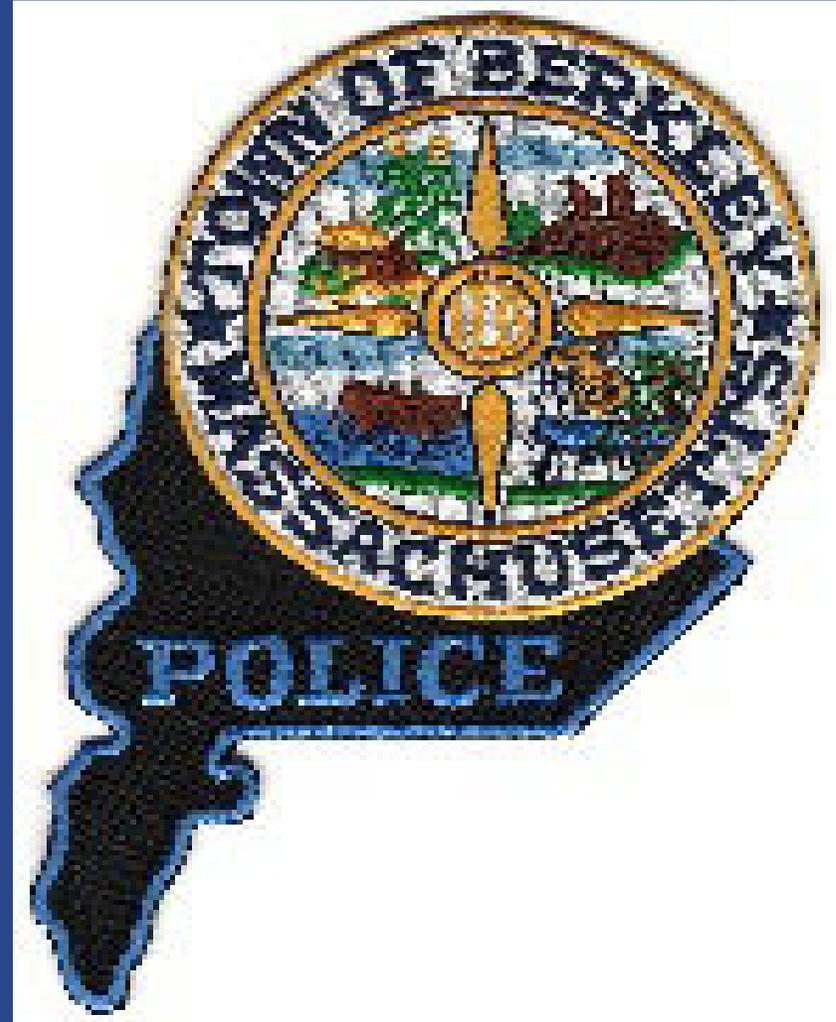


Community Forum – Berkeley Police and Communications Departments

Presented by:

Chief Arthur Newhook Jr.



Why We're Here Tonight

- To explain the day-to-day operations of the Berkley Police and Communications
- To share the current staffing of the Berkley Police and Communications Departments
- To share the current status of the equipment of the Berkley Police and Communications
- To explain how the current staffing compares to other communities



Core Responsibilities of the Police Department

- While residents are familiar with patrol and emergency response, much of the department's critical work is mandated, preventive, and administrative in nature.
- Criminal investigations, evidence management, and court preparation require significant officer time and specialized training. Evidence that needs processing has to be transported by evidence officer to MSP Labs in Lakeville, Sudbury or Maynard depending on what types of testing needs to be done.
- Court Officer- The Police Department has schedule hearings that the Officer working the road has to attend at least once a week and every time we arrest someone.
- Medical and Fire Calls – Police Officers are usually the first to arrive at these types of calls. All officers have to have yearly training on CPR/ First Responder
- Traffic enforcement, on all town roads, and crash response help prevent serious collisions and fatalities.



Core Responsibilities of the Police Department (Cont.)

