

FINAL



WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 20, 2015

**PRESENT:** THOMAS CLOW, CHAIRMAN; JOHN LAWTON, SELECTMAN; JAMES LEARY, SELECTMAN; JENNIFER BOHL, SELECTMAN.

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Thomas Clow

**GUESTS:** Members of the Weare Police Department including Sergeants Frank Hebert and Kimberley McSweeney and Patrol Officers Shane Arsenault, Kenneth Cox, Austin Maguire, Brandon Montplaisir, and Sheila Savaria.

**Chairman Clow called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.**

This meeting was held in the meeting room at the Safety Complex with members of the Weare Police Department to get their views on the process for selecting a new police chief and characteristics they would like to see in that chief.

Chairman Clow started the meeting by explaining the two options the Board is considering for a selection process. One would be to again go through Municipal Resources Incorporated (MRI). MRI has agreed to conduct the process with no charge for the time of their personnel. Cost to the town would include only the out of pocket expenses incurred by MRI. They would use a multi panel approach for the interview process with one panel being police professionals and at least one other panel which would include local citizens. Another MRI option would be to use an assessment center approach.

The second option being considered by the Board is to work through the New Hampshire Association of Chiefs of Police. In this case the BOS would advertise the position and receive applications. A panel of New Hampshire Chiefs would review the applications for minimum requirements as well as review and score the applications. The acceptable candidates would then be interviewed by a panel made up of a combination of a community panel and chief panel. Three to five candidates would be brought to the BOS for final interviews and selection.

The floor was then opened to the department officers for comment and suggestions. Both Sergeants Hebert and McSweeney emphasized the level of professionalism and commitment to the community that they saw in the present staff. They also emphasized the need to separate the work of this group from events in the past that brought public criticism of the department and negative media coverage. There was discussion of the BOS talk about going to an outside agency or the County Sheriff's Department to police the town and the negative impact that talk

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had on present police officers who felt they were working hard to protect the community and gain respect. Officers talked about the strengths and weaknesses of prior chiefs and noted that if they could take only the strengths of each and combine those into one person they would have the ideal leader.

Speaking for the group, Sergeant McSweeney asked to have one or two police officers involved in the selection process for the new chief. Even if they were non-voting members of the panel she felt that their insight would be valuable. She also talked about asking to speak to the BOS last fall as the Union Steward and that it hurt the moral in the department when she was asked to put her concerns in writing.

Selectman Lawton brought up the issue of CALEA certification. Most of the officers present thought it was a good idea. The general opinion was that although we could have a good police department without certification, the CALEA certification would help reestablish community confidence in the Weare Police and be a measure of pride within the department.

**The following is a list of traits or characteristics that the police officers would like to see in a new chief:**

- Not from a big city, but from a small to medium sized town
- Community oriented
- Advocate of training
- Laid back, but not a pushover
- Approachable/Down to Earth
- Honorable
- Honest
- Looks and acts professional
- A working chief
- Open to innovative ideas in law enforcement
- Communicative
- Someone who understands our vision to set a standard to put us at one of the top ranking police departments in New Hampshire
- Knows New Hampshire laws
- Someone to stand up for us in the media/with the public
- Transparent
- Disciplinarian through the ranks
- Forms his own opinions

Concerning innovative practices, all of the officers were enthusiastic about the addition of body cameras and used that as an example. Sergeant McSweeney said that she had received a call from the police department in Sacramento, California asking how the use of the cameras was working out in Weare. "Can you imagine the capital city of California asking the opinion of the Weare Police Department?" she said.

**The following are ideas about where the officers would like to see the department in five years:**

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- Fully staffed
- Competitive pay
- Community programs involving the police department
- Bringing positions back like DARE, SRO, and K9
- Bring in Bike and OHRV patrol
- New Building
- Leadership brought up through promotion within the department
- New Equipment
- No negative media
- One or two additional officers

### **Other topics discussed included:**

- Extra details including highway traffic control, school events, and other non-profit events
- How to keep young officers with the department after the town invests in their training

**The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.**

A True Record

Thomas S. Clow, Recording Secretary