

Towns of Williamsburg and Chesterfield, MA
Police Services Study
Project Report

July 2014



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Introduction

Local governments face the ongoing dilemma of establishing the correct level of police service for their communities. Specifically, based on assessment of the community's needs, they must determine the staffing levels necessary to respond to calls for service and emergency incidents and to provide an appropriate level of proactive patrol within the constraints of limited municipal budgets.

The towns of Williamsburg and Chesterfield, Massachusetts, share borders, characteristics, and police officers. Both are rural communities with part-time police departments. Several part-time officers work in both departments, and there is considerable interaction between the two agencies. The Town of Chesterfield has reached a critical point as its part-time Chief of Police, who has served the town for more than 40 years, is approaching mandatory retirement age. Chesterfield officials reached out to their counterparts in the Town of Williamsburg to discuss the possibility of sharing the services of a police chief or consolidating their police services into a regional department to reduce costs and improve efficiency.

The towns requested funding through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts 2014 District Local Technical Assistance Program, administered by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) to seek consultant services to conduct an analysis to determine whether the municipalities' police departments could benefit from cross-jurisdictional sharing of personnel or regionalization. The PVPC is the regional planning body for the Pioneer Valley region, which encompasses 43 cities and towns in the Hampden and Hampshire County areas of Massachusetts. It is the primary agency responsible for increasing communication, cooperation, and coordination among all levels of government as well as the private business and civic sectors in order to benefit the Pioneer Valley region and to improve its residents' quality of life.

The PVPC retained The Novak Consulting Group (TNCG) to perform this study. TNCG has been tasked with reviewing the operations of both police departments to identify individual areas in which efficiencies might be achieved, as well as to assess potential benefits or obstacles associated with consolidation or sharing of personnel, facilities, or equipment.

To conduct this analysis, TNCG reviewed data regarding calls for service, staffing, scheduling, and budgets from both departments. TNCG also conducted field work in both towns, meeting with the respective Chiefs of Police, Town Administrators, and elected officials. TNCG representatives visited both police facilities, participated in a ride-along tour of both towns, and met with police officers from both departments.

This has enabled TNCG to develop an understanding of the areas served by the two departments, the desired levels of service from the perspectives of both staff and elected officials, the financial constraints within which the towns operate, and the challenges faced by

the departments. The result is several recommendations aimed at providing both municipalities with options for full or partial consolidation of their police departments, or in the alternative, to make operational improvements within their agencies.

Summary of Current Operations

The Town of Williamsburg and the Town of Chesterfield have a history of cooperation among the communities in the area of police services and in other areas of local government. However, while there are similarities between both towns, there are important distinctions as well, especially as it relates to the delivery of police services. The profiles of each community and their demand for police services are summarized below.

Town of Williamsburg

The Town of Williamsburg, located in Hampshire County, Massachusetts, was settled in 1735 and incorporated in 1775. It operates under the open town meeting form of government, with a three-member Board of Selectmen. Under this form of government, an annual Town Meeting, open to all residents, is essentially the legislative body for the town, and decides three major items:

- It sets the salaries of elected officials.
- It votes to appropriate money for town operations.
- It votes on the town's local statutes.

All Town residents are eligible to vote on all matters. The Board of Selectmen consists of elected officials who serve as the town's executive officers. They may call town meetings; supervise town employees; and may appoint a Town Administrator to administer town operations under their supervision.¹

The total area of the Town of Williamsburg is 25.7 miles, of which 25.6 square miles is land, and it includes the villages of Haydenville and Searsville. The population of 2,482 people consists of 1,118 households and 1,183 housing units, with an average population density of 96.6 per square mile. Median household income is \$58,636, and per capita income is \$39,041. Approximately 7.3% of individual residents are considered living below the poverty line.²

The Town of Williamsburg Police Department is currently staffed by seven employees and has one additional vacant position, allocated as follows:

- One full time Chief of Police
- One full time sergeant – vacant
- One part time sergeant – 8 to 16 hours per week
- One police officer - 20 hours per week

¹ "Citizen's Guide to Town Meetings," Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Secretary of the Commonwealth, <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cistwn/twnidx.htm>

² U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Demographic Profile Data

- Four part time police officers – 8 hours per week each.

Chief Denise Wickland has served as the full time Chief of Police since 2010.

The Police Department is responsible for all aspects of policing within the Town, including the investigation of crimes other than homicides.³ The Massachusetts State Police provides forensic assistance as well as investigative support, but investigations remain under the Department's jurisdiction and are assigned to the reporting officer.

The Police Department is housed in a public safety building shared with the Fire Department at 16 South Main Street in the Haydenville section. The Town is planning to build a new public safety facility, and expects to seek approval in Summer 2014 for feasibility study funding. The department is equipped with four vehicles: one Sport Utility Vehicle (SUV) assigned to the Chief of Police; one SUV and one sedan assigned to patrol; and one SUV assigned as a spare vehicle that is used primarily for court, training, traffic details, and similar functions.

The Police Department's operating budget for Fiscal Year 2014 (July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014) is \$219,649. Of that, \$122,399 is allocated for police labor costs. The Chief's salary of \$58,250 is carried as a separate line item. Part time police officers with less than two years of experience are paid \$17.33 per hour; those with more than two years of experience are paid \$18.81 per hour. The rate for sergeants is \$22.41 per hour. There is a \$1.00 per hour night shift differential for hours performed between midnight and 7:00 A.M.

During the past three years, the Department has responded to an average of 1,586 calls for service annually. The call volume for 2011, 2012 and 2013 is detailed below:

- 2011: 1,459
- 2012: 1,687
- 2013: 1,612

Emergency calls are dispatched by Northampton Control, a centralized regional dispatch center operated by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Williamsburg police officers have averaged 34 arrests annually for the past three years:

- 2011: 23
- 2012: 45
- 2013: 34

In 2012, the last year for which Uniform Crime Reports are currently published, Williamsburg reported only two violent crimes (two Aggravated Assaults) and 32 Property Crimes (11 Burglaries, 20 Larcenies, and one Motor Vehicle theft).⁴

³ The District Attorney is charged with the investigation of homicides, with the exception of certain designated cities in the Commonwealth, under Massachusetts General Law Title VI, Chapter 38, §4.

⁴ Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reports, "Crime in the United States 2012," Table 8

The Department attempts to provide coverage seven days per week on day and evening shifts (8:00 A.M. to midnight). The Chief of Police works during the day shift, Monday through Friday. Part time officers are scheduled during the evening hours, on weekends, and, when possible, to provide an overlap between day and evening shifts, or to provide coverage by two officers per shift. During the overnight hours or at other times when officers are not scheduled to work, upon receipt of a call for service, Northampton Control will broadcast a page to all officers via cell phone. If an off duty officer is available (frequently they are not, since many work full-time jobs out of town), he or she may respond. If no officers are available, the Massachusetts State Police is dispatched. A similar practice is followed when an on-duty officer requires assistance; off-duty officers are paged and may respond if available. When paged off-duty, officers will typically respond in their personal vehicles. Several officers have been authorized to install emergency lights in their vehicles.

Town of Chesterfield

The Town of Chesterfield, located in Hampshire County, Massachusetts, was settled in 1760 and incorporated in 1762. It is also operated under the open town meeting form of government, with a three-member Board of Selectmen. The total area of the Town is 31.3 miles, of which 31.1 square miles is land. It borders the Town of Williamsburg on the east. The population of 1,222 consists of 511 households and 564 housing units, with an average population density of 39.0 per square mile. Median household income is \$61,198, and per capita income is \$32,589. Approximately 5.3% of individuals are considered living below the poverty line.⁵

The Town of Chesterfield Police Department is currently staffed exclusively by part time personnel. Chief Gary Wickland, the part time Chief of Police who has been a member of the Department since 1970, has reached mandatory retirement age, and is continuing to serve based on a temporary waiver. Chief Denise Wickland of Williamsburg is a part time sergeant in Chesterfield, working one evening per week, primarily to assist with administrative duties. Four police officers are currently on the roster, three of whom also work in the Williamsburg Police Department. The Department had staffed a 20 hour per week position, which allowed for scheduled routine patrol; however, that officer has taken a full time job and is no longer available for the full 20 hour position. As a result, no routine patrols are being conducted at this time.

