



Hamburg Township Public Safety Department

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PHONE: (810) 231-9391 · FAX: (810) 231-9401

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RICHARD DUFFANY, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY



TO: Hamburg Township Board
FROM: Chief Richard Duffany
DATE: April 11, 2024
RE: Supplement to Public Safety Goals & Objectives for FY 2024/25

Included in the FY 2024/25 Public Safety Goals & Objectives are two items that warrant in-depth discussions. The first being the proposed Fire millage and the second being the request to add 2 additional full-time police officers. The Fire millage discussion has been allotted its own time slot on the schedule for the Township's Strategic Planning session on April 16, 2024.

The request to add the 2 additional police officers will be discussed during the 30-minutes allotted for the general Public Safety Goals & Objectives. As this topic undoubtedly has the potential to lead to an extensive discussion on the matter, I felt it would be beneficial from a discussion standpoint and time-management standpoint to provide this supplemental memo outlining the background for this request. It will provide an opportunity for the Board to ask questions and obtain additional information from me prior to the Strategic Planning session in order to facilitate a more productive discussion. Additionally, it may provide me with some clarity as to what issues the Board would like addressed during the discussion so that I may provide an informed response.

At the outset, I want the Board to know that I didn't make the decision to request the 2 additional officers flippantly. I struggled over the past several months about whether to bring this request to the Board as I anticipated much pushback. However, in the end I decided that I needed to do what I feel is right for the department as opposed to taking the easier path of the status quo.

The issue of staffing levels within the police department is nothing new. It was a primary focus of the Police millage passed in 2018 (the last time we added an officer position) and was even brought up by the police union during the 2021 contract negotiations.

From my perspective, there are two questions which drive the answer to this request for additional officers. Is there a need for the additional officers and can the Township afford them? If the answer to both these questions is "yes" then the request should be approved. If there are additional considerations, I respectfully ask that you let me know them so I can address them at the Strategic Planning session.

As to the first question of whether there is a need, I can provide much anecdotal evidence of the need for more officers, however, I don't know how persuasive that is to the Board. I have made known to some of the Board members my frustration of not being able to adequately convey the



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behind the scene struggles to fill open schedules caused by vacations, training, injuries and court appearances in addition to staffing marine patrols, special events, and community events.

In previous discussions with the Board on various matters (including pay raises, promotions, staffing, etc.) the term “benchmark” has been used by various Board members. While I understand in general terms what the term “benchmark” means, I am not sure what “benchmark” we need to meet to justify adding 2 more officers. The most obvious and objective benchmark would be to analyze our staffing level in comparison to others.

The average number of officers for the State of Michigan is 1.8 officers per 1000 residents. That figure of 1.8 per 1000 residents is not a recommendation or a goal, it represents the *actual* average number of police officers that police departments throughout the state have. That means if we were just an average police department as far as staffing goes, we would have 39 officers. We have 18.

Bringing it closer to home, we are lacking in comparison to every other local Livingston County police agency as well. The number of full-time police officers per 1000 residents are as follows:

Police Department	Population	Full-Time Officers	Officers per 1000 Residents
Brighton	7,446	18	2.42
Fowlerville	2,951	7	2.37
Pinckney	2,415	5	2.07
Howell	10,068	18	1.79
Unadilla Township	3,333	3	0.90
Green Oak Township	19,539	17	0.87
Hamburg Township	21,259	18	0.85

When looking at these ratios it is also important to note that our department provides more additional services and resources to its residents than any other individual local agency in the county, including:

- Having two dedicated detectives for follow-up investigations
- Having an officer assigned to LАWNET with access to additional state/federal resources.
- Having officers assigned to the Livingston Regional SWAT Team



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- Having officers assigned to the Livingston Crisis Negotiators Team
- Having an officer assigned to the Livingston County Dive Team
- Having a strong community relations presence
 - Dedicated Community Services sergeant
 - Active social media presence
 - School liaison officer working with the Livingston County SRO
 - Having community outreach forums
 - Participating in numerous community/civic events
 - Attending HOA meetings
 - Providing crime prevention education and awareness at the Senior Center
- Having a federally-certified motor carrier enforcement officer
- Having a state-certified Drone Team (one of only 4 in the state)
- Having a certified police sketch artist
- Providing routine boat patrols on the Chain of Lakes during the boating season
- Providing routine bike patrols on the Lakelands Trail
- Providing full coverage for the Hamburg Family Funfest and fireworks

In short, we are the epitome of “doing more with less.” I would consider the number of services that we provide in relation to the number of officers we have as another benchmark, a benchmark that we have set for the rest of the county. Providing these services in addition to 24/7 road patrol coverage with our current staffing level, however, does not come without significant strain on our officers and our overtime budget.

I also find it relevant to point out how having adequate staffing can have real tangible results for our residents. As I have pointed out previously to the Board, our department has had a crime clearance rate well above the state average for the past 10 years going back to 2014. Prior to 2014, our department’s crime clearance rate was consistently below 20% (while the state average is generally around 30-35%).

Our department’s significant rise in our crime clearance rate beginning in 2014 can be directly attributed to the establishment of 2 detective positions and a LАWNET position that year. The 2 detectives provided the ability of our department to conduct thorough and in-depth follow-up investigations when criminal activity occurred. The placement of one of our officers in LАWNET also provided us with invaluable investigative resources. LАWNET provides us with access to over a dozen officers who assist on our investigations, conduct surveillance for us, assist on the execution of search warrants and provide information from state and federal resources. This assistance complements the work of our 2 detectives leading to the resolution of crimes.



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Having a high crime clearance rate is an enormous benefit for our community. When a crime occurs in Hamburg Township our residents know that literally more often than not (as we have had over a 50% crime clearance rate the past 4 years) we will solve the crime. This leads to resident satisfaction and confidence in our department.

As an example of another benchmark that our department has set for the county, I point out the crime clearance rate for all Livingston County law enforcement agencies from 2022 (the latest figures posted on the Michigan Incident Crime Reporting website):

Hamburg Township PD:	52.3%
Brighton PD:	43.5%
Fowlerville PD:	41.9%
Green Oak Township PD:	40.3%
STATE AVERAGE:	31.5%
Pinckney PD:	31.3%
Howell PD	21.3%
Livingston County Sheriff:	20.6%
Unadilla Township PD:	13.5%

Again, our consistently high crime clearance rate is attributable to having 3 specialized positions (2 detectives and a LАWNET officer) to investigate crimes. Obviously, though, those are three officers not working road patrol duties.

Currently, there are 12 officers assigned to road patrol duties with 1 sergeant and 2 officers *scheduled* to each 12-hour shift. In other words, if all goes as planned then we have 3 officers working road patrol at any given time (which I would argue is still inadequate given the size of our Township). However, with vacations, sick time, FMLA, injuries, court appearances and training days we routinely operate with only 2 officers working road patrol duties (and we regularly have to assign an officer on overtime to even get to 2 officers).

Again, having only 2 officers working road patrol in a Township our size is simply insufficient from a response standpoint and an officer safety standpoint. Our Township has seen an increase over the past few years in the number of assaults on our officers, use of force incidents, pursuits, and injured officers. As I indicated in my latest annual analysis report to the Board, we had 4 officers require medical treatment in 2023 due to being assaulted while on calls.

As we stand now, there is no “relief factor” built into our road patrol schedule which would help offset staffing issues when an officer is off due to the many reasons that I previously enumerated. If approved, the 2 new officers would be assigned to road patrol in order to help address this lack of “relief factor” issue. Additionally, having 2 more officers available to work our many additional details (marine patrols, Lakelands Trail patrol, Fun Fest, community events, special events, etc.)



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would lessen the burden on the supervisors tasked with filling these extra details and lessen the strain on our current officers constantly being asked to fill these details.

If these statistics and benchmarks are not persuasive on the issue of our staffing level, then I would like to point out an additional item for consideration. As you are aware, our department just went through an extremely comprehensive review of all administrative and operational aspects of our department by assessors from the Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission. At the conclusion of the two-day onsite assessment I had an exit interview with the assessors.

During the exit interview, I was advised that our department was 100% in compliance with all standards and proofs (which I was told was an exceedingly rare accomplishment). The lead assessor then advised me that while we were totally in compliance, that he would be noting in his final report that our department was extremely understaffed and that it was an issue that should be addressed. This is an unsolicited opinion from outside law enforcement professionals whose purpose is to thoroughly review the operations of police departments in this state.

In sum, based upon the aforementioned, it is my professional opinion as someone with over 35 years of law enforcement experience, including over 20 years of command experience, that our department is understaffed and the answer to the first question as to whether there is a need for the 2 additional officers is unquestionably “yes.”

As to the second question that I posed, whether the Township can afford these 2 new officers, I submit to the Board that the answer is also “yes” if the Board authorizes the use of funds from the General Fund to supplement our Police millage.

According to the latest figures provided to me this week by the Accounting Director, the General Fund is projected to have a total fund balance of over \$6.8 million dollars at the end of FY 24/25 with the *undesignated* reserve fund projected to be over \$5.8 million. The General Fund total fund balance will be well above the 125% of operating costs required by the Board resolution (projected to be approximately 148% of operating costs).

Financial calculations by the Accounting Department also show that the estimated total cost to add a new officer in FY 24/25 would be about \$120,000 which includes all wages and benefits. I would note that this is the high end as this figure assumes the maximum on all variables (“family” medical insurance, working all 14 holidays, etc.). Two additional officers would be approximately \$240,000 maximum. This represents an amount less than 5% of the undesignated reserve of the General fund. As such, I am asking that the Board approve taking some of the General Fund and investing it into public safety.



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It is my sincere hope that I have clearly articulated my position on this matter and that the Board will objectively consider my request. Please reach out to me at any time before Strategic Planning if you have any questions, need additional information or want to discuss my request further.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Duffany".

Chief Richard Duffany
Director of Public Safety