BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
PUBLIC SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE

There was a regular meeting for the above referenced subcommittee held on Monday, February 14, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom meeting.

Present were: Deputy Mayor Gregory Davis, Councilors Suzette DeBeatham-Brown, Kenneth McClary and Shamar Mahon

Also present were: Police Chief Paul Hammick, Fire Chief Willie Jones, Fire Chief William Riley, Lou Blumenfeld, Chair – EMS Committee and India Rodgers, Clerk of Council

Absent was: Pat Braun, EMS Committee

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

The subcommittee received the following updates and status reports from:

POLICE

Crime Statistics

Chief Hammick reported a 15% decrease in crime statistics during the month of January. The following categories list details of the crime stats for January:

- Homicide (0)
- Sexual Assaults (1) – Past tense reported by the victim, but happened many years ago.
- Robbery (2)
  - On January 24th at 7:00 p.m., the victim reported that he met up with two males that he met through Instagram to sell sneakers. During the exchange, one suspect attacked him and a fight ensued. During this time, the second suspect exited the suspect vehicle with a black handgun and told the victim to stop because he had a gun. The victim went inside Concetta’s to ask for help and the suspects took his sneakers and left the area in a four door black Honda Accord, heading eastbound on Mountain Avenue.
  - On January 29th at 1:19 a.m., the complainant/clerk stated a light skinned bald male wearing glasses robbed the store and had a gun. The suspect stole an estimated amount of approximately $1000 in cash and several cartons of cigarettes. The suspect was not on scene or located upon officers arrival.
- Aggravated Assaults (0)
- Burglary (0)
- Larceny (35) – Significant increase in shoplifting at Copaco Plaza
- Auto Theft (2)
  - Vehicle parked in the driveway and running. Recovered in Newington.
  - Person left their vehicle running at CITCO and it was stolen. Recovered in Hartford.
**Personnel Updates**

The department has a total of 61 employees, budgeted for 49 sworn officers and currently at 45. The department continues actively recruit sworn personnel during the recruitment process. Chief Hammick interviewed a candidate last week and offered a position, pending State of Connecticut mandated tests.

Chief Hammick also reported that there is 1 full time and 1 part time Dispatcher position vacancies. A candidate was interviewed and offered the full time position, but waiting on medical review.

It was noted that several officers are out on leave, two officers out on Workman’s Compensation due to injury, one on long-term light duty and one on Administrative leave pending full review.

The staff morale is fair, citing outstanding issues with retirement contract status. The proposed Police union contract is under review and Council action is in the foreseeable future.

**Hiring**

Chief Hammick reported that there are three recruits are in the Police Academy. There are two officers in field training and one officer successfully completed training and is on the road.

**Promotion**

Daigle Law Group was hired by Human Resources to conduct testing for Sergeant and Detective positions. Testing was scheduled for January 28, 2022.

**Traffic Calming Complaints**

January – February speed meter locations:
- Prospect Street
- Woodland Avenue
- Brown Street
- Burr Road
- Brookline Avenue

Chief Hammick also noted that Semi-trailer restrictions are on six Town roads, which began in January. Signage has been posted, however they were relatively smaller than expected. The department placed an order for larger signs. In addition, electronic signs were deployed for several weeks.

**Targeted Enforcement Activity:**

- Prospect Ave, Woodland Ave, Maple Ave, Brown St, School St, and Tyler St. from 1/20/2022 to 02/14/2022:
  - 137 MV Details: 31 Woodland Avenue, 24 Brown Street, 21 Tyler Street, 33 School Street, 14 Maple Avenue, 14 Prospect Street
  - 65 MV Stops: 8 Woodland Avenue, 24 Brown Street, 21 Tyler Street, 33 School Street, 14 Maple Avenue, 14 Prospect Avenue
  - 4 Infractions, 4 Summons, 57 warnings
Chief Hammick noted that there are some significant speeding issues on these streets. He has plans to continue working with Mr. Jonathan Thiesse, Town Engineer on additional traffic calming measures and evaluating environmental impacts.

**CHR Clinician**

The CHR Clinician worked 16 shifts for the month of January 2022. She has assisted and followed up with several cases at the Police Department as well as coordinated with local medical and mental health facilities, Senior Services, Social & Youth Services and the Police Department. She also reported on several success stories of people reaching out for, and being connected to mental health services, and word spreading in the community about our efforts.

**Internal Affairs**

There was one citizen complaint for the month of January.

- The complainant was in relation to a motor vehicle stop and subsequent infraction. The case was investigated by Sergeant Dimanno, reviewed by the Captain and me. The officers actions were reasonable and within Police Department Policy.

**Use of Force**

There were three incidents during the month of January:

- On January 10, 2022, officers responded to Trader Joes shipping area on a report of someone being threatened with a handgun. Upon arrival, officers were directed to the suspect who was in a commercial delivery vehicle. The officers ordered the suspect out of the vehicle, when he emerged, he refused officer’s directions to stop, and continued walking toward them. One of the officers warned the suspect that he would be tased, but he refused to comply. The officer deployed the taser, and the suspect was apprehended without further incident.

  A search of the vehicle and statement from the suspect revealed that the object was a hammer. He was placed under arrest at the scene. A review of this case determined that the force used was reasonable and necessary to control the actions of the suspect, and in compliance with Police Department policies and State Statute.

- On January 10, 2022, officers responded to a mental health crisis. An emergency medical evaluation was ordered and the subject resisted staying on the stretcher once in the ambulance. Officer held the subject down onto the stretcher until soft restraints were applied. A review of this case determined that the force used was reasonable and in compliance with Department policies and procedures.