Patrol shifts are staffed randomly, based largely on officers' availability, and officers are paged to respond to calls for service when the need arises. Because they are part time employees, their availability is largely dependent on their full time jobs. As a matter of practice, Chesterfield officers working in Williamsburg will often respond to Chesterfield when needed.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Demographic Profile Data

Like the Williamsburg Police Department, the Chesterfield Police Department is responsible for all aspects of policing within the Town, including the investigation of crimes other than homicides.⁶ The Massachusetts State Police provides forensic assistance as well as investigative support, but investigations remains under the Department's jurisdiction and are assigned to the reporting officer.

The Department is housed in an office in Town Hall at 422 Main Road. It is equipped with two vehicles: one SUV and one sedan. Because there is no secure facility at which to park the vehicles, they are stored at the Chief's residence.

The Police Department's operating budget for Fiscal Year 2014 (July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014) is \$43,500 with \$33,500 allocated for police salaries. Part time police officers are paid \$15.69 per hour; the sergeant is paid \$17.64 per hour; and the Chief of Police is paid \$18.93 per hour.

During the past three years, the department has responded to an average of 443 calls for service annually. The call volume in 2011, 2012 and 2013 is detailed below:

- 2011: 470
- 2012: 461
- 2013: 399

Similar to Williamsburg, emergency calls are dispatched by Northampton Control, a centralized regional dispatch center operated by the Massachusetts State Police.

During 2012, the last year for which Uniform Crime Reports have been published, Chesterfield reported no Violent Crimes and seven Property Crimes (two Burglaries, four Larcenies, and one Motor Vehicle Theft).⁷

The Department operates on a call out basis similar to that used by the Williamsburg Police Department. During the overnight hours or at other times when officers are not scheduled to work, upon receipt of a call for service, Northampton Control will broadcast a page to all officers via cell phone. If an officer is available (frequently they are not, since many work full-time jobs out of town) he or she will respond. If no officers are available, the Massachusetts State Police is dispatched. A similar practice is followed when an on-duty officer requires assistance; off-duty officers are paged and may respond if available. When paged off-duty, officers will typically respond in their personal vehicles.

Massachusetts State Police

The Massachusetts State Police is not part of this study. However, it is the agency charged with providing police services to rural areas and towns without independent police departments,

⁶ The District Attorney is charged with the investigation of homicides, with the exception of certain designated cities in the Commonwealth, under Massachusetts General Law Title VI, Chapter 38, §4.

⁷ Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reports, "Crime in the United States 2012," Table 8

making it, by default, the agency that responds to emergencies when members of the Williamsburg and Chesterfield Police Departments are unavailable. It also provides support services, such as crime scene processing and investigative assistance. Therefore, it is helpful to understand the agency's role and capacity.

The Towns of Williamsburg and Chesterfield are served by Station B-6 of the Massachusetts State Police, also referred to as "SP Northampton," which is based at 555 North King Street in Northampton. The Northampton Barracks covers 17 cities and towns in an area of 400 square miles, as well as six colleges and universities, including the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, with a student body of approximately 24,000.⁸

The station is responsible for patrolling Interstate 91, a major north/south highway, from the southern border of Holyoke to the northern border of the Town of Whately. However, the primary mission of the station is not highway patrol, but providing police services to those municipalities that do not have independent police departments. Of the 17 municipalities covered by Station B-6, only six have full time police departments. The remaining eleven have either full time Chiefs of Police and part time officers, or are staffed completely by part time officers. As a result, the station covers most towns during the late night hours and on weekends when no other police resources are available. It also provides assistance when town police departments have incidents that are beyond their capabilities.

Station B-6 normally assigns four patrols on the day shift; three on the evening shift; and two on the midnight shift. As a result, depending on call volume and troopers' locations, response time may be extended.

⁸ <http://www.mass.gov/eopss/law-enforce-and-cj/law-enforce/msp-troops/troop-b/station-b-6-sp-northampton.html>

Findings and Recommendations

The findings and recommendations resulting from this study are outlined below. They begin with general comments relevant to both departments, followed by specific observations and recommendations to increase efficiency of operations within the individual towns. Finally, opportunities for collaboration are discussed.

A significant challenge for almost all municipal governments is determining the appropriate level of police staffing. Public safety is clearly a core service, and is a costly one; in many municipalities, it is the largest cost center. Although some minor revenue streams may be associated with it, such as fines and forfeitures, policing is not a profitable business. At the outset, analysis of a community's policing needs, in the absence of the key drivers found in larger communities such as a significant call volume or major crime issues, depends largely on several factors:

- Does the community need or want its own police department, or is it willing to rely solely on an outside entity (such as the State Police)?
- What is the community's perception of its safety and its need for police services?
- Does the community need or desire around-the-clock coverage; proactive patrol; specialized programs; or just reactive response to emergency calls?
- What does the community consider to be an acceptable response time?
- What is the community's willingness – and fiscal capacity – to fund police operations?

It is also important to bear in mind that there is a sizeable administrative burden associated with the operation of a modern police department. Training, scheduling, record keeping, statistical analysis, updating of policies, evidence management, review of reports, legal updates, and similar tasks beyond routine patrol have continued to increase in both complexity and importance. The "back office" operation of any law enforcement agency is not insignificant, regardless of the size of the agency, and the liability that can accrue to a municipality that fields a police department without satisfactorily addressing its administrative obligations can far outweigh the benefit provided by a token police presence.

With certain nuances that will be addressed in the discussion of the individual departments, it is clear that both Williamsburg and Chesterfield believe that their communities should have local police departments, and they are generally satisfied with the performance of their departments. Police Department staff generally believes that coverage during the overnight hours would be an appropriate step, and that ensuring adequate backup for officers who are typically working alone is important.

However, it is apparent that municipal officials are satisfied with the current scheme, which aims to provide coverage during the day and evening hours, with on call officers and the State Police providing response as needed during the overnight hours. Both towns would like to enhance their coverage during the current operating hours; that is particularly the case in Chesterfield, which currently is not staffing scheduled routine patrols. However, there is limited

support for any enhancement that would require additional funding. Likewise, both towns have expressed a willingness to consider collaboration, whether through consolidation, sharing of personnel or resources, or contracting for services, but only if the resulting arrangement benefits both towns equitably and does not substantively increase costs.

TNCG’s recommendations are designed with the goal of meeting those objectives: finding potential areas of efficiency within each department, and/or through inter-municipal collaboration, while keeping any financial impact to a minimum.

Although both towns serve predominantly rural areas, a side-by-side comparison shows significant differences in the departments as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Statistical comparison, Towns of Williamsburg and Chesterfield

Category	Williamsburg	Chesterfield
Population	2,482	1,222
Population density	96.6 per sq. mi.	39.0 per sq. mi
Calls for Service (2013)	1,612	443
Major roadways	Route 9	n/a
Full time police officers	1 (+1 unfilled vacancy)	0
Part time police officers	6	4
Crime rate ⁹	85.3 per 100,000	32.0 per 100,000
Annual Operating Budget	\$219,649	\$43,500

Traffic patterns in the two towns are of some significance. Williamsburg is bisected by Route 9, which is a through road that serves as a route to the cities of Pittsfield and North Adams. Traffic counts¹⁰ reflect approximate volumes of between 8,400¹¹ and 10,800¹² vehicles. Police Department staff report that in addition to routine traffic concerns, such as accidents and violations, criminal conduct has increased due to transient activity, as the Town is the location of the last services for a stretch of about 30 miles. Conversely, Chesterfield’s main road, Route 143, is not a route to any major destinations, and does not produce a comparable level of traffic volume or related activity.

Both towns share a similar challenge in the recruitment and retention of personnel. They are primarily staffed by part time police officers. Staffing with part time employees provides advantages and disadvantages. They provide useful flexibility in scheduling, especially in what is essentially a solo patrol operation, although their availability may be limited by conflicts with their primary employment. Their salaries are typically lower than those of full time employees, and they do not accrue benefits. However, they may work infrequently – in both communities,

⁹ www.city-data.com profile; 2012 figures; national average is 257.0 per 100,000

¹⁰ <http://www.mhd.state.ma.us/traffic.asp?f=2&C=RTE.%20%209>

¹¹ Route 9 east of Route 143

¹² Route 9 East of Petticoat Hill Road

most officers work only one shift per week – which can limit communication regarding unusual occurrences or crime trends. Neither department has roll calls or face-to-face briefings as a matter of routine. As a result, an officer who has not worked for six or seven days may not be as conversant with recent events and emerging issues as a full time officer might be.