- Community policing initiatives, such as school safety programs, elder well-being checks, reduce crises and lower long-term costs to the Town.
- Mental health and welfare checks, often occurring after hours, involve coordination with outside agencies to protect vulnerable individuals.
- Student Resource Officer juvenile services
- POP Unit – Problem Oriented Policing Unit- Follow ups for Domestic Violence, Drug Addiction, Alcohol Addition, and Mental Health issues to offer services.
- Mandatory reports POST, CJIS, NIBRS, RMV, DCF
- Communications Department not only answered the business line and the front door of the Public Safety Building but that same employee also answers 911, provides EMD and dispatches Police, Fire and EMS

Mandates, Regulations, and Legal Requirements Determining Service Levels

Berkley PD's level of service is determined by multiple federal, state, and local mandates, including:

-  Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) requiring continuous 24/7 law enforcement coverage, prisoner care, and investigative services.
- POST Commission certification standards, mandating ongoing training, documentation, and policy compliance.
- MPTC yearly Officer training requirements- Classroom, Firearms twice per year, Taser, CPR/First Aid
- MA State 911 & APCO Emergency Medical Dispatch yearly requirements for 911 EMD Dispatchers
- State-mandated reporting for use-of-force, juvenile interactions, and domestic violence incidents.
- Department of Public Health- cell inspection state requirements
- Department of Youth Services – Juvenile cell inspection requirement
- CJIS and NCIC regulations require secure, uninterrupted database access and monitoring.
- Mutual aid agreements obligating Berkley PD to assist neighboring towns, requiring sufficient staffing and readiness.

Police Department Staffing – Current Reality

- **Full-Time Leadership**

- Chief of Police

- **Full-Time Patrol Operations Personnel**

- 1 Lieutenant
- 2 Sergeants
- 6 Patrol Officers
- Provides 24/ 7 coverage of two full-time officers (LT, Sgt or Officer)
- **No full-time Detective, SRO, Licensing or Court Officer** - patrol officers perform these duties while on duty on a part time basis.

