

# Special Meeting of the Dorset Select Board

## August 11, 2015 ~ Minutes

Present: Mike Connors (Vice Chair), Michael Oltedal, Brad Tyler, Henry Chandler  
Absent: Chris Brooks  
Also, present: R. Gaiotti (Town Manager), Chad Schmidt (Bennington County Sheriff)

M. Connors, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

### **Meet with Bennington County Sheriff Chad Schmidt**

R. Gaiotti explained the background of the public safety study and planning process that the Dorset Selectboard has been going through over the last 2 years. The concept for the public safety plan is a 5 year outlook as to where the Town would like to see public safety services etc.

Chad Schmidt explained his approach for policing in Dorset, and that the model would be like Dorset having it's own police officer/department. Discussion ensued about the number of staff members, and level of training of current staff at the Sheriff's Department. Discussion was had about recent break in problems and the need for some possible part time investigatory work. M. Connors stated that there would not be a need for full time investigating and that we need to figure out just how much police coverage is reasonable and at what cost to taxpayers.

C. Schmidt presented information about hourly rates for patrol, investigation and misc. He explained that he would like to provide a SUV cruiser that would be kept in Dorset, only for use on Dorset patrol. The cruiser would be given a Dorset Patrol logo, as to allow community members to identify and relate to the service. C. Schmidt suggested that perhaps a 40 hour week with a dedicated officer for Dorset, who had office space to work from and receive residents would be something good for the Town.

Discussion ensued about vehicles and terrain for patrols in Dorset. Further discussion was had about policing strategies in Dorset. B. Tyler felt that residents would really like a cruiser that they could relate to and an officer they can call their own. H. Chandler stated that at many of the public meetings residents talked about the need for additional police presence in Dorset, and that was what the Town should be looking for, while determining what is most reasonable from a cost perspective. M. Connors agreed that the funding portion of the service would be critical because taxpayers are strapped.

C. Schmidt presented information about dispatch, and noted that the Bennington County Sheriff is dispatched during the day from Bennington and dispatched from Windham County in Newfane after hours. M. Connors asked about dispatching procedures, C. Schmidt explained that emergencies are always 911, but a non-emergency call would just be placed to the Sheriff's number and someone would always pick it up.

The board members then discussed the need to weigh all the options available so residents will get the best benefit. R. Gaiotti was asked to compose a list of options and costs relative to a possible service contract with the Bennington County Sheriff's department. This will allow the board to further gather all the information needed to develop a policing and public safety plan that will work for Dorset.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting stood adjourned at 9:15pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Rob Gaiotti  
Town Manager