There is also a considerable ongoing training requirement for part time employees. Part time officers must initially attend a part time Police Academy; subsequently, they receive 40 hours of training annually. The amount of time devoted to training (and therefore paid time when the officer is not performing patrol duty) is proportionally much higher for an officer who works a single shift – or on an on-call basis – than for an officer who works a full time or a more traditional part time (i.e., 20 hours per week) schedule.

Because of these factors, it is important for both departments to be as proactive as possible in scheduling personnel in order to maximize coverage during the days and hours of greatest need; to achieve the best return on their training investment; and to keep officers’ skills sharp to avoid the rustiness that can result from long gaps between shifts. That said, the realities of the recruitment and retention situation must be acknowledged.

Although part time employment as a police officer is often viewed as a stepping stone toward a full time position – and it has been the case that officers have been hired by either town, received training and experience, and moved on to a full time law enforcement position elsewhere – there appears to be little interest on the part of the staff in moving to full time positions. This is largely attributed to the pay scale. Several officers indicated that the salary range would be too low for them to accept a full time job. They would prefer to keep their full time employment and fulfill their interest in policing and service to the community on a part time basis. As both towns consider increasing the number of full time positions, the potential difficulty in filling the jobs must be considered, and salary rates may need to be adjusted accordingly.

Williamsburg Police Department

Findings and recommendations specific to the Williamsburg Police Department are addressed under three principal categories: staffing/coverage; the condition of the Police Headquarters facility; and records management/technology.

Patrol Staffing and Deployment

Currently, the Chief of Police is the only full time employee of the Williamsburg Police Department. As a “Working Chief,” in addition to the managerial duties associated with the position, the Chief responds to calls for service and is often the only officer on duty during the day shift.

A second full time position has been authorized for a sergeant, but it is vacant at this time. The current sergeant works a part time schedule of approximately 16 hours per week. The

remaining staff hours are allocated to provide coverage between 7:00 A.M. and Midnight, seven days per week.

The Department schedules office hours two evenings per week, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 6:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M., during which members of the public can conduct non-emergency department business. One part time officer, who is designated as the administrative officer, staffs the office during evening hours, but also serves as an active officer available for call response. Although nominally assigned to perform administrative duties, the officer responds to calls for service as needed during those hours.

Lastly, a 4:00 pm to midnight shift is staffed by part-time officers; whether the shift is staffed depends largely on the availability of part-time officers.

As noted earlier, each of the departments involved in this review is responsible for all police duties within its jurisdiction, including response to emergency incidents and calls for service; proactive enforcement; community relations; and investigation of crimes. One of the most important considerations in policing is coverage. Are patrol officers available to respond to calls for service and is sufficient back-up available when an emergency situation arises? To answer these questions, it is important to define the minimum staffing levels required to meet those base coverage requirements.

Recommendation W-1: Adopt a minimum staffing goal of one officer per shift from 8:00 am to midnight.

Williamsburg is a small community with a low frequency of calls for service. This means that emergency volume is seldom high enough to alone warrant having two officers on a shift. However, it is still important to provide basic coverage whenever possible. To that end, it is appropriate to establish a goal to staff at least one officer, whenever possible, especially during peak workload periods.

Based on basic coverage needs, it is appropriate that the Department's goal in scheduling its personnel should be to provide coverage during the day (8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.) and evening (4:00 P.M. to 12:00 midnight) shifts, and to staff shifts, to the extent possible at current funding and staffing levels, with a least one patrol officer.

To determine how to most effectively meet this goal, it is necessary to determine the number of staffing hours that must be filled each year and to determine what staffing configuration best allows the Department to effectively cover peak workload periods and important administrative, supervisory, and managerial tasks.

Recommendation W-2: Fill the existing vacancy for a full time sergeant.

Currently, the Chief of Police serves as the primary manager and supervisor of the Department, though some administrative support is provided by a part-time sergeant. The Chief also serves

as the Department's first responder, from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm. Because the Chief's shift ends at 3:00 pm, and considering that the only other supervisory personnel in the department is a part-time officer, the evening shift (4:00 pm to midnight), which is primarily staffed by part-time officers, receives inconsistent supervision.

In addition, the lack of an additional full-time officer means that coverage during the 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm timeslot, which is one of the busiest workload periods, must be covered by part-time officers. There is currently a vacant full-time sergeant position in the Police Department. Current plans are to appoint a full time sergeant and, considering the factors outlined above, is appropriate to fill the sergeant position. However, it is equally appropriate to deploy the sergeant in such a way as to maximize the value of the position.

Recommendation W-3: Assign the full time sergeant to a mid-day shift (i.e., 12:00 noon to 8:00 P.M.).

Assigning the full-time sergeant position to 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm shift offers a number of important benefits to the department. First, and most important, it would add a second officer during a large portion of the day shift, when the department is busiest. This will provide consistent coverage during high workload periods that does not rely on the availability of part-time officers.

Second, the shift configuration will allow the Chief consistent time to focus on managerial duties during the four daily hours when the sergeant's shift would overlap with the Chief's schedule. This schedule configuration would provide additional staffing for the busiest part of the day and evening shifts on weekdays, as well as supervision for a major portion of the 4:00 pm to 12:00 am shift.

Recommendation W-4: Assign an officer to each 4:00 pm to 12:00 am shift.

Currently, patrol officers are permitted, to a large extent, to fill shifts as they are available for service. This arrangement reflects the reality that most officers working in Williamsburg (and Chesterfield) have full-time jobs and other life commitments. As a result, officers may not be available for duty for significant periods of time. This limits the Department's ability to predictably staff shifts for coverage. It also can contribute to a depreciation of skills. Policing, like most professions, is a perishable skill that requires regular practice to remain effective. By assigning individual part time officers to specific shifts to the extent possible, the Department will be better positioned to provide consistent coverage and will better secure and improve each officer's skill set. Assigning an individual officer to each 4:00 pm to 12:00 am shift would provide at least one officer on duty from 8:00 A.M. to midnight daily, and two officers on duty between noon and 8:00 P.M. weekdays, which is the busiest workload period.

Recommendation W-5: Assign one police officer to the day shift on weekends.

Day shift coverage (8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.) is needed on weekends when the Chief and the sergeant are not scheduled to work (832 hours per year). Since there is typically a daytime patrol presence during weekdays, as a result of the Chief's and Sergeant's schedules, this would provide consistency through the entire week.

Recommendation W-6: Assign a police officer to staff office hours.

The Department's advertised office hours for routine business are Monday and Tuesday evenings from 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. In order to accommodate public contact while maintaining a patrol presence, the Department should staff a police officer for three hours on those evenings. However, those hours and duties should be incorporated into the existing hours of an officer assigned to the 4:00 pm to 12:00 am shift.

Recommendation W-7: Allocate the remaining patrol hours to the busiest days and hours of the week.

While cognizant of the fact that part time employees' availability and flexibility may be limited by the demands of their full time jobs, it is important that the department maximize the effective use of the scheduled hours available to it by assigning people according to the needs of the Department and the hours and days with the greatest workload. The Department should assign personnel during those days and hours believed to be the busiest. Based on 2013 statistics, the largest number of calls for service was received on Friday, Saturday, Thursday, and Wednesday. There will likely be gaps in coverage due to assignments for court, training, and other non-patrol duties. These are priority time frames for part time officer assignment.

Summary of Staffing Changes and Associated Cost

To determine the cost impact of the recommended staffing changes, it is necessary to identify the number of hours that must be covered in a given year and to compare the cost of providing that coverage to the available salary budget.

The staffing and deployment configuration recommended above calls for two full-time officers; the Chief of Police and the Sergeant position. These two positions will provide coverage Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 am and 8:00 pm. Part time officers will provide coverage between the hours of 8:00 pm and midnight, Monday through Friday and between the hours of 8:00 am and midnight on Saturday and Sunday. In addition, the recommended deployment model calls for a part-time officer to cover office hours Monday and Tuesday between 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm.