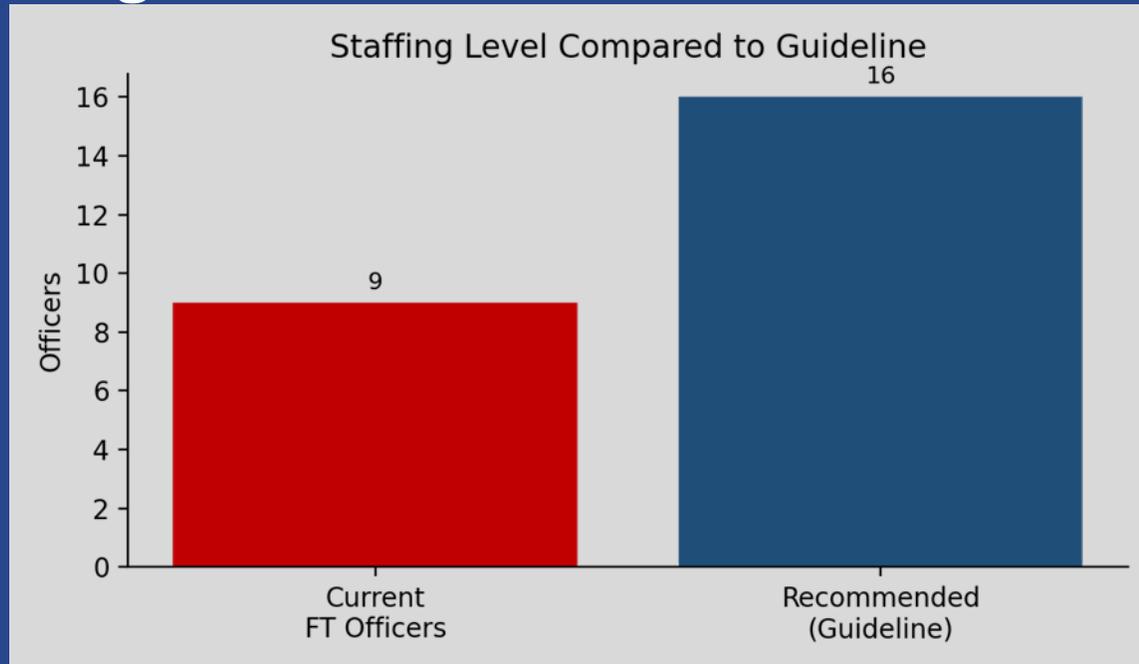
- ***Part-time Patrol Officers***

- 11 Part-Time Officers to fill in days off for full-time officers and work on private traffic construction details
- **No administrative support staff, No IT support Staff** – these duties are performed by the Chief of Police



Federal Staffing Guidelines

-  Federal guidance recommends 2.25 officers per 1,000 residents
- For Berkley, that equates to approximately 16 officers
- Current staffing is 9 officers — well below that level



Communications Department Staffing- Current Reality

- **Full-Time Operations Personnel**
- 1 Dispatch Supervisor
- 3 Dispatchers
- Provides 24/7 coverage of one dispatcher.
- Dispatcher answers 911, police and fire non-emergency lines, controls access to the front door, and dispatches police, fire, and EMS.

- **Part-Time Operations**
- 6 Part-Time Dispatchers to fill in days off for full-time dispatchers

Daily Staffing Reality

- Chief of Police –Weekdays
- Two Officers on Patrol per shift – could be a LT & Officer, a Sgt and Officer, or 2 Officers
- 1 Dispatcher per shift

What Two-Officer Shifts Mean Operationally

-  Limited ability to split calls safely
- Reduced coverage when incidents tie up an officer
- Less time available for proactive patrol and follow-up
- Higher reliance on part-time backfill for vacations, training, and court

Officer Safety and Public Safety

-  Backup availability affects outcomes and safety
- Single-officer periods increase risk during critical incidents
- Long incidents can leave the remainder of town with limited coverage
- Staffing affects response times, deterrence, and follow-up



Staffing Comparison – Bristol County

Town	Population	Full-Time Sworn
Berkley	6,844	9
Dighton	8,150	15
Acushnet	10,648	19
Freetown	9,380	21
Rehoboth	12,614	28
Westport	16,339	30

How Berkley Compares

- All other Bristol County towns staff 3–5 patrol officers per shift
- Most have dedicated Detectives, SROs, Community Outreach and Court Officers
- Neighboring towns commonly have 5–8 officers working per shift depending on time of day
- Berkley operates with just 2 officers per shift to handle patrol as well as these other specialized areas

Recruitment & Retention Challenges

Not only does Berkley have the lowest amount of Full Time Officers , but :

- Berkley is the lowest paying department in Bristol County, with the lowest % of employer contribution health insurance.
- Competitive hiring environment regionally
- High cost to train a new officer (often \$80,000+)
- Nearly a year from hiring to full deployment
- Retention affects experience, continuity, and coverage



Here is how Berkley stacks up with other communities in Bristol County in relation to budget and staffing: More than \$360,000 lower than the closest

Town	Population	Staffing	FY26 Police	FY26 Comm	FY26 Total
Acushnet	10,648	19 FT Sworn, 4 FT Non-Sworn, 1 Pt Non-Sworn, Admin Support	\$ 2,950,265	Included	\$ 2,950,265
Berkley	6,844	10 FT Sworn, 3 FT Nonsworn, 10PT Sworn, 4 PT Non-Sworn	\$ 1,607,267	\$ 419,268	\$ 2,026,535
Dighton	8,150	15 Ft Sworn, 4 FT Non-sworn, 4 PT Sworn, 3 PT Non-sworn, 1 admin Support	\$ 1,964,525	\$ 423,186	\$ 2,387,711
Freetown	9,380	21 FT & 1 PT Sworn, 8 FT & 4 PT Non-Sworn, 2 admin support	\$ 2,687,009	\$ 565,718	\$ 3,252,727
Rehoboth	12,614	28 ft sworn, 5 pt sworn, 8 ft non-sworn, 3pt non-sworn, 2 Admin Support,	\$ 3,810,764	\$ 440,491	\$ 4,251,255
Somerset	18,226	24 FT Sworn, 6 FT Nonsworn, 2 Admin Support	\$ 4,329,327	\$ 588,221	\$, 4,917,548
Westport	16,339	30 Ft Sworn, 5 Ft Nonsworn, 1 admin support	\$ 4,632,310	Included	\$ 4,632,310

