



Webster Police Department

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Community Committed

As we enter January, 2023, it will mark four years of my being the Chief. I am always amazed at how much and how fast time has gone by. The first four years of my tenure have seen us undergo much change in policing nationwide, including a pandemic, police reform, and the advent of constantly changing and evolving technology.

Webster was no different; although 2022 saw us emerging from the pandemic, we saw the local implementation of Police Reform, most noticeably the first round of police officers having to be certified through the Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission (POST). POST divided officers statewide according to the first letter of their last name. The first officers to be certified would be those with last names ending with the letters A through H. All active officers were certified, and that certification will be good for three years.

One downfall of Police Reform was that we lost our Reserve Officers. How we utilized them, in addition to the new regulations placed upon them, forced them to retire. This is a tremendous loss to not only our department but the town as well. The officers that comprised this unit did so because they wanted to be part of their community and give back. While I understand that there was a need to reform certain areas of policing, this aspect needed to be thought through by the legislature and caused us more harm than good. I want to thank all the former members of the Webster Reserve Police Force for their commitment to our Department and the Town of Webster.

2022 brought about some personnel changes, with Sergeant Thomas Ralph's retirement, Sergeant Aaron DeSantis's resignation, and Officer Robert Brooks's departure. We were fortunate to hire Jacob Zablocki as a lateral transfer from the Douglas Police Department and Melissa Bak from the Sturbridge Police Department. Both have excellent backgrounds and have already shown that they are a great fit for our team. I am confident both will have successful careers here in Webster. We are hiring someone to fill our third vacancy, and the process to fill the vacant sergeant position has begun. I expect both will be filled by the spring of 2023. This hiring will bring us to our full complement of 33 full-time officers.

We continued to maintain a strong presence on the lake this season. Officer Patrick Trainor entered his second year as the Harbormaster and did an excellent job. He is responsible for scheduling patrols, maintaining equipment, and training new officers. I planned to place an officer there full-time and supplement that person with weekend shifts this past summer. Unfortunately, due to staffing shortages, we could not do that. However, we prioritized weekend coverage and sporadic patrols during the week. With full staffing, we will be able to increase our presence more in 2023.

We had 144 total calls involving the Marine Patrol. One hundred fifteen of those were stops initiated by Marine Patrol Officers. Seventy-six verbal warnings were issued, with three written warnings and five citations being issued. Twenty-seven voyages were terminated, and

From the shores of
Lake Chagoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

two crashes were investigated. We will be looking to expand the number of officers that work on the boat next year and boost our presence.

Our Community Outreach Advocate, Jennifer Genduso, has settled into her role and is working to bridge the gap between getting citizens' assistance from the agencies that serve them. Jen doesn't just help individuals suffering from Substance Abuse Disorder, but also assists elderly citizens, transient people, those suffering from mental health issues, and numerous other issues police officers come across during their tours of duty that may be outside their scope of expertise. I am proud that the town of Webster had the forethought to fund this position, and she has been an asset not only to the Police Department but to other Town Departments as well.

As you may have seen on our social media posts, I attended the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Academy in Quantico, Virginia, from July through September. The National Academy is designed for law enforcement executives and exposes students to a broad range of topics relevant to police leadership worldwide. Attendees come from around the world, and it is recognized that attendees are among the top one percent in law enforcement. I cannot say enough good things about how this experience impacted me personally and professionally. I would also like to thank Town Administrator LaFond for allowing me to attend and Deputy Chief Toby Wheeler and Lieutenant Wentworth for running the department in my absence. I would not have been able to submerge myself in the experience completely had it not been for them.

Our ongoing engagement with our community continued with our annual events, like our Duck Off, which we combined with the Touch a Truck hosted by the Webster Public Library. We hosted two fishing tournaments and had yet another successful Junior Police Academy. National Night Out occurred again at the lake, connecting residents with local service agencies that can help them. Wrestling returned to the Webster Town Hall, and we are hopeful to have it back in 2023. Our year-end car show was a big hit, and we had some new chefs create a great menu! Our community events are made possible with the help of our officers and their families, who volunteer their time in many ways. Without their support, these events would not be possible. Thank you to everyone that makes these possible! They are a true testament to our dedication in engaging with our community.

In 2022, we responded to 21,993 calls for service, which is a decrease from 22,065 the previous year. We also saw a decrease in arrests, from 548 to 518, but an increase in person summoned to court, from 818 in 2022 versus 770 in 2021. 1,610 citations were issued in 2022, whereas 1,326 were issued in 2021. There was also an increase in motor vehicle crashes as 382 occurred in 2022, and 348 were reported in 2021.

There were 12 complaints filed against Webster Police Officers in 2022. Five were unfounded, two were exonerated, and five were sustained.

I want to thank the men and women of the Webster Police Department for their service and dedication. These times are not easy for law enforcement, but the men and women of this

department continue to deliver exceptional service to the residents of Webster, and it is an honor to be their Chief of Police.

TOWN OF WEBSTER ANNUAL CRIME REPORT 2022

OFFENSE TYPE	2021	2022
Murder and Manslaughter	0	1
Kidnapping/Abduction	4	7
Forcible Rape	9	17
Statutory Rape	7	0
Forcible Fondling	9	5
Robbery	9	6
Aggravated Assault	137	121
Simple Assault	347	284
Intimidation	91	33
Arson	2	5
Burglary/Breaking and Entering	52	49
Pocket-Picket	1	2
Purse-Snatching	2	0
Shoplifting	14	34

Theft from Building	24	30
Theft from Motor Vehicle	16	45
All Other Larceny	99	134
Motor Vehicle Theft	20	24
Counterfeiting/Forgery	17	16
False Pretenses/Swindling	51	60
Credit Card/Automatic Teller	2	10
Impersonation	37	27
Identity Theft	0	2
Embezzlement	1	0
Stolen Property Offenses	11	6
Destruction/Vandalism/Damage	185	128
Drug/Narcotic Violations	96	106
Pornography/Obscene Material	1	7
Prostitution/Assisting Promoting Prost.	0	0
Weapons Law Violations	52	54
Animal Cruelty	0	1

Bad Checks	0	0
Disorderly Person	106	113
Driving Under The Influence	72	66
Drunkenness	24	15
Family Offenses, Non-Violent	3	1
Runaway/Missing Person	1	0
Liquor Law Violations	27	27
Trespass of Real Property	32	23
All Other Offenses	288	227
Traffic, Town By Law Offenses	1019	1353
Total Number of Calls	22,065	21,993
Total Number People Arrested	548	514
Total Number of People Summoned in For Various Offenses	770	818
Total Number of Citations Issued	1326	1610
Total Number of Traffic Accidents	348	382