Under the current model, a lone full-time officer (the Chief of Police) is on duty until approximately 4:00 pm (Monday through Friday). After 4:00 pm part time officers cover calls for service until Midnight, when the State Police take over responsibility for call response. Under the recommended deployment model, the full time sergeant, under a staggered start

time, provides an additional four hours of full-time officer coverage per day, Monday through Friday, during the busiest workload periods. In addition, this model provides two-officer coverage five hours per day, Monday through Friday.

This staffing configuration and deployment model offers an approach that increases supervision and coverage during the busiest workload periods. The following table compares current coverage to recommended coverage.

Table 2: Comparison of Current Coverage to Recommended Coverage

Hour of Day	Current: Mon-Fri	Recommended: Mon-Fri
8:00 AM	1 FTE	1 FTE
9:00 AM	1 FTE	1 FTE
10:00 AM	1 FTE	1 FTE
11:00 AM	1 FTE	1 FTE
NOON	1 FTE	2 FTE
1:00 PM	1 FTE	2 FTE
2:00 PM	1 FTE	2 FTE
3:00 PM	1 FTE	2 FTE
4:00 PM	1 FTE	2 FTE
5:00 PM	Part -Time	1 FTE w/Part-Time
6:00 PM	Part -Time	1 FTE w/Part-Time
7:00 PM	Part -Time	1 FTE w/Part-Time
8:00 PM	Part -Time	1 FTE w/Part-Time
9:00 PM	Part -Time	Part -Time
10:00 PM	Part -Time	Part -Time
11:00 PM	Part -Time	Part -Time

*Green highlighted cells denote full-time officer coverage

The Police Chief and Sergeant will work a combined total of 80 hours per week, but because their shifts will contain necessary shift overlap, the Police Chief and Sergeant would provide patrol coverage for 60 hours per week, or 3,120 hours per year, after the shift overlap is taken into account. -time officers would be tasked with covering 72 hours per week, or 3,744 hours per year.

The Town of Williamsburg’s current budget for police salaries, including the Police Chief, is \$180,649. The Police Chief and full-time Sergeant’s salaries total \$104,979 per year, leaving approximately \$75,670 to fund part time police officer salaries. On average, part time police officers earn \$18.81 per hour. Therefore, the current budget allocated to funding part time officer salaries will fund approximately 4,022 hours of police coverage, which is adequate to consistently achieve a minimum of one officer staffing each day from 8:00 am to midnight. The following table summarizes the budget impact of the recommended staffing configuration and

demonstrates that the recommended changes allow the Department to meet minimum coverage requirements within current budget constraints.

Table 3: Cost of Recommended Deployment Model

2014 Police Salary Budget	\$180,649
Chief of Police Salary	\$58,250
Full-time Sergeant Salary	\$46,729
Balance Available for Part-time Officer Salaries	\$75,670
Average Hourly Rate per Part Time Police Officer	\$18.81
Part Time Patrol Hours Funded in Current Budget	4,023
Total Number of Annual Part Time Patrol Hours to Meet Coverage Requirements	3,744
Percent of Part-Time Coverage Requirement Funded in Current Budget	107%

Multi-Officer Coverage

Though it was previously stated that emergency volume is seldom high enough to warrant having two officers on shift, call volume is not the only factor to consider when evaluating patrol staffing needs.

Another important consideration regarding police staffing levels is that of officer safety. When the rare emergency situation arises that requires immediate back-up and support to protect an officer’s safety, it is important that an officer is available and can quickly respond. In Williamsburg, the closest back-up is often a minimum of 20 minutes away.

In fact, a review of the Department’s schedule from January through April 2014 reflects considerable variation in shift coverage. During that 120 day period, there were only two occasions when two officers worked during the entire 4:00 am to 12:00 pm shift, meaning that the Department relied upon either call-outs or the State Police to respond to emergency calls for service. This has been effective in the past, though the approach inevitably increases the amount of time required to reach the scene of an emergency call.

This was an also an area of concern for Police Department staff. Williamsburg officers voiced their concern about the lack of backup on most shifts; most of the time (an average of 51 of 60 shifts per month) only a single officer is working. During those times, should an officer require assistance, the only sources of backup would be officers responding from other towns (including the State Police) or from their homes if they are available. Travel into and through both Williamsburg and Chesterfield is difficult. There are no highways, but predominantly two lane winding roads. In addition to officers’ personal concerns about their safety, the difficulty of

obtaining backup inhibits the scope of the work an officer can initiate. Many aspects of policing – such as responding to violent incidents, domestic or other disputes, apprehension of criminals, suspicious vehicle stops, processing of arrests – warrant the presence of a second officer.

Taking these factors into consideration, it is appropriate for the Department to adopt a target of staffing two officers per shift so as to provide adequate coverage and back-up in the case of emergencies.

Based on the deployment model, coverage by two officers, sixteen hours per day, could be achieved by scheduling officers to work four hour shifts, 8:00 A.M. to noon, and 8:00 P.M. to midnight on weekdays. Full coverage would require an additional 2,080 hours of coverage per year, at an annual cost of approximately \$39,000.

The Town has not identified the funding sources necessary to achieve this level of staffing. However, it is important to note that the section of this report concerning inter-municipal collaboration opportunities provides more cost-effective alternatives for reaching a similar result.

Police Headquarters

The current Police Headquarters/Public Safety facility requires substantial improvement to be suitable for modern police operations. Among the items observed during a tour of the building are described in the subsections below.

General Security:

- The front door is unlocked when the station is occupied. There is no barrier between the public and an on duty officer, who may be processing a prisoner, securing evidence, or engaged in a confidential investigation or sensitive interview. When the building is unoccupied, there are large glass panes in the front doors that would provide easy access.
- There is no holding pen or temporary detention facility for persons in custody. Prisoners are handcuffed to a bar in a large open room in close proximity to a door that opens to the parking lot. An open interior doorway to the remainder of the facility is adjacent to the bench where prisoners are held, and there is a high step downward into the next room.
- Many, if not most, arrests are processed by a police officer who is alone in the building.
- There is a single restroom that is shared by male officers, female officers, and prisoners.
- Equipment, including cleaning chemicals and a dog noose, is stored in the room used for prisoner processing, presenting a potential hazard.
- There have been complaints regarding the building's air quality, as well as the presence of mold and asbestos.

Evidence and Property Management:

- There is a single safe for the storage of evidence, to which all police personnel have access.
- Bulk items and old records are stored in a room in the basement of Town Hall that is secured by a light wooden door and padlocks.
- No cameras or security systems are in place.
- The evidence room has sustained flooding in the past.
- Basic guidelines for evidence management require that guns, drugs, and currency be stored and inventoried separately from other property; that access to the property room be limited to designated custodians; and that all property movement be recorded. Found property must also be segregated from property held as evidence. These requirements cannot be met under the present circumstances.

Recommendation W-8: Proceed with funding and constructing a new public safety facility.

The Town of Williamsburg recognizes deficiencies in the current Police Headquarters building and has expressed its interest in building a new public safety facility to house the Police Department and Fire Department. A location has been identified, and there are plans to seek funding for a feasibility study. This is an important step, but one which will likely take several years to complete. Because of the importance of addressing safety issues in the building, we recommend that the Town make short-term repairs to address critical issues in the interim. This matter will be further referenced as appropriate in the discussion concerning consolidation and inter-municipal sharing of resources found later in this report.

Recommendation W-9: Enhance prisoner security in the existing Williamsburg Police Station.

This can be done by making interim modifications to the existing facility, such as:

- Installation of a temporary holding pen
- Installation of secure toilet facilities
- Installation of a door or other barrier that will prevent access to the booking area by unauthorized personnel but will provide the booking officer with line of sight between the booking area and the rest of the building.
- Installation of video monitoring equipment in the booking area. The area is currently recorded; however, the monitor is in the central office. Expansion of video monitoring capability to other portions of the building would enhance safety and security. Installation of monitoring equipment in the Chief's office and in the sergeant's/police officers' office would also enhance safety.
- Implementing a policy under which an additional police officer is called in to ensure that officers handling prisoners are not alone. Development of an inter-municipal agreement to share arrest processing duties may also be considered (see Recommendation 17, below).