- On January 22, 2022, officers responded to a domestic dispute. During the investigation, one of the individuals made a statement that they were going to commit suicide after the officers left the residence. It was determined that an individual required an emergency medical evaluation. The informed the individual, who then became disruptive yelling and screaming vulgarities. The individual was handcuffed and later restrained to an ambulance stretcher for transport. The subject was restrained to the stretcher
with soft restraints. A review of this case determined that the force used was appropriate and in compliance with PD policies and procedures.

**BVA**

Chief Hammick reported the following updates regarding the Bloomfield Volunteer Ambulance:

- **BVA** will receive a one-time disbursement of PPE from Department of Public Health. The equipment will include masks and gloves for First Responders (unknown how much of each we will receive).

- **BVA** completed the implementation of a software program that will provide patient outcome information from the hospitals as well as additional billing information. The data will be beneficial for training purposes (patient outcomes) as well as additional revenue for calls that Providers were unable to obtain billing info on.

- An EMT class is slated for April 2022. There will be a reduced course cost for Town residents and an additional reimbursement for students who successfully complete the course and volunteer with BVA for a minimum of six (6) months after they obtain their certification. Once the course receives State approval, the class will be advertised in a variety of locations.

- While the Bloomfield Schools have their own policies and procedures governing the use of Narcan, EMS Coordinator Ellen White has met and spoken with members of the High School regarding some of their concerns. Specifically, identifying suspicious items that could potentially be illicit drugs and behaviors of their students which are not their norm and then taking appropriate action.

**Discussion**

Deputy Mayor Davis inquired about Mental Health referrals in Police Department. He asked if there is any promotion to inform the community about expanded clinical services within the department.

Councilor McClary also asked about the Community Health Resources (CHR) Clinician Program. He inquired about linkage and outside community referrals after the initial interaction. Councilor McClary commented on the progress of the Traffic Calming Committee. He asked if it possible to obtain a quarterly update from the committee to the Public Safety Subcommittee.

There was a suggestion made to review the potential grant opportunities from Federal Infrastructure dollars. Councilor McClary made a recommendation to provide a brief overview of what the Traffic Calming Committee does and the process for submitting a complaint.

Councilor DeBeatham-Brown thanked the Police Chief and the department for their timely attention regarding a neighbor complaint. She also inquired about recent investigations with catalytic converter thefts at schools. Chief Hammick noted that additional re-enforcements and patrols of all school grounds are in place.
**FIRE**

**Center Fire District**

Chief William Riley reported 35 calls for service statistics for the month of January 2022. Most calls were unintentional activations involving smoke detectors. Center Fire responded to one dual response call at 11 Stone Hill Road, in which a car fire was next to a garage.

On January 28, 2022 - January 29, 2022, the district responded to the snowstorm event, crews staff the firehouses, which responding to a “blizzard party” at 545 Simsbury Road (Fraternity House).

Chief Riley also reported that the district hired an architecture firm to conduct a feasibility study for Company 3 expansion on Tunxis Avenue.

They also participated in the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) held on Zoom with other town departments and the Blue Hills Fire District.

**Blue Hills Fire Department**

Chief Willie Jones reported 40 calls for the month of January 2022. There were no major incidents, mainly unintentional fire alarms activities by cooking or water related sprinkler activation due to the cold weather. The district had 6 dual response calls to Bloomfield Center, the one at 11 Stone Hill Road was the most significant, a car fire next to a house. There was one station coverage to Windsor Company 1 to standby for a house fire that they had.

**Projects**

The in-house construction project in still in the works, we’re still waiting for bids and rendering to prepare for selection of a contractor to complete the work by the end of January. In addition, the Energy Efficient Lighting project that was sponsored by Eversource is completed at all of the firehouses. This project was completed two within weeks.

**January Storm Coverage**

During the storm, Blue Hills Fire Department on January 28 – 29, 2022, excellent coverage was in place that provided coverage to all 3 firehouses with full crews and limiting units responded depending on call due to weather conditions.

**Training**

Training was suspended for the month of January due to the high COVID positivity rate. Chief Jones opened back up this month to get started on plans to conduct various trainings, getting newer members certified to the State Level of Operating and trained to drive fire apparatus. Everyone is still required to wear a mask.

In addition, the department is still actively looking for volunteers. There is one firefighter in Fire Class 1, two others have passed portions of the exams and are awaiting finals steps to be certified. Several firefighters will be taking pump classes and Q2 driving classes next month.
(CERT) Community Emergency Response Team

The Blue Hills Fire Department in partnership with former Mayor and Councilwoman Suzette DeBeatham-Brown, working together to organize a Community Emergency Response Team for the Town of Bloomfield. The goal of this team is to be trained and certified on how to respond to emergency situations in the workplace and the community. The department held one Zoom meeting, where a host of organizations joined in.

EMS

Mr. Lou Blumenfeld, Chair of the EMS Committee gave a brief report commenting on the continued discussions to develop an approach for future direction of Bloomfield Volunteer Ambulance (BVA) and its volunteers. The committee discussed a recommendation to enhance shifts at BVA. Mr. Blumenfeld also mentioned the importance of the upcoming EMT class, which will be held April 2022.

OTHER PUBLIC SAFETY CONCERNS

Councilor Mahon thanked the Town for their swift response in addressing semi-truck restrictions on Town streets and roadways. He commended Town Administration and staff for their dedication, hard work and passion in serving the Bloomfield community.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Councilor DeBeatham-Brown, seconded by Councilor Mahon and voted unanimously to approve minutes from January 10, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved by Councilor DeBeatham-Brown, seconded by Councilor Mahon to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m.