



BEDFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

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As the Bedford Police Department begins 2015, I am beginning my first year as Chief of Police for this department. Already steps have been put in place to establish my vision of this department as an agency dedicated to Community Policing, built on a framework of effective Problem Solving techniques. Goals and objectives set for 2015, reducing crime, traffic problems and crashes, are clear and obtainable given the strengths and initiative of our personnel. The progress of the department as it meets its challenges and achieves its goals will be assessed each year in an Annual Report such as this one.



The Police Department Mission Statement

The Bedford Police Department will work in open partnership with the citizens of Bedford to provide honest, fair and effective law enforcement services. Our constant objective will be to protect life, property and liberty for all people in a fair and equitable manner. The vision of the department is summed up by five elements -- Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Courage and Innovation --that will enable the department to continue to move forward and accomplish our mission.

Accreditation

Accreditation is an important accomplishment of this department. The Bedford Police Department was the first of its size to receive its initial Certificate of Accreditation in 2003 from the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC). We have continued that brand of excellence, having been through two assessments since. One of my first challenges as Chief of Police will be our fourth assessment which occurs in six months, striving to ensure that the department meets and exceeds all of the VLEPSC standards.



Accreditation is about having professional policies and ensuring the department follows those policies, documents the work of officers and staff, as well as interaction with the public and the department being accountable. It is everything the department does and ensures we provide the most professional services to citizens of the Town of Bedford and to those either working in the Town of Bedford or visiting. Accreditation is a coveted honor that stands as proof to those considering a move to Bedford that the police department conducts themselves with honor and integrity to ensure the highest ethical standards that maintain public confidence.

Policies and Procedures

All policies and procedures in the existing Police Department Policy Manual approved by Retired Chief Day meet the standards recommended by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). The manual is now being reviewed to ensure that our policies continue to meet the current goals and objectives of the department. This annual review will include all policies but extra attention is placed on high liability issues such as use of force, vehicle pursuits, chain of command, and code of conduct.

Department Awards and Recognition

Proof of success in meeting our goals and objectives for the department can be witnessed in the recognition of our officers and personnel by other organizations, as well as the Department. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) recognized Officer Jon Maddox for his efforts in enforcing the Driving Under the Influence Laws and educating citizens about the dangers of driving while intoxicated or distracted.



Officer Tim Brooke (r)

Officer Tim Brooke was recognized as the Traffic Safety Officer of the Year. Officer Brooke worked diligently to ensure the safety of people on the roads through the enforcement of traffic laws to include speed and occupant protection. Officer Brooke also received training in installation of Child Safety Seats and was certified after a 24-hour course.

Officer Jon Maddox was recognized as the Alcohol Safety Officer of the Year. Officer Maddox worked diligently to enforce the alcohol related laws. The enforcement of these laws helped keep the citizens on the road safe from drivers

operating motor vehicles while under the influence of alcohol. Officer Maddox was also very involved in education of children, teens, and adults through the use of our DUI and Distracted Driving simulator. He educated hundreds of people about the dangers of operating a vehicle while distracted or under the influence.

Several of our officers and staff were recognized recently by the Domestic Violence Services in regards to their efforts in prevention and responses to domestic violence situations that contributed greatly to the safety and well-being of victims and their families.

In October at the VA Chiefs of Police Annual Conference, the Bedford Police Department received the Click It or Ticket Campaign Award for Most Improved Seat Belt Use.



*Sgt. Bill Boucher
presented Domestic
Violence Service Award*

Organization and Department Personnel

In January 2014, the Bedford Police Department had a full staff of 24 sworn officers and three full time civilian staff. The rank structure at the beginning of the year was a Chief, Captain, Lieutenant and five sergeants. The Captain supervised Investigations and one of the sergeants served as an investigations sergeant, which allowed a supervisor to be involved in any criminal investigation. The Lieutenant supervised the Patrol division with four sergeants. The Patrol division is comprised of four platoons working 12 hour shifts.

Having that structure of supervisors allowed the department to have a supervisor available when the patrol shifts are working; this method provides a strong, clear chain of command in which officers understand who they must report to or who they can request assistance. The structure compels the sergeants to take control of their platoon and provide clear leadership and guidance. While taking control and leading, they can observe the officers and reward them for exemplary performance and mentor the officers to prepare them for future positions in leadership. Within this structure, the supervisors gained a better opportunity to first recognize a weakness and provide guidance, training and mentorship to help his or her officer improve. The sergeants are able to ensure information concerning criminal activities or other events requiring monitoring was passed on by briefing the oncoming platoon. They also utilized the briefing board and electronic daily notes, as well as email, to make sure all personnel are aware of criminal activity and knowledgeable about situations that need to be monitored.

That important structure for the department began breaking down in April of 2014 when several people left the department for other opportunities or due to retirement. As of the last day of December 2014, the department was six officers below full staffing levels--one quarter of the police force. One officer was hired in September and began the strenuous 19-week long Academy training in January. The Police Department had also hired a second person in December who attended the

academy for one day and then resigned. The officers employed by this department are very good officers, dedicated to maintaining the safety of the community. Their dedication is evident in their acceptance of working greatly increased overtime to help bridge the gap in manpower until the department is able to provide the staff necessary to ensure the safety of the community.



