

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 21, 2014
BOARD ROOM
6:30 P.M.**

Board Members Present: Mayor David Gregg
Mayor Pro Tem Jan Dowker
Trustee Suzie White
Trustee Dick Shepard
Trustee Thomas Jones
Trustee John Bauer

Board Members Absent: Trustee Paul Alaback

Staff Members Present: Town Administrator Mike Hart
Town Clerk Mary Cowdin
Interim Police Chief Sargent John Feyen
Administrative Clerk Jory Haslett
Attorney Greg Bell

Mayor Gregg led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Recap of Public Safety Review

Administrator Hart briefly reviewed the current status of the Berthoud Police Department.

Interim Police Chief Sgt. Feyen presented the assessment of the future needs of the Berthoud Police Department, including staffing options, salary requirements, fleet, equipment, facilities and training.

First, Sgt. Feyen addressed the staffing options for the Town. He stated that there are four options for staffing available to the Town, depending on the number of officers and hours of staffing that the Town wants.

Next, Sgt. Feyen addressed salary requirements for law enforcement officers. He reviewed law enforcement salaries from surrounding communities and found that Berthoud offered the lowest salaries for both chief and officers. Sgt. Feyen recommended increasing the starting salaries, which he believes will increase the candidate pool and allow Berthoud to be competitive with other communities. He also recommended implementing a new hiring process and establishing criteria for each step of the hiring process.

Sgt. Feyen next reviewed the Town's police department fleet and found that they were all in various states of disrepair and recommended that some be immediately replaced. He contacted a local mechanic to conduct an assessment of what would be required to bring the remaining vehicles in the fleet into acceptable working order.

Next, Sgt. Feyen reviewed the general state of the other equipment required by the police department. He found that much of the required equipment was either non-existent or in disrepair. He provided cost estimates of what would be required to bring the department up-to-date.

Sgt. Feyen reviewed the state of the police department facility and reported that some issues are cosmetic and others are essential to the proper functioning of the department.

He also reported that proper training of officers in a variety of areas is an issue for the Town police department.

Larimer County Sheriff's Office Policing Proposal

Captain John Manago from the Larimer County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) presented the proposal for policing services. He explained that the numbers in the worksheets are rough estimates only and that numbers would become more firm as the Town decided what staffing, services and hours of coverage the Town would require.

Captain Manago stated that there are options in regard to the coverage hours and staffing based upon the needs of the Town. He also has spoken to the Thompson School district and found that they would be receptive to sharing costs for the School Resource Officer (SRO) and suggested sharing a detective with LCSO.

Captain Manago stated that the LCSO supervisor assigned to the Town would report to the Town Administrator and the Board, as well as have contact with citizens regarding questions and concerns. The Town would also receive the "command structure" of the LCSO. The details of implementing the Town branding on the Sheriff's vehicles can be addressed if they move forward to an agreement.

He stated that in regard to current employees, there is a process in place to transition them to LCSO employees.

Mayor Gregg asked when the Town went to 24 hour coverage. It was reported that Berthoud has had an overnight officer on duty for about 20 years. Captain Manago stated that the LCSO already has deputies in the area during the evening hours, so there would not necessarily be any need for reassigning officers for coverage. However, if the assigned deputy was already engaged in a call, there could be more of a delay if there was an incident that required more than the assigned deputy.

Trustee White asked how far a deputy might be away during the overlap time. Sgt. Feyen stated that in the case of an emergency, officers could respond in 10-12 minutes.

Mayor Gregg asked Sgt. Feyen about the equipment criteria to bring the department up to date. Sgt. Feyen stated that the LCSO has a one officer to one car plan, because they found longevity of the car is better if it is only assigned to one officer at a time. He stated that Tasers could be shared, but the equipment function would be reliant on each officer taking care of the unit. He also recommends a computer for each car for emergencies and for backup, but there does not need to be desktop computers and evidence kits assigned to each officer.

Mayor Pro Tem Dowker asked about the costs of updating our facility versus working with the LCSO. Captain Manago stated that he would prefer that a police presence remain in the building for the citizens, but that staffing would have to be addressed internally.

Town Administrator Hart noted that code enforcement was not included in the proposal from LCSO and that staff would propose hiring a code enforcement officer.

Trustee Jones asked if traffic court would be held here if the Town decided to enter into an agreement with LCSO. Sgt. Feyen stated that LCSO officers will still write municipal tickets and there would still be municipal traffic court in Berthoud.

Trustee Bauer asked what would happen to Town-owned assets if the Town moved forward with an agreement with LCSO. Administrator Hart stated that most equipment needs to be replaced. Sgt. Feyen stated that there are some things that the Town could keep, but technology changes quickly and they could be obsolete soon.

Trustee Shepard asked if special events, like Berthoud Day, be covered by LCSO. Sgt. Feyen stated that there are many volunteer resources that are available to the LCSO that would be available to Berthoud for special events.

Mayor Pro Tem Dowker asked if there would be cost savings by sharing resources with the LCSO. Captain Magano stated those numbers are included in the estimates and that the Town would be able to leverage the “buying power” of the LCSO. He also stated that the Town would not be billed for hours worked over those specified in the agreement, but the LCSO will keep a log of those extra hours worked. Mayor Pro Tem Dowker stated that those reports would be valuable to the citizens and the Board.

Trustee White thanked Sgt. Feyen and stated that it is good for Berthoud to move forward with the knowledge gained from this experience. She asked if the SRO would stay in Berthoud during the summer hours or go back to LCSO. Captain Magano stated that it would be up to the Town, but he recommends that the employee stay in town because summer is a busy time and juvenile issues do not go away during the summer months.

