

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT



I am pleased to present the Fiscal Year 2015 Deerfield Police Department Annual Report for review.

The intent of this report is to provide an overview of activity and events that occurred during FY 2015. The officers of the Deerfield Police Department work very hard all year long to provide quality police services to this community and, as a result, Deerfield continues to be a safe place to live, work, and visit.

FY 2015 presented some challenges to our agency as we attempted to keep up with increased demands placed upon us while operating short staffed for most of the year. There were several personnel changes that occurred through the year. There was a separation of service with one full-time officer that occurred in April 2015. There were also two part-time officers that were released in April, as they were not able to accommodate our needs in terms of hours worked.

We immediately advertised and began the arduous process of hiring replacement officers to bring us back up to a full complement of officers. Law enforcement is currently experiencing an unprecedented trend where there is a lack of qualified applicants to fill vacant police officer positions. Deerfield is certainly not immune to this trend, which is prevalent throughout New Hampshire, affecting departments of all sizes. This is exacerbated by the fact that our agency has not been competitive with other agencies relative to salary and benefits. This makes it even more difficult to not only attract qualified candidates, but to retain them as well.

The hiring process for a police officer is extremely time consuming, as there are several phases that a prospective candidate must successfully navigate. It begins with screening applications to determine if minimum qualifications are met to even allow an individual to go through the process. From there, an applicant must successfully pass a physical agility test and achieve a passing score on a written examination. This first phase of the testing process is where most candidates fail. If successful, the candidate then moves on to the second phase, which is an oral board interview conducted by senior officers from our department.

Candidates are then evaluated on their scores from the first two phases of the process to determine who will be selected to continue on. They are then subjected to an intensive background investigation, which delves into every aspect of their life. A successful candidate at this point would be given a conditional offer of employment, which then leads to a polygraph examination, psychological examination, medical examination, and a Chief's interview.

Following an exhaustive search we finally hired Eric Baker at the end of October to fill the vacant full-time police officer position. During this time I made a proposal to the Board of Selectmen to hire one more full-time officer in lieu of filling the two part-time positions, and the Board accepted my proposal. We then hired Alexander Molet as a full-time officer for our

department. I believe these two individuals make an excellent addition to our department and I look forward to having them serve our community. Both are slated to attend the sixteen (16) week Basic Full-Time Officer Academy beginning January 2016. This brings our agency back up to a staffing level that was in place several years ago prior to losing a full-time position. This will allow for better scheduling that will eliminate gaps in active patrol time we have experienced for some time due to being understaffed.

Department Roster

Full-Time Officers

*Chief Gary Duquette
 Det. Lt. Dan Deyermond
 Sergeant Michael Lavoie
 Officer 1st Class Joel Hughes
 Officer Alan Wilson
 Officer Keegan Pearl
 Officer Erik Baker
 Officer Alexander Molet*

Part-Time Officers

*Officer Roger St. Onge
 Officer Glenda Smith*

Administrative Assistant

Glenda Smith

We have seen a fairly significant increase in activity in 2015, particularly in the areas of arrests; drug activity; and impaired driving. The drug problem in New Hampshire has been well publicized and Deerfield is not immune to this problem. Our officers have embraced a more proactive style of policing, which means they are actively and aggressively looking for issues as opposed to simply waiting for something to happen and then responding to it. I believe that this accounts for the increase in activity as much, if not more, than the trends themselves. The following is a brief statistical overview showing a comparison between FY2014 and FY2015:

	2014	2015	+/-%
CALLS FOR SERVICE	2,543	2,780	+10%
ARRESTS	105	173	+65%
DRUG ARRESTS	14	46	+229%
DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED	11	25	+127%
MOTOR VEHICLE STOPS	930	1,155	+24%
TRAFFIC CITATIONS	83	150	+81%
TRAFFIC WARNINGS	847	1,005	+19%
TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS	84	87	+4%

Even though we operated through most of the year with a reduced number of officers, we remained committed to providing uninterrupted service to the community. I am proud of our performance this past year and we look forward to serving this community in the year ahead. With that being said, I ask the residents of Deerfield to continue assisting **your** police department by contacting us with information, issues, or concerns; and to report anything you consider dangerous or suspicious.

In closing, I would like to thank the community, department heads, and elected officials for their continued support of the police department. I would also like to thank our officers for their dedication and professionalism.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Duquette
Chief of Police