Applicants must pass intensive Written as well as Physical testing

Full staffing numbers are important, but they also must be the right personnel. We want to recruit for diversity, but hire for character. The Police Department requires our staff to be accountable with high expectations. And in 2015, we will be proactively recruiting and searching for truly exceptional people to fill the vacancies in a manner that ensures the Town of Bedford receives officers that meet their expectations of service and commitment.

Crime and Analysis

In 2013 we had 652 Group A offenses, which are the most serious offenses and are required to be reported to the State Police and the FBI. The preliminary numbers for 2014 showed 724 Group A offenses. Members of the Bedford Police Department cleared 58% of these cases through investigations leading to arrest or other type of clearance. We have staff assigned to work crime prevention through the use of specialized data and problem solving techniques. The goal is to reduce crime in the Town of Bedford through the use of these techniques and others the patrol sergeants are tasked with implementing.



RAIDS Online gives our officers area crime activity data to better make informed strategic decisions

Community Events and Activities

The Bedford Police Department has always worked to provide information, events and activities to educate and foster community involvement. In 2014, we hosted many events and activities to improve the safety and reduce crime and traffic crashes. We hosted monthly meetings in which we discussed the past months call for service and crimes. We provided education for different topics requested by our citizenry and various community groups.



Inv. Joe Dooley hosts a Community Awareness Meeting

In 2015, the Police Department is committed to continuing these effective community-oriented policing events and activities. Programs like the Community Awareness Meetings and Business Watch are just two examples of how our connection with the community can make a difference. The educational discussions often have knowledgeable guest presenters or police officers who specialize in the meeting topic. These meetings are just one way the police officers and public can work together to solve community problems.

Members of the police department are also invited to speak to different groups throughout the community. This type of educational and awareness events include Joseph's Dream Community Meeting, Salem Court Community Meeting and the Town Community Meeting.

The Bedford Police Department works with the region on traffic safety through checkpoints to deter individuals from driving under the influence. Bedford Police Department partners with Lynchburg Police Department, Campbell County Sheriff's Office, Bedford County Sheriff's Office, Amherst County Sheriff's Office and Virginia State Police.



The Bedford Police Department has a wide variety of tools and expertise to work with the community and other public safety organizations in promoting traffic safety and educate the public and teens of the dangers involved with driving. Some of these tools and expertise include:

Airbag sled: the Bedford Police Department created this unique device to demonstrate how an airbag deploys and the importance of wearing a seatbelt. It is such an effective tool that community events and agencies across Virginia have requested it at their events.

Impaired Driving Simulator: A renovated golf cart which, along with a set of impaired driving goggles, demonstrates the dangers of driving intoxicated or distracted.

Child Safety Seat Checks: Officers go through special training to become a Certified Child Safety Seat Technician. At events they inspect the safety seat to make sure it is the proper fit and it is properly installed. They are also available during business hours to check seats at the department.

Crime Prevention Specialists: These are specially trained officers that conduct places of business for Security Surveys, as well as residential homes, to suggest the best ways to prevent crimes.

Bike Patrol Officers: The Bedford Police Department has on staff a Certified Police Mountain Bike Patrol Instructor. Sergeant Walker not only trains our officers but also officers in other area law enforcement agencies. Our bike patrol works shifts and events, including Bike Rodeos and Bike Safety Days at area day care centers and schools.



Officer Jon Maddox at Crime Prevention Day



COP CAMP gives kids from the ages of 9-14 an opportunity to explore the inner workings of law enforcement. They also learn life skills, such as conflict resolution & goal setting.



CRIME PREVENTION DAY: Residents, local agencies, fire and rescue crews and law enforcement celebrate crime prevention successes from working together.

Other events the department participates in:

Liberty High School Driver's Education Class

Gereau Center in Rocky Mount (partnered with Blue Ridge Regional Crash Team)

Bedford Memorial Hospital Camp

Worked with Make A Wish Foundation to assist with a child's dream to be Spiderman for a day.

First Responder Softball game benefiting Domestic Violence

Safety Day at Centerfest: a collection of law enforcement, emergency services and community resource agencies setup to inform the public and provide an opportunity to meet those responsible for making our community safe.

Christmas Parade and YMCA Footrace



Officer Michelle Alderson speaking to attendee of "Save the Next Girl".

The Bedford Police Department will continue its ongoing commitment to finding new and innovative ways to connect the Department with the community. We live in a great community and the entire Department is committed to building partnerships that strengthen our ability to reduce the fear and incidence of crime. We work to reassure the Town that the Bedford Police Department conducts themselves with honor and integrity to ensure the highest ethical standards that maintain public confidence. And our commitment is to be always prepared, trained and ready to handle emergencies and calls for service.