Recommendation W-10: Improve security of evidence and property. This is a critical area, which can be remedied in several ways:

- Appoint an evidence custodian(s) with sole access to invoiced evidence.
- Install appropriate equipment for the security of evidence, to include separate storage of narcotics, firearms, cash, and found property. A “pass through” system, which allows invoicing officers to secure evidence in individual compartments that are then only accessible by the evidence custodian(s), is an efficient way to accomplish this.
- Enhance security of the storage room in Town Hall that is currently used for storage of bulk items by installing a stronger door, fortified locks, and a security system, ideally with video monitoring.

Records Management/Technology

Officers report that administrative tasks consume as much as one and one half hours per shift. Essentially, officers are off patrol and in Police Headquarters for the last 90 minutes of their shifts, which, in light of the limited number of hours of patrol time available at the current funding level, is a significant amount of lost time.

Although the Department’s vehicles are equipped with Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs), the computers’ only function is to check license information from the field. They cannot be used to complete reports, which must be done from Headquarters. Additionally, officers report that they must make duplicate entries of the same information in four separate places: Activity Logs; Time Sheets; the “Group Ready” software program, which is essentially a calendar; and in “IMC,” the Department’s records management system. The systems are not interconnected, and as a result there is no single source for searching recorded information. Documentation of activity is limited, since the State Police Dispatch Center uses a Computer Aided Dispatch system, “Hunter CAD,” which is not connected with the Department’s systems.

A solution to the problem has been identified. The Hunter CAD system used by the Massachusetts State Police is available to the Department at no cost. Access to the system would facilitate automatic downloading of information regarding calls for service. The final step in completing the system would be an upgrade of the Departments records management system with an “IMC Mobile Dispatch” module, at an estimated cost of approximately \$25,000.

The delay in implementing these advances is not a deficiency, but rather a sensible approach at this time. It appears that the State Police is considering a change in its software from the Hunter CAD system to IMC. As a result, it is not practical to make any changes until there is a determination regarding the system that the Dispatch Center will use. The groundwork is in place to move forward when that decision is made.

Recommendation W-11: Continue preparations for connectivity with the State Dispatch Center’s Computer Aided Dispatch and Records Management System for implementation as soon as practical.

Recommendation W-12: Allocate \$25,000 for upgrade to the IMC Mobile Dispatch Module for implementation at the appropriate time.

The result of enhancement of mobile technology will be a potential increase in officers' time available for patrol.

Chesterfield Police Department

The Chesterfield Police Department differs appreciably from the Williamsburg Police Department. Although it is a bit more than five square miles in area, its population, population density, and crime rate are all approximately half those of Williamsburg. The Department responds to approximately 25 percent of the number of calls that Williamsburg does. There are no significant commercial areas in the Town.

The Department has no full time employees. Its complement of personnel currently consists of a part time Chief of Police; a part time sergeant (who also serves as the Chief of Police in Williamsburg) and four part time police officers. In addition to the sergeant, three of the four police officers also work as part time police officers in Williamsburg. All officers receive 40 hours of training annually.

The Department maintains office hours on Monday evenings from 6:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. so the public can transact non-emergency business. For a period, it staffed a 20 hour per week position, but that was discontinued in early 2014 when the assigned officer accepted full time employment elsewhere. At this time, no routine patrols are scheduled. Officers randomly perform patrol when they are available, and are paged by Northampton Control for calls for service when needed. When they patrol, normally one officer patrols the entire Town.

There is one major event each year, the Fourth of July Parade, which is policed by the Department. In prior years, officers were scheduled daily to patrol a federal campground; however, that program has been discontinued as the Commonwealth has taken over that responsibility.

Town officials would like to see more patrol presence, and are open to the possibility of a 20 hour or potentially a 40 hour position, but with minimal, if any, budget impact.

In light of the rural nature of the community, the impending retirement of its Chief of Police, and the fact that at the moment there is no routine scheduled patrol activity within the Town, TNCG's review indicates that there are potential benefits to be derived for Chesterfield from regionalization/consolidation, contracting services, or sharing of resources. They will, however, be discussed separately. This section of the report is limited to recommendations for operational improvements within the existing agency structure.

As discussed earlier regarding the Town of Williamsburg, each of the departments involved in this review is responsible for all police duties within its jurisdiction, including response to emergency incidents and calls for service; proactive enforcement; community relations; and investigation of crimes. The ability of a single officer working on a given shift to accomplish this

diverse mission is limited. Officers in both agencies voiced their concern about the lack of backup when only one officer is working. During those times, should an officer require assistance, the only sources of backup are officers responding from other towns (including the State Police) or from their homes if they are available. Travel into and through Chesterfield and the neighboring towns is difficult based on the geography of the area. In addition to officers' personal concerns about their safety, the difficulty of obtaining backup inhibits the scope of the work an officer can initiate. Many aspects of policing – such as responding to violent incidents, domestic or other disputes, apprehension of criminals, suspicious vehicle stops, processing of arrests – warrant the presence of a second officer. Nevertheless, based on the rural character of the Town, the level of reported activity, and funding constraints, it is difficult to justify the assignment of more than one officer.

Recommendation C-1: Fill the existing vacancy for a 20 hour per week officer. Statistics indicate that the majority of calls for service are received Monday through Friday, with Saturday and Sunday being the least busy days. The morning commute and school drop off time – 7:30 to 8:00 A.M. – are reported to have high traffic volume, and would also serve to maximize patrol visibility. Therefore, assignment of an officer from 7:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M., Monday through Friday, would appear to be an effective use of personnel. Those times also coincide with hours when the Williamsburg Police Department is staffed, providing a source of backup if needed, through existing mutual aid agreements.

Recommendation C-2: Ensure that the sergeant's shifts include patrol time. Although the importance of the administrative component of policing has been stressed, in light of the Department's limited budget, every opportunity to engage officers in visible patrol should be maximized. Therefore, efforts should be made to ensure that the sergeant's shifts include not only administrative duties, but also some visible patrol time.

Recommendation C-3: Adopt a practice of scheduling part-time officers for patrol on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. At this time, since the 20 hour per week position is no longer filled, there is no set patrol schedule. Officers report for patrol duty when they are available. Two factors must be acknowledged: the fact that the part time officers typically have full time employment obligations that affect their availability, and the importance of some random patrol. However, there is an obligation to maximize the effective use of budgeted hours. Anecdotally, weekend nights have been reported to be busy; however, the busiest days for calls for service are Tuesday, Monday, and Thursday, with Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday recording the fewest number of calls. Therefore, since an officer/sergeant is normally assigned on Monday evenings for office hours, it is recommended that part time officers' assignments be prioritized on Tuesday and Wednesday, with particular emphasis on the hours between 3:00 P.M. and 7:00 P.M. Those hours provide for a patrol presence during school pickup, after-school hours, and the peak commuter traffic hours. As staffing permits, personnel should be assigned to those hours during other days in order of call volume, and patrols should be scheduled at irregular times during the remainder of the week. Recommendations regarding deployment are based on the most recent statistics, and of course should be subject to constant review and revision to address changing patterns and emerging trends.

Recommendation C-4: Increase patrol coverage during evenings and weekends. Using current salary rates, it can be expected that the Chief of Police earns approximately \$4,921 per year (based on five hours per week) and the sergeant earns approximately \$5,594. An officer working 20 hours per week would earn approximately \$16,318. The remaining money in the annual budget -- \$6,467 -- would fund only 411 hours for part time officers, or approximately 7.9 hours per week; 3.5 hour shifts would provide for patrol two days per week, in addition to the weekday morning patrols conducted by the 20 hour officer. To make it possible to staff four hour evening shifts five days a week would require a budget increase of \$7,800; seven day per week coverage would require an increase of \$14,000. Implementation of this recommendation would provide patrol coverage by one officer for four hours during the day shift Monday through Friday, and by one officer for four hours, seven days per week, on an afternoon or evening shift. This equates to a total of eight hours of coverage per day during weekdays and four hours per day on weekends.

