



## Police Department Survey

Questions **Responses** 112 Settings

# 112 responses



Not accepting responses



### Message for respondents

This form is no longer accepting responses

Summary

Question

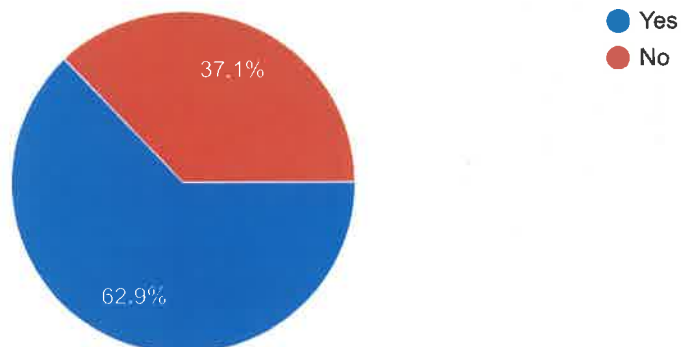
Individual

Are you happy with the current set-up for police service in New Salem?



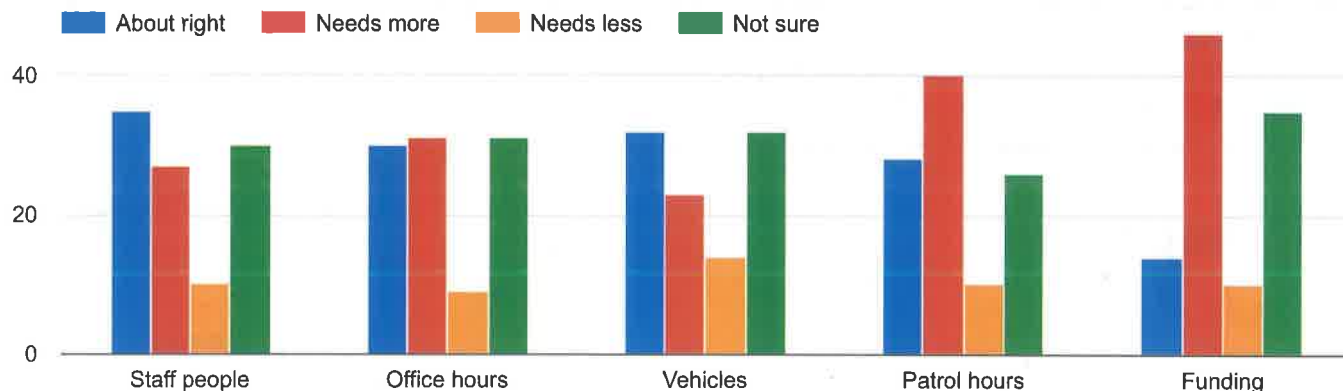
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97 responses



More specifically, do you feel the department has the right amount of

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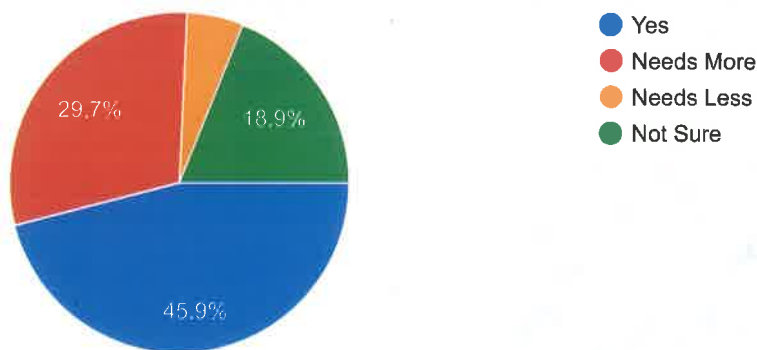


Part II

Do you feel the department has the right amount of management, meaning hours of work by a Chief or Lieutenant? Currently our Police Chief is funded for 19 hours per week.