Jason Brooks, 208 1st Street, thinks the coverage issue and response times should be addressed. He also thinks that the areas of Berthoud located in Weld County should be addressed with Weld County officials. He thought that the cost for rebuilding the department and the contract with LCSO looked equivalent, but it might be wise to rebuild and have a force that is organic to the community.

Barbara Mitteis, 230 2nd Street #2, explained that Berthoud went to 24 hour police coverage about 22 years ago and she would not recommend anything less than 24 hour coverage. She asked why the Town of Wellington decided to re-form their police department after being serviced by LCSO. Town Administrator stated that during meetings with Wellington officials, they stated that they weren't unhappy with their service, but did note that there was some response time delay. Wellington has grown enough that they would like to re-staff their police department. Ms. Mitteis stated that she is in favor in hiring a good chief of police and rebuilding the department.

Vance Bunker, 1110 4th, addressed the Board and stated that he glad that the SRO is a priority no matter in which direction the Town decides to move. He stated that all the kids know Sgt. Vasquez. Mr. Bunker asked if Berthoud would retain the same officers if the Town decided to enter into an agreement with LCSO. Mayor Gregg stated that there would be a preference to keep the same officers, but there would be some degree of requalification.

Patty Swiger addressed the Board and stated that she has worked in the Police Department for 17 years. She appreciated that Sgt. Feyen recognized how difficult it has been for the staff lately. She is in favor of keeping the Police Department and there are other alternatives in partnering with the LCSO. There are already some partnerships in place and there is a great relationship with the LCSO. If the Town had a strong Police Chief with good contacts, there may be more opportunities for training. She feels it is important to have someone in the office locally and that code enforcement is important to the people of Berthoud. She stated that it is crucial to have an experienced, strong leader as police chief. She said there are options to generate more funds for the department, for instance, fees can be increased for summonses and fingerprinting services. She also believes that there may be grant funding available to help the department.

Officer Vasquez, Berthoud's School Resource Officer, addressed the Board and stated that Berthoud still has an excellent police department and he believes it can overcome the past issues. He reported that the current officers are okay with the lower wages, and in his case, this is where he wants to work and he loves protecting this community. He believes that with strong leadership, the department can be rebuilt and having an officer in the community 24 hours provides a very quick response time. He stated that there are grants available for training. The Berthoud officers are committed to the community and he would encourage keeping the police department.

Kathy Needing, 531 S. 9th, asked how much input does the Town Board would have in the hiring or assigning of officers for Berthoud. Captain Magano stated that LCSO would assign specific deputies to work in Berthoud on a day-to-day basis and they will give the Town as much input as

the Town wants in hiring and personnel issues. He noted that the Towns of Wellington and Timnath are also currently contracted with LCSO.

Trustee Shepard that the decision is important and the results of the study was invaluable. He thinks it is important to have a point of contact with the police department and he would recommend that the Town follow the recommendations of the study. Trustee Shepard stated that it is time to reanalyze where we are and where we are going.

Trustee Bauer stated that based up on the information presented tonight, the police department cannot continue in the same direction and either way the budget will have to be increased. He would like to see a cost comparison of the recommendations to rebuild the department versus a contract with LCSO.

Mayor Gregg stated that shortcomings of the police department will be corrected in the future and he is glad for the thorough coverage during the interim. The Town is fiscally challenged and its budget for basic services is significantly smaller than our neighbors, but the Town cannot compromise on public safety. He would like to see a comparison of both routes, but also needs to understand the variables. He would like for the Board to take time in reviewing all the options as we are well covered in the interim.

Town Administrator Hart stated that there are several staffing issues that are affecting the current level of service. There will have to be moneys redirected or raised to keep the police department and rebuilding will not happen overnight. It could take 3-4 months to find a chief and then there could be an extended amount of time for re-staffing.

Mayor Gregg stated that the importance of this decision is worth putting in extra time.

Trustee White stated that the most important thing is public safety and currently there is a lack of trust, which will need to be rebuilt. She thinks it is important to have 24/7 coverage and the goal should be to rebuild police department, even if the Town contracts with LSCO for a time.

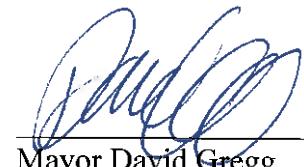
Mayor Pro Tem Dowker thanked Sgt. Feyen for the honest and glaring overview of things that need to be addressed in the police department. She stated there are liabilities for which the Town is responsible and the officers should be operating with the best equipment. She stated that the Town must ensure that public safety is the number one priority and she also thanked the current officers for sticking through a difficult time.

Trustee Jones thanked the LCSO and the Berthoud police officers. He thinks to keep the Towns image, a code enforcement officer is important. He also thinks there are hybrid possibilities for cooperation with LCSO and the Town. He stated that the Town wants to have our own police department as the Town grows, but if we can hybrid it, it would be in the best interest of the Town.

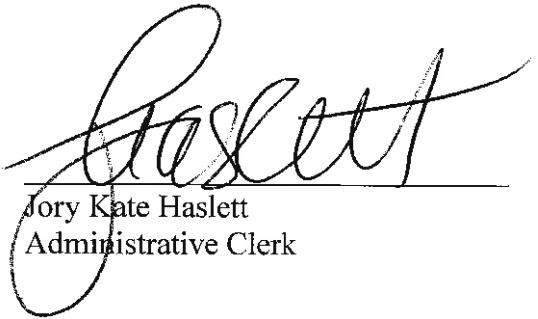
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Mayor Gregg stated that it would be helpful for the Board to see all options side by side, collated for comparison.

Mayor Gregg adjourned the meeting at 9:06 PM.



Mayor David Gregg



Jory Kate Haslett
Administrative Clerk