Recommendation C-5: Develop an inter-municipal agreement with the Town of Williamsburg under which prisoner processing would be done at Williamsburg Police Headquarters. A best practice in policing is for two people to be present during prisoner booking and processing. This practice improves officer safety and also limits potential liability. Given the staffing and resource constraints in Chesterfield, it is a challenge for multiple officers to be available for prisoner processing. The section of this report dedicated to the Town of Williamsburg offers a number of recommendations to both enhance police coverage in Williamsburg and address critical facility issues at the Williamsburg Police building. If the City of Chesterfield is willing to share in the cost of those facility upgrades, it is reasonable to seek an agreement that enables Chesterfield to capitalize on the facilities and backup that could be provided by Williamsburg.

Alternatively, the Town of Chesterfield should implement a policy under which an additional police officer is called in to ensure that officers handling prisoners are not alone. Similar to the Williamsburg Police Department, Chesterfield has inadequate prisoner detention facilities, particularly for an officer working alone. In light of the Department's size and budgetary constraints, it may be more efficient to seek alternatives for prisoner processing than to make enhancements to the facility.

Administration

As noted at the outset of this report, the "back office" operation required by modern policing is considerable. The administrative tasks associated with running a police department -- such as training, scheduling, evidence management, procurement and maintenance of equipment, fleet management, background investigations and hiring of applicants, and maintenance -- are similar regardless of the size of the agency.

In fact, the burden may be proportionally higher in a smaller department, or one staffed largely by part time employees. The 40 required hours of annual training, for example, represents about two percent of a full time officer's scheduled hours. For a part time officer who works

one eight hour shift per week, the training obligation represents almost 10 percent of his or her scheduled work time. The cost of the part time sergeant, who works approximately four hours per week, and whose primary duty is to assist with the Department's administrative tasks, represents slightly more than 10 percent of the Department's budget for salaries. Yet it is critical for the Town that the department's training and administrative obligations are met. While the Department appears to be keeping up with requirements in this regard, the cost is high when considered in proportion to the size and level of activity of the Department.

Recommendation C-6: Consider collaboration or contracting of administrative oversight as a more cost-effective approach to meeting administrative obligations. One option considered by many police agencies considering consolidation is the merging of administrative or non-patrol functions. For example, in somewhat more densely populated suburban areas, two or three neighboring 20-member police departments, despite struggling to field adequate patrol coverage, are required to maintain individual command staffs, investigative units, records management, information technology, and training staffs. They have explored economies of scale that might be achieved, for example, by merging three separate investigative units, each staffed by a supervisor and two detectives, into a joint squad supervised by a single ranking officer and staffed by three detectives. In this example, the merged staff is adequate to absorb the workload, while two supervisors and three officers can be assigned to other duties.

A similar model might benefit Chesterfield. Currently, the Department's staff consists of five officers. In theory, two of them – the Chief of Police and the Sergeant – have duties that are largely supervisory/administrative/clerical. Nearly 40 percent of the Department's staff, therefore, is supervisory/administrative, whereas Williamsburg, with a staff of eight (seven filled positions and one vacancy) also has a Chief of Police and a Sergeant – 25 percent of its staff.

In light of the existing crossover between the two departments – three Chesterfield police officers also work as Williamsburg police officers – it appears that certain efficiencies might be achieved by contracting with Williamsburg to assume many of the department's administrative tasks, such as scheduling, training, and records management. Determination of a reasonable fee for services provided would enable Chesterfield to divert some of the hours currently consumed by administrative tasks to patrol time, and Williamsburg would be compensated for assuming the tasks, which would enable that department to increase staff hours to handle the workload and concomitantly increase patrol availability.

Options for Inter-Municipal Collaboration

The primary task of this study is to review opportunities for collaboration between the Town of Williamsburg and the Town of Chesterfield and the various forms that inter-municipal resource sharing could take. It has become clear during the course of field work and research that Williamsburg is the larger of the two communities, and that Chesterfield potentially has the

most to gain through collaboration. However, any proposal for consolidation must also benefit Williamsburg for it to be attractive and viable.

There are certain sensitivities that must be recognized when considering the consolidation or regionalization of services, particularly police services. Just as every community has its own unique character, police departments also have individual personalities reflective of the communities they serve. Different areas develop different styles of policing, and certain expectations of their police officers. In many cases, municipalities feel that their police departments are part of their identity.

That does not appear to be the case here. The towns have prior experience with regionalization of services including schools and emergency medical services. The crossover among officers who work for both departments is a factor that would facilitate consolidation as well. Some concern has been voiced, however, particularly in the context of discussion of sharing the services of a Police Chief, regarding how preference would be given to one town over the other in the event of simultaneous events. These concerns and issues are taken into account in the evaluation of service sharing opportunities.

Several potential options are discussed below, including sharing the services of a Police Chief; contracting for police services; and consolidation of departments. First, it is helpful to review the practice of Mutual Aid.

Mutual Aid – Formal and Informal

Mutual Aid is a recognized concept in both the police and fire services. However, the term can be misinterpreted, so it merits discussion. The Towns of Williamsburg and Chesterfield have a formal Mutual Aid Agreement in place, executed March 1, 2005 with no specific date of expiration,¹³ which permits either town to request police personnel and equipment when there is a need for assistance, pursuant to Massachusetts law.¹⁴ It provides authorization for police officers to exercise police powers in the requesting jurisdiction and establishes procedures for command and control, indemnification, and reimbursement of expenses. The requesting municipality is responsible for all personnel and equipment costs associated with the mobilization, as well as indemnification of the responding municipality from any claims for civil rights violations, personal injuries, death, or property damages resulting from the Mutual Aid response.

Although the Mutual Aid agreement provides basic authority for Williamsburg officers to act in Chesterfield when their assistance is requested, and vice versa, the concept of Mutual Aid is intended for emergency mobilization of resources – large scale emergency incidents, civil disorder, officer in need of assistance, etc. – and is not, strictly speaking, intended to provide

¹³ “Mutual Aid Agreement with the Town of Chesterfield and the Town of Williamsburg,” March 1, 2005.

¹⁴ Chapter 40, §8G, Massachusetts General Laws

routine coverage. The Mutual Aid agreement calls for reimbursement of salary and equipment expenses, language commonly intended to cover a large-scale emergency deployment.

Most neighboring police departments, however, routinely engage in what is best referred to as “informal mutual aid.” They back up neighboring officers, respond to priority calls when the neighboring jurisdiction is occupied, etc. This is the practice in Williamsburg and Chesterfield, perhaps to a larger extent than may be commonly understood. There is a predisposition in this case, since so many officers work in both departments. Anecdotally, it has been said that Williamsburg officers, in particular, are in Chesterfield several times weekly.

Department records indicate that the volume of documented cross-jurisdictional calls is not large, but has been increasing. The table below reflects incidents in which an officer responded to the neighboring town because an officer was not available; it does not reflect incidents in which an officer responded to back up an officer already on the scene of a call.

Table 4: Cross-jurisdictional responses

Year	Williamsburg to Chesterfield	Chesterfield to Williamsburg
2008	14	2
2009	8	3
2010	9	3
2011	9	2
2012	21	8
2013	26	10

Responses were by officers who are employees of both departments.

Informal mutual aid is an accepted and valuable aspect of policing, especially in an area where officers must routinely rely on members of neighboring departments for backup. It can become an issue, however, when the perception arises that a municipality is taking advantage of the process by using mutual aid, at the expense of a neighboring jurisdiction, to cover regular operations. We do not believe that to be an issue for the Towns of Williamsburg and Chesterfield at this time. However, as needs and demands for police services increase, along with the associated costs, it is important to prevent it from becoming a point of contention.

Recommendation IMC-1: Adopt a process of maintaining and regularly reporting mutual aid responses by type on each Town. Data regarding cross-jurisdictional response, maintained in readily retrievable format, will be helpful to inform future discussions regarding regionalization or shared services, and should be tracked closely. Moreover, it is important for Town leaders to consider not only the calls for service that were responded to by local officers, but those that were addressed through mutual aid. This is critical to developing an understanding of actual service demand which in turn informs resource allocation and policy decisions regarding resource allocation.

Sharing Services of a Chief of Police

Commissioning this study was in large part triggered by the impending retirement of Chesterfield's Chief of Police, Gary Wickland. Chief Wickland has served the Town for more than four decades and has reached mandatory retirement age. Denise Wickland serves as a part time sergeant for the Chesterfield Police Department, and would be a logical choice as a successor. However, she is the Chief of the Williamsburg Police Department, and that agency's only full time employee.

