

MORC – PUBLIC SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Presented - March 7, 2010

Our subcommittee members included Tim Thompson, chair, Bill Desena and Penny Jordan, town councilor. Our town employee liaison was Police Chief Neil Williams.

Our subcommittee met with both the Police Chief and Fire Chief on numerous occasions, and we would like to thank them for their open and helpful cooperation in providing information and answers to our probing questions.

From our conversation it appears clear to our subcommittee that strong opportunities exist for looking further into leasing/hiring out, sharing or regionalizing services. In the police, rescue and fire departments, the opportunity to save on vehicle services, purchasing, personnel and other synergistic areas clearly exist and need further pursuit.

In the area of fire, we recognize that the magic that exists in this department is in our volunteers. We appear to be the envy of the state as a volunteer department. Our department's leadership team and our volunteers perform the duties and training on an organized and professional basis. Care should be taken to protect at all costs the asset we have with our dedicated and professionally trained pool of volunteers.

In the area of rescue, the challenge of staffing all calls with a paramedic seems to provide our department with a challenge from time to time and could benefit from regionalizing and further support.

In the area of police, it appears savings could be realized in personnel and certainly in equipment, as well as, significant savings and realignment of resources as the police station could be reinvented to serve the town in a broader array of services and uses.

As our subcommittee included no professionals in the area of data collection and interviewing of personnel to identify savings or efficiencies, our work is an inch deep and of only minor significance. We recognized the further pursuit of information was very difficult as processes, laws and controls made it almost impossible to accomplish.

It would, therefore, be our strong recommendation that a third party be brought in to professionally study the departments to provide the underlying data and information to provide a firmer foundation to our work. We feel strongly that having the professional review is imperative at this time and the expense would either provide numerous ideas and recommendations or an affirmation of how well we are already doing. Either outcome would be a positive to the one town concept.

