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Doris Balacic - Scheuing*

Doris Balacic-Scheuing,

Secretary