By all accounts, both towns are extremely pleased with their police chiefs. Williamsburg officials, in particular, indicated that one of the reasons they are interested in hiring a full time sergeant is to provide support for Chief Wickland, who they believe is working to capacity due to the demands of her position. They do not want to lose her services, but they are also concerned that if she serves as Chief for two municipalities – full time in Williamsburg and part time in Chesterfield – there is the potential for conflict if simultaneous incidents occur in both towns requiring the Chief's response. They are interested in ensuring that the interests of their community are protected.

For her part, Chief/Sergeant Wickland truly enjoys her job in Williamsburg and demonstrates tremendous dedication to it. She also enjoys her service to Chesterfield.

A number of municipalities in various states have begun sharing the services of a Police Chief.¹⁵ However, the fact that the Chief, in this case, is a Working Chief, as opposed to one whose duties are primarily administrative, is a complication. It is also important to note the difference between a Sergeant and a Police Chief in terms of the level of response expected. A Police Chief should be available to respond to and assume command of major incidents. Guidelines would be required to delineate circumstances under which the Chief would be released from duty in Williamsburg to attend to matters in Chesterfield. It is especially important since she would be on two government payrolls. There have been cases in other municipalities in which part time police officers, including Chiefs of Police, have been charged with "double dipping" – collecting payment from two municipalities by charging for hours worked in two towns at the same time. While this is unlikely, and there is no reason to believe it may happen, what is more likely – and important to avoid – is the possibility of allegations of such conduct, which can be generated from a number of sources: disgruntled employees; political adversaries; dissatisfied taxpayers; misinformed residents, or those who might simply feel that one of the towns is receiving an inappropriate level of service. Therefore, clear guidelines should be established, agreeable to both municipalities, setting forth protocols under which the Chief is released from duty in one town to attend to emergencies in the other, and policies for compensation and accounting for hours worked (or establishing a straight salary/stipend). Attention to detail in this area can prevent or minimize controversy and distraction in the future, and will enable both towns to address and dispose of any allegations of impropriety quickly and with a minimum of

¹⁵ Binghamton/Johnson City, New York and York/Elliott Maine are two examples.

disruption. The following is a preliminary list of the guidelines that should be considered under a joint Police Chief scenario:

- Definition of a cost structure with clear delineation of the services to be rendered and the fixed annual cost associated with providing this basic service level.
 - Identify the specific Chesterfield administrative and management activities to be completed by the Williamsburg Police Chief and the number of paid hours for each activity.
 - Identify the number of Chesterfield patrol hours to be completed by the Williamsburg Police Chief.
 - Specify the number of recurring public meetings that the Williamsburg Chief would be asked to attend in Chesterfield.
- Specify the emergency call types in Chesterfield that the Williamsburg Police Chief would be compelled to directly respond to when on duty in Williamsburg.
- Develop labor hour tracking and review process.
- Develop cost-share methodology that reflects hours worked in each community and develop a cost structure for hours worked above those assumed in the fixed annual cost.
- Identify a dispute resolution process.

The costs associated with this option are dependent on the level of service desired from the Town of Chesterfield and are subject to negotiation; however, the cost should reflect the Police Chief's fully-loaded salary and benefit rate as well as an overhead rate that takes into account the administrative time required to manage such an agreement.

Contracted Services

Another model that has become more common is for municipalities to contract for services. In this case, Chesterfield would essentially purchase a certain level of police services from the Town of Williamsburg. The terms are open for negotiation; they could range from the assignment of periodic patrols, to one officer and car per shift, to respond to calls without proactive patrol. The City of Reading, Pennsylvania, for example, provides coverage to the neighboring Borough of Kenhorst on a contract basis, providing a set number of officers per day, in Reading Police uniforms and vehicles, to patrol the borough. Westchester County, New York has a similar arrangement with the Town of Ossining, which recently disbanded its police department and contracted with the County Department of Public Safety to provide coverage. King County, Washington operates under a different model; Sheriff's Department employees provide police services to municipalities as their own departments, with municipal uniforms, vehicles, patches, and command staff. A town police chief may actually be a Sheriff's Department officer on assignment.

Under a contracted services model, the Town of Chesterfield would essentially disband its police department and negotiate with Williamsburg a desired level of service and an associated fee. The fee would include all associated costs, factoring in salary, vehicle and equipment expense, an appropriate portion of training and other administrative expenses, and an

administrative fee. The benefit to Chesterfield would be the elimination of the costs and workload associated with the maintenance of a police department in return for a set level of service. For Williamsburg, the arrangement should at the minimum break even, but realistically should be negotiated so that some revenue or other benefit accrues to the Town.

A drawback to this option is that if it is done with Williamsburg's existing staffing levels, it potentially results in a negative impact for each community. For Williamsburg, officers currently on patrol in Williamsburg may find themselves responding to calls from Chesterfield, increasing response times. For Chesterfield, despite the fact that patrols are currently sporadic at best, the likelihood that an officer on patrol would be responding from Williamsburg – rather than from within the confines of the Town of Chesterfield – increases. Response time to calls for service may increase, and patrol presence in either town may, in fact, be spread thinner than it currently is.

For a contracted services model to work effectively, Williamsburg's resources would have to be increased as necessary to meet the demands of the negotiated agreement, enabling it to maintain or increase its current level of service to its residents while supplying the appropriate coverage of Chesterfield. Within that framework, the contracted services model may take almost any form acceptable to the parties.

Similar to the shared Chief option discussed above, the annual costs associated with this option are dependent on the level of service desired from the Town of Chesterfield and are therefore subject to negotiation. For example, the cost of the service should reflect the fully-burdened hourly labor rate to provide the service multiplied by the number of hours of service provided. A fully-burdened labor rate is a labor rate that takes into account all direct salary and benefit expenses, non-personnel expenses such as fuel and vehicle maintenance, and overhead expenses.

Consolidated Department

Perhaps the most central and sensitive tasking of this study is to review the feasibility of consolidation of the two departments into one regional police department. Consolidation is a complex and sensitive endeavor, but there are a number of reasons why it may in fact benefit both municipalities.

As noted earlier, both towns share many similarities. Both are primarily rural communities with small, part time police departments, low crime rates, and limited budgets. Both communities support their police departments, and prefer having their own part time departments rather than relying solely on the State Police for police services. Officials in both towns have expressed their interest in increasing police presence, albeit without increasing their budgets significantly. Both police departments share officers, interact routinely, and in fact already act to some extent like a unified department, covering each other's calls when needed.

The statistical differences that distinguish the two jurisdictions also support consolidation. As noted earlier, despite the fact that it encompasses a larger land area, the Town of Chesterfield has about half the population, population density, and crime rate of the Town of Williamsburg. The Department responds to approximately 25 percent of the number of calls that Williamsburg does. While the Town of Chesterfield is desirous of, and needs, a certain amount of patrol coverage, based on Chesterfield's level of activity, that need can be met by officers working out of Williamsburg. At the moment, Chesterfield has reached a pivotal point as it must determine a course of action upon the retirement of its long-time Chief of Police. And although it currently has six members on its roster – a Chief of Police, a sergeant, and four police officers – it is not routinely scheduling patrols.

Yet the Department bears the same administrative burdens as its larger counterparts. The importance of keeping up with those responsibilities has been stressed throughout this analysis, as has the disproportionate expense of it.

Consolidation offers an opportunity to combine administrative tasks – training, scheduling, evidence management, etc. – into one functional area, and to combine patrol resources in a way that both provides additional staffing to Williamsburg and an enhanced level of coverage and emergency response capacity to Chesterfield. It eliminates the potential conflicts associated with the proposal to share a Chief, and puts the Chief in a position not of choosing which town to respond to in an emergency, but rather deploying the resources of a single agency in a unified coverage area.

Currently, \$33,330 is budgeted for Chesterfield Police Department wages. If the Chief of the consolidated department were given a salary increase roughly equivalent to her earnings in Chesterfield – a minimum of \$5,700 – to adjust for her lost earnings in Chesterfield as well as the increased duties and responsibilities associated with the merger, the remainder, \$27,630, would provide for 1,468 additional hours of patrol, assuming that the salary rates were equalized at the Williamsburg rate of \$18.81 per hour.