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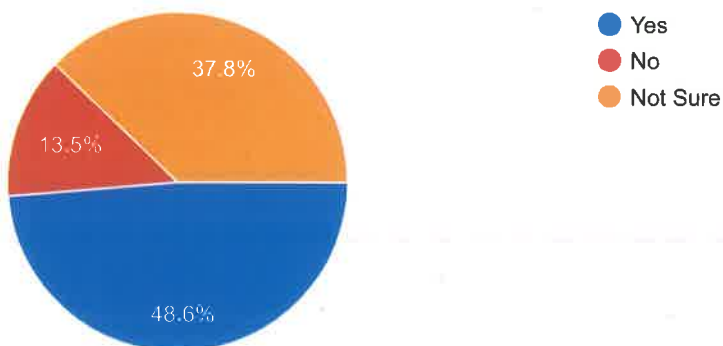
111 responses



Do you think the organizational structure works for the department?

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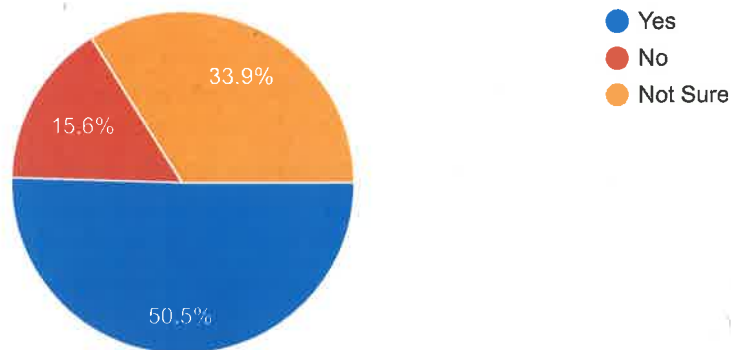
111 responses



Do you think the organizational structure works for the town?

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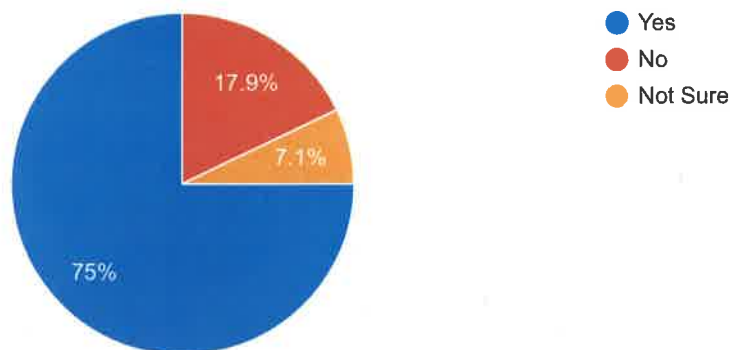
109 responses



Are you aware of patrol (when an officer drives by in a cruiser) on your street?

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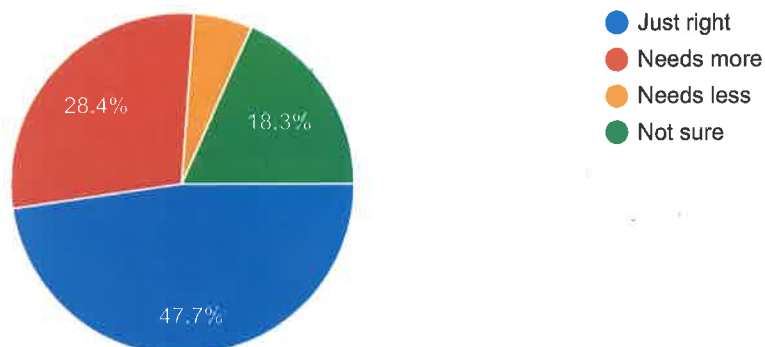
112 responses



