



VILLAGE OF WAVERLY

Waverly, New York 14892

32 ITHACA STREET • WAVERLY, NY 14892 www.villageofwaverly.com
• TELEPHONE 607-565-8106 • FAX 607-565-8109 • TDD # 800 662 1220

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PATRICK AYRES
Mayor

MICHELE WOOD
Clerk/Treasurer

BETTY J. KEENE
Attorney

Draft Plan 2/17/2021

Village of Waverly Police Reform & Reinvention Collaborative Plan 2021

In June of 2020 Governor Andrew Cuomo signed an Executive Order requiring local governments to perform a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices and develop an improvement plan.

Below is the Village of Waverly's plan for the Waverly Police Department

Process for the Reform Collaboration in the Village of Waverly:

- Establish a work group representing residents and organizations in the Village of Waverly
- Involve the community by offering a survey to gain input into their current views of the Police Department as well as their input on what current police operations should entail
- Review current practices, policies and training goals of the Waverly Police Department
- Develop an improvement plan and release it for public comment
- Modify the plan if necessary to reflect further public input
- Present the plan to the Waverly Board of Trustees to ratify or adopt it
- Certify the adoption of the plan to the State Budget Director on or before April 1st, 2021

Information on the Village of Waverly

Incorporated in 1854 the Village of Waverly is a 2.3 square mile Village located in Southwestern Tioga County in upstate NY. With 4400 residents Waverly is the largest Village in the county and is also part of an interstate community known as "the Valley". "The Valley" consisting of Waverly, NY, South Waverly, Pennsylvania, Sayre, Pennsylvania and Athens, Pennsylvania has a population of near 30,000.

As of the 2010 census the Village of Waverly was 97.03 % white, 0.79% Black or African-American, 0.38% Asian, 0.32% American Indian or Alaskan Native or 1.42% multi race. As of 2019 the number of persons living below the poverty level in Waverly was 19.4% compared to 13.0% for the entire State of New York.

The Village of Waverly Police Department has served the residents of Waverly since the mid 1800's, acting as the primary public safety agency for the Village. The Waverly Police Department currently employs 10 full time police officers and 3 part time police officers. The residents of the Village of Waverly receive 24 hour per day police coverage occurring 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Minimum staffing requires that 2 officers are on duty at all times. The Waverly Police Department responds to all requests for service, regardless of type.

Village of Waverly Police Reform Team Members

Village Mayor Patrick Ayres

Village Trustee and Police Commissioner Jerry Sinsabaugh

Waverly Police Chief Daniel Gelatt

Waverly Central School District Superintendent Dr. Eric Knolles

Attorney Todd Miller, Tioga County Public Defender's Office

Waverly Business Association President Cameron VanNorman

Pastor Cindy Schulte, Waverly United Methodist Church

Citizen & former Police Commissioner Laura Hoppe

Work of the reform team

The Police Reform Team began meeting via Zoom in late 2020 and first tasked itself with developing surveys to gain input from residents of the Village of Waverly or persons whom have interacted with the Waverly Police Department. One survey was compiled and made available to the public via Facebook or hard copy through the Police Department. A second survey for 11th and 12th graders was compiled and distributed by the Waverly Central School District.

The Police Reform team also worked through the New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Guidebook with department input from Chief Daniel Gelatt. The reform team also engaged in discussions about current Waverly Police Department practices and policies.

We received 109 responses to our surveys, the results of the survey can be viewed on the Village of Waverly website.

What we learned from our community

Our community values positive interactions with the Waverly Police Department as well as the importance of knowing that their Police Department instills a sense of safety.

Our community values having a Police Department that treats people from all walks of life with fairness.

Our community values having a Police Department that responds to all requests for help, regardless of the type of situation.

Our community desires police officers that demonstrates the following characteristics: respectful, honesty, trustworthy, compassionate, fair, patience, kindness, empathetic, unbiased, integrity, friendliness, calmness, positive attitude, peaceful, good communication skills, professional, observant and good listening skills

Our community favors additional training in the areas of communication, cultural awareness, personal identity, de-escalation techniques and use of force.

Our community favors continuing the School Resource Officer program with the Waverly Central School District.

Village of Waverly Plan for Police Reform and Reinvention

The Waverly Police Department will continue to build its relationship with community members, schools, charities, religious groups and businesses. The Police Department and Village leadership intend to interact with local groups on a quarterly basis to create opportunities for residents to meet members of the department and provide feedback on any concerns within the community or the police department itself.

The Waverly Police Department will require all officers to complete annual training in De-escalation and Communication techniques. The goal of this training is to provide officers with an organized way of making decisions about how they will act in any situation including situations which may involve uses of force.

The Waverly Police Department will require all officers to complete annual training in Anti-bias policing. The goal of this training is to ensure that officers exhibit fairness during each and every encounter with the public regardless of race, religion, sexuality or socio-economic status.

The Waverly Police Department will partner with the Waverly Central School District to receive training in Social Emotional Learning (SEL). The goal of this training will be to ensure that officers effectively manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.

The Village of Waverly will ensure that the emotional and physical well-being of Waverly Police Officers remains a high priority and that hard work will be recognized and appreciated. Officers will always feel confident in knowing that resources are available to help them through tough situations, be it a check-in from leadership or professional assistance offered through an Employee Assistance Program. The Village of Waverly will also ensure that an in-house fitness center remains available to all members of the department.

The Waverly Police Department will continue to maintain the School Resource Officer position in partnership with the Waverly Central School District. The primary role of the SRO will be to ensure student safety, assist in education and act as a liaison for students, parents and educators.

The School Resource Officer will lead efforts to increase interest in careers in law enforcement amongst the youth of our community. The SRO will offer education to students on the process of becoming a police officer as well as developing the character traits that our community values in prospective officers.

The Waverly Police Department will partner with the Mayor and Police Commissioner to conduct an annual review on the Use of Force Policy of the department.

The Village of Waverly will offer an annual survey to the public with the goal of creating a mechanism which will provide us with consistent feedback on the strengths and needs of the Waverly Police Department. The results of this survey will always be made public on the Village of Waverly website.

The Village of Waverly Police Reform Team will reconvene in June of 2022 to evaluate the implementation of this plan, study the outcomes and make any changes necessary to continue our goal of improvement.