



Date: 3 August, 2020

To: Village Board Members

Subject: Request for Additional Police Staffing in 2021 Budget

Over the past few years, the Village of Maple Bluff Police Department has quietly endured a staffing shortfall despite an increasing need for officers. This year introduced new challenges that amplify an already difficult situation for our team. As Chief of Police, I must ensure that our department has adequate support and resources to fulfill their community obligations.

We have an urgent need to reinstate a previously vacated full-time supervisor position, and add another full-time patrol officer to our staffing. These additions would bring our staffing to seven full-time sworn personnel and ensure two officer coverage for approximately 65 percent of any given day. The increase would eliminate a critical staffing shortfall, mitigate officer safety issues, and improve overall outcomes for our department as well as the community.

Staffing Shortfall History – *Current staffing levels are unsustainable.* In early 2014 our department was staffed with a total of six full-time sworn personnel. This structure was designed to allow for a single officer on patrol at all times, but also relied on part-time staff to supplement shift coverage and full-time absences. Then a position was vacated and left unfilled. Since the change, compounding effects of administrative and training burdens, additional reliance on part-time officers, and turnover left us with insufficient staff and an exhaustion of financial reserves. Looking into 2021 our staffing and budget allocations make us vulnerable to significant negative outcomes, including the inability to staff our officers for 24 hours a day.

Current Environment – *Increased staffing is necessary to meet community expectations.* The communities that surround Maple Bluff have seen an escalation in violent crime and although crime levels in Maple Bluff are low, our officers regularly encounter the same circumstances as their peers. Our residents expect and deserve exemplary police services. Alone, officers are limited in their ability to meet these challenges and expectations with confidence.

Improved Outcomes – *Enabling Officer success is in the best interest of the community.* Adequate staffing improves officer safety and increases positive outcomes. When multiple officers respond to a situation, they have more options for de-escalation and lower-level use of force alternatives to choose from; thus, increasing safety for the subject, the officer, and the community. Adequate staffing also ensures our officers receive essential training, supervision, and guidance; as well as minimizes disruptions from anticipated and unanticipated absences.

I respectfully ask you to pursue a budget increase that supports this staffing adjustment.

Sincerely,

Tanner A. Nystrom
Administrator / Chief of Police