How do we try to bridge the gap

- Use of Part-Time Officers for shift filling as much as possible
- In-house minor repairs on Police Vehicles
- Grants:
- Byrne Equipment Grant- Tablets for cruisers for RMV/ CJIS checks
- Municipal Road Safety (MRS) Grant – Extra Officers for traffic enforcement and radar trailer
- BVP Grant to help offset the cost of Ballistic Vests
- 911 Grant to cover the cost of 911 mandatory ConEd
- Most IT services are done by the Chief of Police

Costs out of our control

- Fuel
- Ammunition for required MTPC training - Price has doubled in the last two years and more range time is required.
- Yearly In-Service Training- Mandated training that must take place each year.
- Specialized Training
- Court Overtime
- Equipment replacement costs
- Police Vehicle Cost

Legal Mandates and Compliance

- 24/7 police coverage required
- POST certification
- MPTC required annual officer training
- CJIS/NCIC compliance and Audits
- Cell Maintenance and Inspections for DPH and DYS
- 911 EMD ConEd
- Documentation and reporting requirements for incidents
- State and Federal required reporting

Equipment & Fleet Challenges

- No new cruiser funding through budget since FY23
- 14 Police Vehicles in fleet-
- Best practice replacement cycle: 6–7 years or over 80,000
- 5 vehicles exceed 6 years and 80,000 miles, not counting the two used cars
- Oldest vehicles exceed 130,000 miles
- One hour of police vehicle idling equals approximately 30 miles of engine wear
- Bought 2 used cruisers in FY 25 as a stopgap to save mileage on newer vehicles
- All minor maintenance on vehicles is in done in-house

Cruiser Age & Mileage Snapshot
over 6 years and 80k miles

Year	Mileage	Assignment
2013	134,000+	Detective / POP
2013	139,000+	PT Patrol
2016	101,000+	PT Patrol
2017	89,000+	FT Patrol
2019	117,000+	Detective Sgt

Fleet Replacement Roadmap

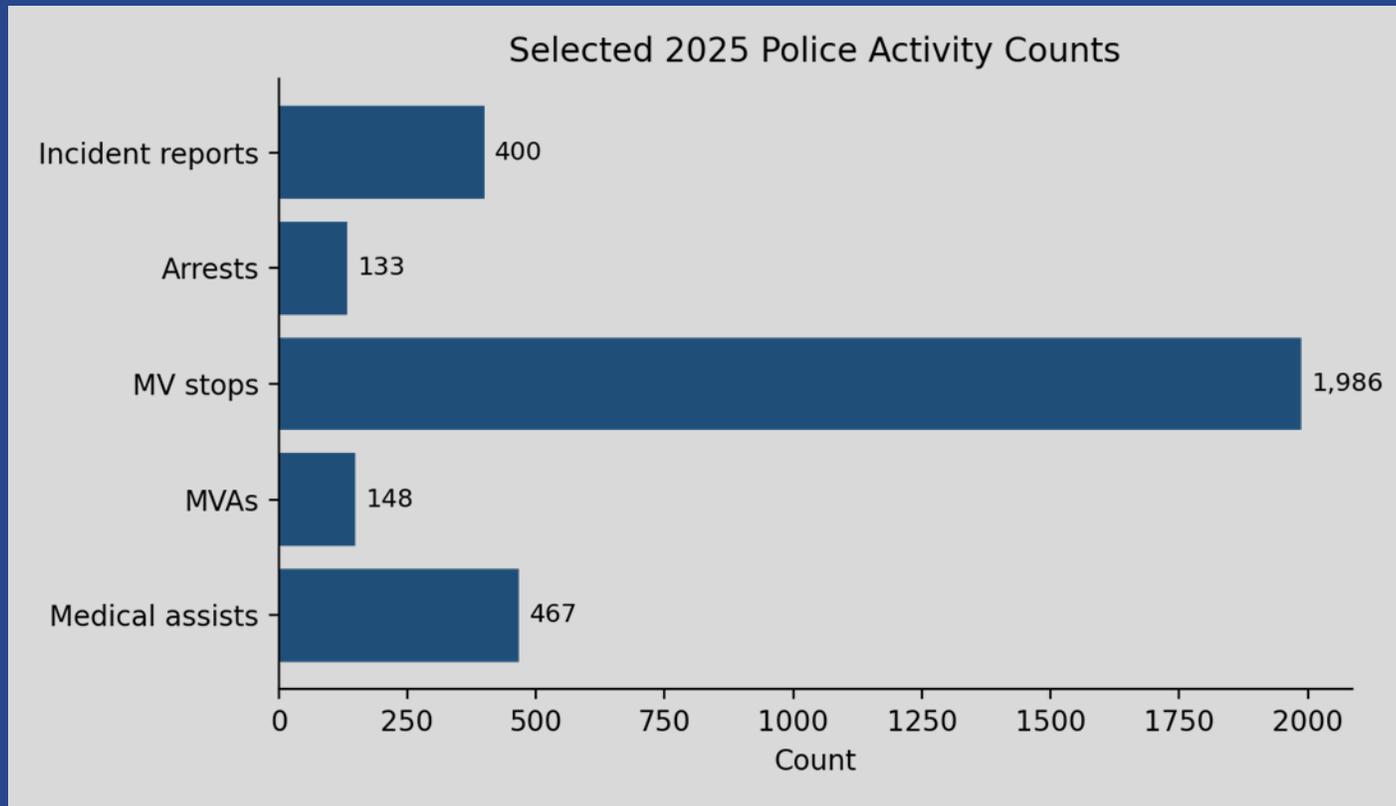
- Recommended Replacement Plan:
 - FY27: Replace 2 cruisers
 - FY28: Replace 2 cruisers
 - FY29 and annually: Replace 1 cruiser/year
- This can be accomplished through the Capital Improvement Plan or a municipal lease program

Equipment Upgrades Needed

- CJIS Security required computer system upgrade: \$40,000
- Body-worn camera POST upcoming mandate: \$37,000 per year
- Portable radios replacement: ~\$3,500 each

2025 Call Volume

- 🚓 Berkley Police responded to 13,089 calls for service in 2025
- That represents an 11.3% increase over 2024
- Call types include medical assists, MVAs, stops, arrests, and incident reporting