The analysis of Williamsburg staffing earlier in this report indicates that an additional 2,080 hours would support staffing of two officers, 16 hours per day, seven days per week. If the 1,559 hours available from the Chesterfield budget were added to the Williamsburg budget, two officer staffing coverage could be achieved with a marginal \$10,000 increase to the Chesterfield portion of a combined police department.

This does not account for court time, training, or other non-patrol duties, so there would be occasional gaps in coverage, but it would provide a foundation for substantially greater police presence in both towns than they currently have, with a structure for patrolling Chesterfield to be determined. Possibilities would include dividing the entire area into two sectors, with one officer primarily responsible, for example, for the eastern 2/3 of Williamsburg and the second officer responsible for the western 1/3 of Williamsburg and the Town of Chesterfield, or designating particular patrol times or routes for Chesterfield.

An additional option would be to make the Williamsburg sergeant, budgeted to be a full time employee, largely responsible for oversight of police operations in the Town of Chesterfield, reporting to the Chief of Police.

Staffing would essentially be the following (note that this is one suggested configuration, subject to alteration to meet identified needs or requirements).

Table 5: Staffing under a consolidated department

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Day	PO 8a-4p	PO 8a-12p Chief 8a-4p Sgt 12p-4a	PO 8a-12p Chief 8a-4p Sgt 12p-4a	PO 8a-12p Chief 8a-4p Sgt 12p-4a	PO 8a-12p Chief 8a-4p Sgt 12p-4a	PO 8a-12p Chief 8a-4p Sgt 12p-4a	PO 8a-4p
Evening	PO 4p-12a	Sgt 4p-8p PO 4p-12a PO 8p-12a	Sgt 4p-8p PO 4p-12a PO 8p-12a	Sgt 4p-8p PO 4p-12a PO 8p-12a	Sgt 4p-8p PO 4p-12a PO 8p-12a	Sgt 4p-8p PO 4p-12a PO 8p-12a	PO 4p-12a

Recommendation IMC-2: Consider consolidation of the Williamsburg and Chesterfield Police Departments. There are efficiencies to be gained from the consolidation of the two police departments. At a minimal cost, patrol coverage can be enhanced significantly, from the current practice that results in one officer frequently covering Williamsburg and none in Chesterfield, to two officers, typically 16 hours per day, covering both towns as a single jurisdiction.

There are numerous items that would have to be reviewed and addressed, including the following:

- Review of any legal or legislative actions required to implement the merger.
- Determination of an oversight structure for the Department. Both Departments currently report to Boards of Police Commissioners, made up of the three Selectmen in each town. A separate Board of Commissioners, with representatives from both towns, would be the most effective approach (with a determination to be made as to the number of members: four, to provide equal representation to each community, or three, to avoid deadlocks).
- Designation of the name of the merged agency.
- Design of uniforms, patches, and vehicle markings.
- Adjustment of pay scales, including:
 - Equalization of rates; Williamsburg officers currently earn a top rate of \$18.81 per hour, whereas Chesterfield officers are paid \$15.64.
 - Determination of the appropriate stipend for the Chief of Police to account for lost income from her position in Chesterfield, as well as additional responsibilities and workload.
- Establishment of hiring and appointment processes to address any procedural differences between the two towns.
- Merging of files and records management systems.

- Standardization of rules and procedures.¹⁶
- Revision of dispatch protocols with Northampton Control and the Massachusetts State Police.
- Public education regarding the merger.
- Physical consolidation of facilities (pending construction of a new public safety facility).
- Determining the financial contribution, if any, expected of Chesterfield toward a new public safety facility.
- Determining final costs to be borne by the Town of Chesterfield, future cost escalators, and payment processes.
- Determine a vehicle and equipment replacement plan, with a formula for assessing costs for capital expenditures (i.e., vehicles).
- Development and execution of a formal inter-municipal agreement.
- Transfer of vehicles and equipment to the new agency.

The Novak Consulting Group makes operational recommendations, but does not provide legal advice. Should the municipalities choose to pursue this recommendation, they are strongly advised to consult with their respective legal counsel.

The following table summarizes the projected cost implications of a consolidated police department for the Town of Williamsburg and the Town of Chesterfield.

Table 6: Summary of Cost Implications of Consolidated Police Department

	Williamsburg	Chesterfield
2014 Operating Budget	\$ 219,649.00	\$ 43,500.00
Increase/(Savings) to Fund Consolidated Department	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00
Percent Increase	0%	23%

Recommendation IMC-3: Upon merger of the Departments, pursue accreditation by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission. Accreditation – a process by which an outside agency evaluates and certifies an agency’s compliance with specific operating standards – is a valuable tool for validating the proper operation of a police department. It can also serve to reduce an agency’s insurance premiums and can assist in defending against liability in civil litigation. The accreditation process, among other benefits, provides a framework to bring the Department into compliance with best practices for key procedural areas and ensures ongoing maintenance of such standards.

Obtaining accreditation can be a challenging task for a police department, and requires leadership and perseverance on the part of the Police Chief and key staff, as well as the support of the municipal administration. Although it may be too taxing a process for either of the departments as currently structured, it would be beneficial to a consolidated agency. It is in

¹⁶ Both departments currently use the Municipal Police Institute (MPI) policies and procedures as their department manual.

both towns' best interest to pursue it for the benefits that derive from the ongoing operational review it requires.

Conclusion

The Novak Consulting Group has presented a variety of options for enhancement of the delivery of police services in the Towns of Williamsburg and Chesterfield, both within the existing structures of the two police departments and outside of that framework. It is ultimately up to the elected officials of both towns to determine what actions best meet the needs of their respective communities.

The merger of police departments is a significant step. In addition to the amount of work that must be undertaken to implement such a change, it can be a controversial move that provokes a strong reaction. Success depends on the support of the employees involved, attention to detail, and primarily on the political will to move forward with the process.

In addition to internal operational refinements, we have discussed sharing the services of a police chief, contracting for services, and the consolidation of the two agencies. All are viable options. However, it appears that in this case, consolidation of the two departments, despite the effort required to complete the merger, produces the greatest benefit for both communities. Based on our interaction with the professional staffs of both towns, we are confident that they have the capability of moving forward with whichever option is selected.

Attachment A: Summary of Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION W-1: Adopt a minimum staffing goal of one officer per shift from 8:00 am to midnight.

RECOMMENDATION W-2: Fill the existing vacancy for a full time sergeant

RECOMMENDATION W-3: Assign the full time sergeant to a mid-day shift (i.e., 12:00 noon to 8:00 P.M.)

RECOMMENDATION W-4: Assign an officer to each 4:00 pm to 12:00 am shift

RECOMMENDATION W-5: Assign one police officer to the day shift on weekends

RECOMMENDATION W-6: Assign a police officer to staff office hours

RECOMMENDATION W-7: Allocate the remaining patrol hours to the busiest days and hours of the week

RECOMMENDATION W-8: Proceed with funding and constructing a new public safety facility

RECOMMENDATION W-9: Enhance prisoner security in the existing Williamsburg Police Station

RECOMMENDATION W-10: Improve security of evidence and property

RECOMMENDATION W-11: Continue preparations for connectivity with the State Dispatch Center's Computer Aided Dispatch and Records Management System for implementation as soon as practical

RECOMMENDATION W-12: Allocate \$25,000 for upgrade to the IMC Mobile Dispatch Module for implementation at the appropriate time

RECOMMENDATION C-1: Fill the existing vacancy for a 20 hour per week officer

RECOMMENDATION C-2: Ensure that the sergeant's shifts include patrol time

RECOMMENDATION C-3: Adopt a practice of scheduling part-time officers for patrol on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday nights

RECOMMENDATION C-4: Increase patrol coverage during evenings and weekends

RECOMMENDATION C-5: Develop an inter-municipal agreement with the Town of Williamsburg under which prisoner processing would be done at Williamsburg Police Headquarters

RECOMMENDATION C-6: Consider collaboration or contracting of administrative oversight as a more cost-effective approach to meeting administrative obligations

RECOMMENDATION IMC-1: Adopt a process of maintaining and regularly reporting mutual aid responses by type on each Town

RECOMMENDATION IMC-2: Consider consolidation of the Williamsburg and Chesterfield Police Departments

RECOMMENDATION IMC-3: Upon merger of the Departments, pursue accreditation by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission