

Town of Wendell Board of Commissioners Strategic Plan – Law Enforcement Initiatives

Adopted 2019
Status Reported June 2020

The Town of Wendell Mayor and Board of Commissioners worked with staff to establish the Town of Wendell Strategic Plan([2019 Strategic Plan link](#)) which was adopted in 2019. While there are a number of Goals and policy actions adopted, many are focused on the delivery of high quality un-biased professional law enforcement services centered around community engagement. What follows are specific actions noted in the plan and commentary regarding progress:

- (Top Commission Priority) Establish an action plan for the Police Department to achieve Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) accreditation and initiate policy review and development to implement. (This will also include a review of the use of force policy). – *The purpose of the CALEA accreditation process is to improve law enforcement by creating a national body of standards and to recognize professional achievements by establishing and administering an accreditation process through which a law enforcement agency can demonstrate that it meets those standards. The process is an exhaustive 3-year review comprehensive review and update of all police policies and practices that seeks stakeholder and community input. The Town is finishing the hiring of an Accreditation Manager position and was accepted into the CALEA program on Monday, June 8, 2020. We look forward to reporting out to the community more on this as the process advances!*
- Complete a comprehensive review of the use of force policies and update as needed. – *The Police Department is currently comparing the existing use of force policy against recommendations in the 21 Century Policing Report in preparation for the CALEA accreditation process. The CALEA process will be used to receive input, analyze , and update the policy consistent with national best practices while meeting the needs of our community.*
- Expand officer participation in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) to expand capabilities beyond the supervisory level to properly assist persons in crisis receive appropriate agency referrals. – *Often officers are asked to respond to assist the public during times that individuals are in crisis for a number of reasons, including mental health and substance abuse issues. CIT provides officers awareness of alternatives to the criminal justice system to assist community members in working through these issues and obtain appropriate care. Wendell Police has already received CIT training and is working to ensure that all members on staff receive additional and continual training in this area. Unfortunately, COVID-19 caused the cancellation of scheduled CIT sessions this spring and the department is seeking alternative training opportunities.*
- Identify methods and seek department-wide training to proactively and consistently utilize community engaged policing methods. – *Staff has increased community policing activities in the past year and is evaluating policies and practices to enhance the community engagement philosophy within the department with the CALEA review. Officer training opportunities were being evaluated prior to COVID-19 and the department will continually to work to build engagement moving forward. Administration is currently working with departments to improve website content to assist with this effort and improve transparency.*

- Include police officer involvement in special events, school activities, and other civic engagements to encourage interaction and relationship building with citizens. – *Wendell's motto of Small Town, Big Charm extends with maintaining relationships with all segments of our community as we grow by strengthening existing relationships and building new ones. The Police Department has increased officer participation in events (until COVID-19 occurred) and started a monthly department report on its webpage to increase public awareness of department activities.*
- Identify opportunities to improve officer health and safety through the promotion of physical fitness, use of employee assistance programs (EAP), ergonomic equipment, and like practices. – *Healthy, supported, well-trained employees provide the best opportunity for positive interactions with the public. The Town implemented an employee assistance program (EAP) to assist employees that need help solving problems, implemented a fitness expense reimbursement program, and increased training funding to improve officer abilities and morale. These efforts also assist in the recruitment and retention of a diverse, professional workforce over time.*