The amount of patrol in your neighborhood is

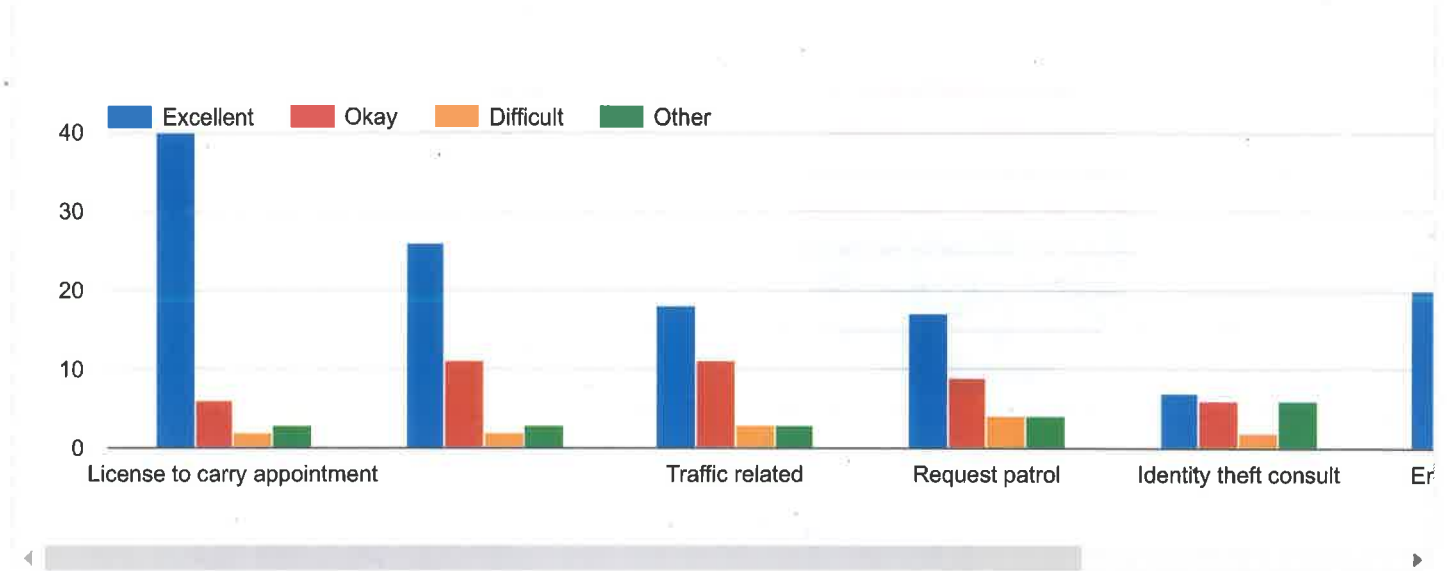
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109 responses



Part 3

If you have had interactions with the Department over the last 5 years, please describe your experience for each type of interaction. You may leave this blank if you have not had any of these types of interactions.



Please offer any explanations you wish about your answers to the previous question on interactions.

23 responses

Very helpful

Police have always been prompt and courteous when they are available.

I enjoy the visual and professional contact. It's great to be able to communicate concerns and support.

I am a strong advocate of community policing . There may some grants available to assist the town in adding an officer. We need more visibility by the police. A community policing grant would enable the police to visit schools, and other town events. We could then focus on the police department in a positive manner rather than strictly law enforcement .

response times can be too long due to the need to rely on state police when we do not have an officer on duty

I feel funding needs to be increased to increase the pay rate for the staff.

The officer delivered my FID card to my house when it was ready.

Too much speeding on Neilson Rd

Medical Assist

no interactions in past five years

More funding will yield future returns

The Municipal Light plant has gotten timely notifications of accidents involving poles carrying our fiber. The police have remained on site, protecting the fiber when needed until the repair crew arrives.

I think these questions are difficult to answer with no context. I haven't had any interaction with police in our six years here because we haven't had any legal-type problems, so I don't have any information to judge by. I guess the fact that we haven't had problems means the police are doing a good job. I do think it is cheesy to employ people and deliberately organize things so we don't pay benefits.

Speed on Wendell Rd related to school is a problem

I feel lucky that I almost never need the police, which might be due to their general presence in the town. The officers with whom I've spoken are friendly and very much in touch with the town and its needs. I'm very happy with the New Salem police.

The police department has been neglected by the town and selectboard, lack of funding, poor office space. The officers are dedicated, if we treated the department better we could retain officers and better patrol and protect our community

We need on-call officers

Only interaction with police was speaking with an officer looking for a neighbor, he was polite, kind, and easy to interact with

ADT alarm response is always great

A part time department in 2022 is a joke. New Salem needs to get with the times and staff a real department.

a request for attention to solving off road vehicles was deemed "not enough staff"

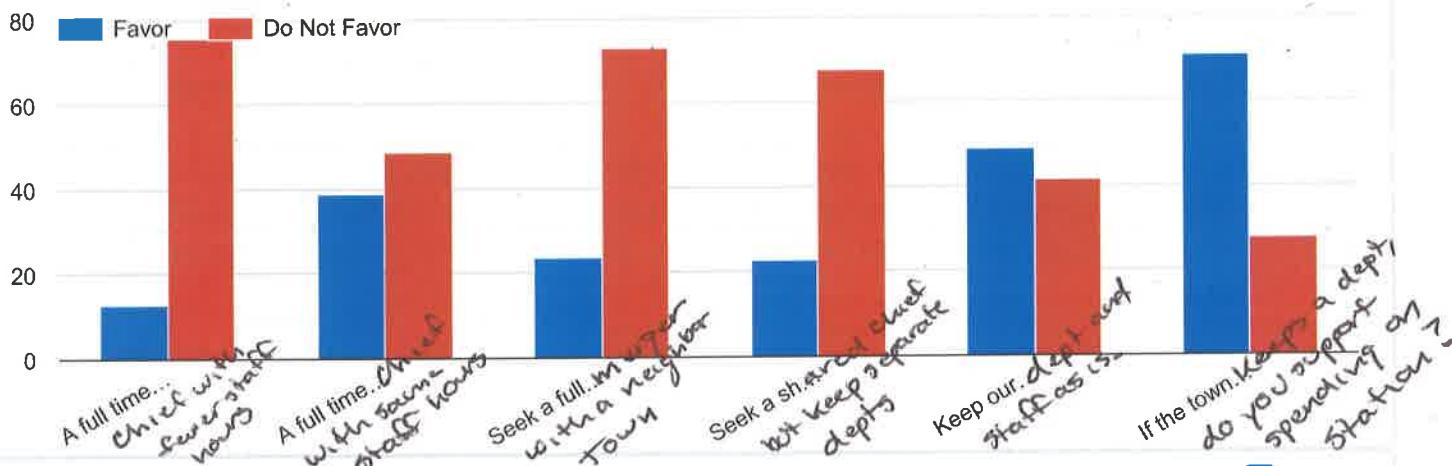
We have had very little if any interaction with the new Salem Police Department.

The first

Options for future policing

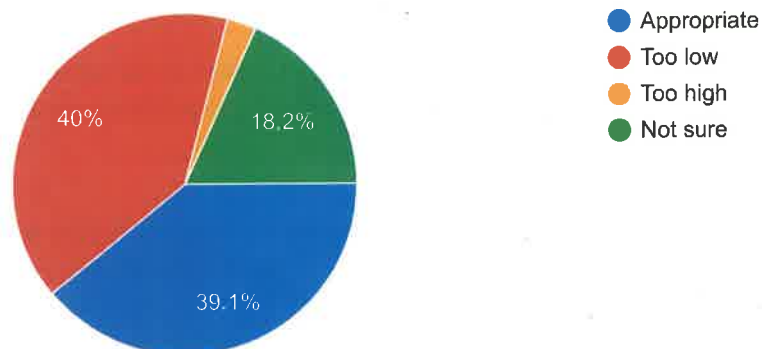


As implied by the name of the committee, our focus is evaluating different models of operating to accomplish the activities of a typical small town police department in a financially sustainable way. Due to anticipated state training requirements, the Town may be presented with increased expenses in the Police Department each time we need to hire. Please remember all budget increases require increases in tax bills when rating your preferences in the following chart. The Chief of Police position is currently part time (19 hrs per week), the Lieutenant is also part time (19 hrs per week), and the department has part time staff to fill in additional hours of patrolling and call response. In the current department, none of the positions come with paid time off or health insurance, benefits required for jobs of 20 hours per week and above. Based on new legislation, in the near future, all officers will either pass full-time training requirements to be eligible for police work in Massachusetts, or will not be allowed to serve, even part time. Please consider these options for the future of the department. These are ideas at this point.



The table above provides a few comparable towns for hours of work and wage rates. Do you think the New Salem hours and pay are

110 responses



Part V

## Any other ideas about how to organize the police department in the future?

51 responses

Create a residency requirement for the Chief if we continue to have one

I'm an abolitionist. The other day there was a traffic accident of some sort on the entrance of my street and no less than four police cars showed up. Why did we need so many? Why do we need someone with a gun to direct traffic? To make a routine traffic stop? While the current status of policing in our town seems to not be an issue, it is clear that police are indoctrinated into a culture of racism and violence in all of their training, and that fully impairs their ability to keep all their citizens safe. I do not feel safe when I see a cop. If we must have police, we should merge with another town to hopefully decrease the presence of police everywhere.

Fund the academy training with the clause that they are employed by the town for a period of 3 to 5 years. Otherwise hire personnel that are already trained.

More patrol hours; seek grant monies for building renovation; look at other town departments' funding before assuming that we would have to raise taxes to increase funding for our police department, which makes our town a safer one.

My answer is to let the police develop as their needs evolve. They know more than I what needs addressing.

We must remember that New Salem is a sovereign town government , and that public safety is one of the basic functions of local government. The state Department Of Revenue would like to have fewer towns and consolidation of Public Safety "plays right into their hands" . We must be careful not to give away our autonomy .

The town needs to keep the Police Department it currently has.

a full time chief and a full time lieutenant with at least one full time officer for community patrol. Route 202 is a major highway and a vehicle for nefarious activities that cannot be monitored appropriately with the current police staffing.

I would prefer it remain the same, would be open for a shared Chief but keep separation. New Salem is growing and we need to maintain a Police Department and remain flexible as the size and demographics of the town will probably change, requiring us to adapt to the change.

The town cruiser should not be used to commute back and forth from a town as far away as Belchertown. If the chief lived in Orange or Wendell, that would be different, but the commute from Belchertown is putting a lot of miles on the town equipment.

I think it has improved in the past couple of years. There are more patrols and interaction with the public. I think with all officers and chief being held accountable for accomplishing duties in which they are paid will show a productive and cost effective department.

Seems ok to me



As in the past, we need a part-time Chief and one part time Officer and one shared vehicle. The Chief should live in town. The exponential growth of the police Dept. is not warranted by population growth or crime in this town.

I am not familiar with total number of officers, hours they work, or benefits provided. \$29 may be a little low, unless receiving a benefits package which could help compensate some of the wages.

I'll leave that to law enforcement professionals.

Hire 2 more part time officers

I strongly support a model working with another town like our fire department model so that we can hire and pay a full-time chief with benefits. It would be nice to then have local officers principally assigned to each town, overlapping when need be, keeping a police station in each town. I am very much against the current policy of having our chief drive a police cruiser home...essentially leaving a police cruiser in Belchertown most of the week where it can be used for non-New Salem overtime highway detail work. It would be nice to see mileage figures on the car for how many actual hours are from work patrolling in New Salem and how many hours have been put on the car for the chief's personal use.

there is no reason to maintain the expense of an independent department, time to combine with another department

I would favor keeping chief hours the same and increasing other staff hours. Ideally, I'd like the police to be able to live in New Salem and to be members of our small community.

Full time patrolman

If it ain't broke, don't fix it just because of a hypothetical scenario that might not happen. Priority should be making the police station humane and safe. It is unconscionable that we make them work there. I can't believe we haven't been sued.

Wouldn't it still be less expensive to budget for special training than to hire full time Chief?

Reduce

You ask how to change things without giving specifics. For instance, how are hours for staff designated, how many officers and vehicles, etc are now in service. Very vague in my opinion. My taxes have increased substantially but I see no major improvements.

I would like to see a full time police chief who engages with the residents of New Salem and sees him/herself as a member of the community who can help neighbors live in harmony together while keep up New Salem as safe place to live. Community policing should be the goal.

Have a chief live in town not 18 miles away!!

Full-time chief or share with other town(s) so there is full-time access to a chief

Just like we reorganize the schools I think we should do that with the police and anything else also.

Seems to me that knowing more about our police and their policing objectives would be good.

I don't think any changes to the current set-up are necessary, but I do think that the police need good office space that's comfortable and safe for their presence and work. If some part of the old Town Hall can be renovated to house them, that would be ideal. Otherwise, perhaps they could share some space with the Fire Dept, in the conference room end of the building. Can that big space have offices partitioned off?

Look into state funds or grant money to renovate the police station with functional improvements. Don't need flashy expensive cosmetic improvements.

Can the police station be combined with existing fire station, is there room?

Please note: we do not support defunding of our police department.

Support and expand, as traffic appear to increase through the community we need more patrol. We should not be cutting back, we should be looking to expand and provide better service with a new station, better pay and benefits.

Full time chief, more officers, improved equipment

Top priority personally is ensuring that the police are able to respond to emergency calls and arrive on scene in under 10 minutes (in the vast majority of urgent situations) regardless of chosen policing method in the end

Keep department as is, reducing staff to level fund over time

We should have a chief who lives somewhere near New Salem. When our current Chief moved to Belchertown, he should have been relieved of his duties.

Get someone that lives in Town!!

I like the model used between Wendell & Leverett

Use state police more...incorporate with another town.

Close department, call state police when needed for real crime

The organization of the NSPD should be up to the professionals in law enforcement. They have the proper training to do so.

Full time chief and a full time officer. Pay for training and run a professional department.

Hire at least one full time officer

In the small adjacent towns, I think that combining resources is fiscally sound and best for public safety.

It's fine the way it is.

I'm 'sorry I can't be very helpful - I just don't have enough information. If I look up crime statistics for New Salem, I find that no crime has been committed in years 2014 and beyond. There seem to have been crimes reported for years 2013 and previously (<https://masscrime.chs.state.ma.us/tops/report/crime-overview/new-salem/2013>). This site contains the disclaimer: "The data in this theme is NIBRS and only reflects data from agencies who have successfully submitted NIBRS data for the selected year." I suspect that no one has been entering data for years after 2013. Without any data, I really can't make any judgment about our police department. With no crime reported, we may do just as well with a scarecrow dressed up as a police officer as with a fully staffed 24 hour police force.

Provide paid benefits for the chief and anyone else who works 20hrs per week.

I don't know enough about our police to comment- have had next to zero contact

See following comments

robo calls about town break-ins/ squatters would be appreciated.

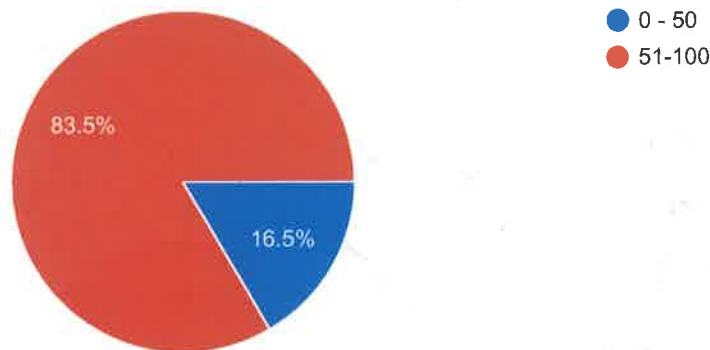
All our questions reflect bias. Offer gun safety and gun practice classes.

To help us interpret these results, please complete these simple demographics.

### What is your age?

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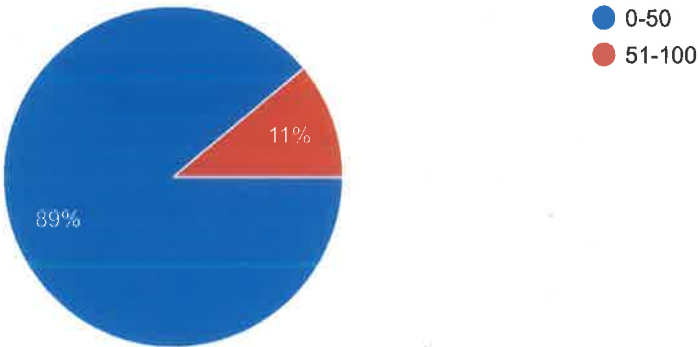
109 responses



How many years have you lived in New Salem

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109 responses



**Please share any other comments or suggestions that concern your**

48 responses

See my previous comment.

My partner, Charlie Chase, and I (Pam DeGregorio) are willing to assist in the effort to operate our police department independently.

I would hate to lose our force.

Please investigate the possibility of obtaining a community policing grant.

There are not enough police officers or hours that the community is patrolled. 202 is too busy and there are too many accidents/speeders not to have someone on duty

We need more officers to patrol for more hours. The community is not safe with police from other towns taking too long to respond

Police presence should be increased to full time standards

Not enough policing in the community, particularly the 202 corridor

Staffing must be increased and with it Pay must be increased to incentivize new full time officers to take positions and increase policing in the community

increasing police presence in the town will improve our community greatly.

Increase police staffing to improve patrols of the town and 202

could use some more policing because on 202 and nearby streets there is too much crime and accidents

increasing police presence and putting more police on duty full time is an investment in the town

please vote to hire more full time police!

A real police station with actual full time police would be a better idea. Taxes may increase but the benefit outweighs the cost of trash/accidents/crime that comes with less policing

I would like to see more police available to make 202 safe and have someone available in emergencies that does not take 20 minutes to arrive on scene

I am very concerned if New Salem merges with another town we will be giving up a lot of autonomy on how we want policing done in New Salem. We will have no say so on any future Police Chiefs that may be hired for the town we choose to contract out with and may wind up with a Police Chief that does not reflect the policing style

that is desired in New Salem. Once we dissolve our Police Department it will be very costly to bring one back on line and am concerned that the contracts as they go forward may be too costly for New Salem and dramatically impact our property tax rate.

All the officers I've met are courteous and Friendly.

Crazy to think we don't need more funding our our department - do think we don't have a crime problem - whats going on??

Merger with another Town will affect response time and reduce interaction and cooperation with residents and the local PD.

None. Thanks.

The Police Department does an excellent job.

It is important to me and my family that we have our own real and legitimate police coverage.

thank you for doing this

I would definitely be interested in hearing how our police force feels. And perhaps the Commonwealth should find a way to reduce the training burden on the towns.

Members of the department being in town and not clearing to go to emergency calls.

My only concern about a part-time police force who have to work elsewhere for benefits is--are they working for New Salem on top of 40 hours elsewhere and does that impact their ability to protect the town? I don't get the sense that it has, but worth checking.

In all honesty, I know nothing about the police department

If Chief would benefit from full time, you should do it. Having 2 jobs to pay the bills probably stinks. Chief should focus on one thing.

Owed a home here over 30 years, increase in tax rate over that time is way too high. Don't have much crime, so don't need more expensive policing.

Why is our chief living out of town and not in town?

Pave dirt roads

My major concern is to keep the New Salem police functioning as well as they do now but with better accommodations. It's awful to ask them to work in their cars or in that moldy basement space they have now. I have all good feeling and entirely support the New Salem police.

If we share police duties with another town, the response times for New Salem residents can be significantly delayed due to the coverage from those other towns. Then would coverage fall to the State Police?

Finance needs to be a better job allowing funds to be used and to give the town what it needs. Keep our police department and start funding for a new police station, fix the town hall or tear it down to create one all use building with proper offices. Figure out how to provide more than part time work and no benefits.

Would like to be able to contact local police without having to go through a dispatcher for non-emergency use.

I think more patrols would keep offends out of New Salem, and keep crime rates down, and better response times.

I don't think the taxpayers should be required to fund a private unmarked cruiser for the out of town chief. Car should remain in Town. Chief can use from Town for police duties. Shared dept such as Wendell and Leverett have should be looked into.

I don't feel I would be amicable to anything that raises taxes.

Close the department. Sell vehicles. Too little crime to justify the expense.

The police department does an excellent job-I'd like it to remain the same.

The survey was not easy to use

I need more info, but generally I feel safe.

I appreciate the efforts made by the study committee to request resident opinions and suggestions. I did attend the informational meeting regarding this survey. I do, however, share with other attendees, the feeling that many of us lack adequate data and a true picture of our police department's needs and changing scope of duties. What I do experience and feel, is the changing demands that any modern day police (or fire) department(s) are expected to be prepared to respond to. Just the traffic demands over the last 15 years has dramatically increased on 2021. Am I "happy" with the current department? Yes....if you are asking me about the half dozen encounters that I have had with officers over my 70 plus years in town....but I need to respond with a "no" when thinking that a regional department might be a better option if the need for more personnel, hours, equipment and a better station are what's needed. I think it's time to get the department out of the basement and shed some light on the situation! Suggestion: do have another town info meeting after you tabulate the response to your survey. It would allow for further feedback.

Keep police vehicles in town.

Consider making residing in Town a hiring factor

Our household supports an independent police department that serves only the town of New Salem. No mergers.