2025 Calls for Service Breakdown

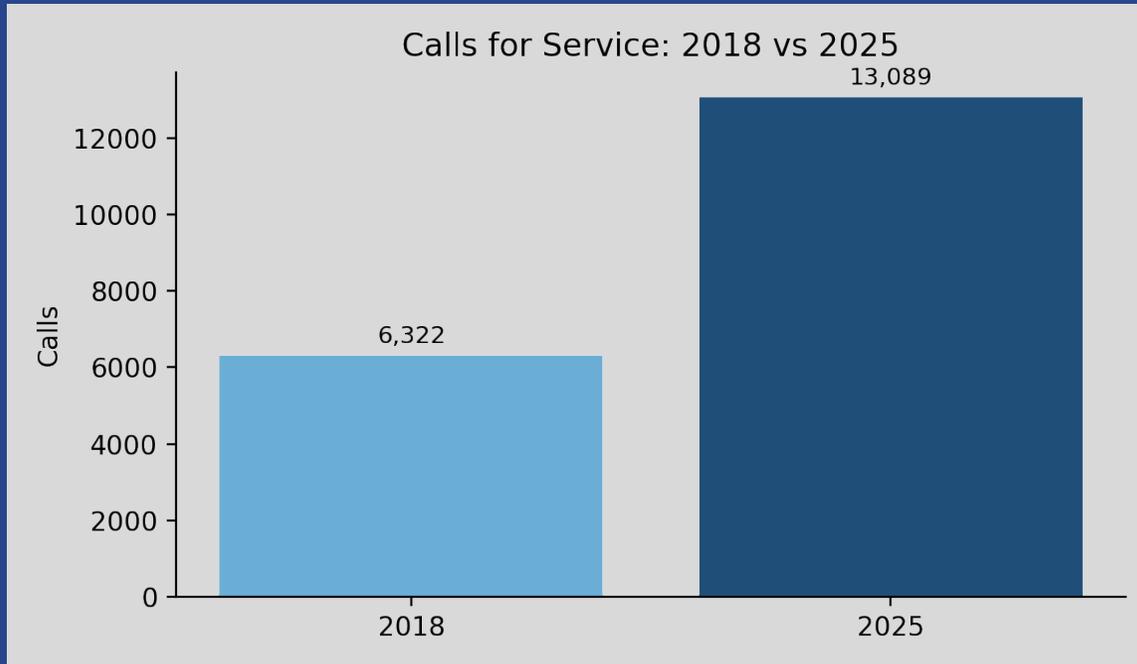
Call Type	Count
Medical Assists	467
Motor Vehicle Accidents	148
Motor Vehicle Stops	1,986
Arrest Reports	133
Incident Reports	400



Calls for Service Trend



Calls for service have more than doubled since 2018





Calls for Service Trend: 2018 vs 2025

- 👥 Last time full-time staffing increased was 2018
- 2018 calls for service: 6,322
- 2025 calls for service: 13,089
- Call volume has more than doubled while staffing remained unchanged
- Mandatory reporting and licensing requirements have increased, while no administrative staffing has been added.
- Increased technological systems have been required, while no IT support staff has been added.



This is a Town-Wide Staffing Challenge

-  Berkley's municipal services have been understaffed and underfunded for years
- Service demands and community expectations continue to increase
- These long-standing limitations strain departments and employees

What Berkley Should Have

- 👥 Minimum 3 officers per shift
- Gradual growth toward guideline staffing (16 officers, including the Chief)
- Dedicated Detective and Student Resource Officer
- Increased supervision to provide supervisors on each shift
- Administrative support staff



Staffing Scenarios: Now • With 6% Reduction • Target Level

- **How We Are Now**

- 9 full-time officers (Chief not included); typically 2 officers per shift
- No full-time Detective, School Resource Officer, or Court Officer
- No administrative staff
- No IT Support Staff

- **With a 6% Reduction**

- Higher likelihood of single-officer coverage during critical periods
- Cuts jeopardize training/accreditation; overtime and fatigue increase
- Reduced proactive patrols and investigative capacity

- **Where We Should Be**

- Minimum 3 officers per shift with gradual growth toward ~16 officers
- Dedicated Detective, SRO, and administrative support

Key Takeaways for Residents

- Berkley operates with the lowest police staffing in Bristol County
- Two officers per shift limits response, investigations, and proactive work
- Calls for service have more than doubled since the last staffing increase
- Investment today reduces risk and long-term cost

Our Commitment to Berkley

- Professional, dedicated response on every call
- Responsible use of resources and mutual aid
- Transparency with the community
- Being fiscally responsible
- Prioritizing the safety of residents and officers
- Collaboration with Town Leadership and other departments
- Continued focus on the highest level of public safety service

Questions & Discussion