

# Town of Essex

## Public Safety Committee Report

June 2015



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|   | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Neither Agree or Disagree | Disagree     | Strongly Disagree | Total |
|---|----------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------|
| The Police Department personnel presence in my town is appropriate.               | 26.51%<br>57   | 39.53%<br>85 | 16.28%<br>35              | 15.35%<br>33 | 2.33%<br>5        | 215   |
| The Police Department is providing appropriate community outreach programs.       | 25.70%<br>55   | 30.37%<br>65 | 38.32%<br>82              | 4.67%<br>10  | 0.93%<br>2        | 214   |
| The members of the Police Department conduct themselves in a professional manner. | 36.92%<br>79   | 43.46%<br>93 | 14.95%<br>32              | 3.27%<br>7   | 1.40%<br>3        | 214   |
| The Police Department responds to emergency calls in a timely manner.             | 35.85%<br>76   | 36.32%<br>77 | 26.42%<br>56              | 0.47%<br>1   | 0.94%<br>2        | 212   |
| Members of the Police Department treat people with respect.                       | 35.51%<br>76   | 42.06%<br>90 | 17.76%<br>38              | 2.80%<br>6   | 1.87%<br>4        | 214   |
| Telephone calls to the Police Department are handled effectively.                 | 25.59%<br>54   | 33.18%<br>70 | 33.65%<br>71              | 5.69%<br>12  | 1.90%<br>4        | 211   |
| The Harbor Patrol personnel responds to emergency calls in a timely manner.       | 14.49%<br>30   | 17.39%<br>36 | 64.73%<br>134             | 1.45%<br>3   | 1.93%<br>4        | 207   |
| The Police Department is providing appropriate community education.               | 19.07%<br>41   | 28.84%<br>62 | 46.05%<br>99              | 4.65%<br>10  | 1.40%<br>3        | 215   |
| The Police Department does its job well.  | 29.44%<br>63   | 42.52%<br>91 | 22.90%<br>49              | 2.80%<br>6   | 2.34%<br>5        | 214   |

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|   | Strong Agree  | Agree        | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree    | Strongly Disagree | Total |
|---|---------------|--------------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------|
| The Fire Department personnel presence in my town is appropriate.               | 37.07%<br>76  | 44.88%<br>92 | 10.73%<br>22               | 5.85%<br>12 | 1.46%<br>3        | 205   |
| The Fire Department is providing appropriate community education programs.      | 22.44%<br>46  | 32.68%<br>67 | 41.46%<br>85               | 2.93%<br>6  | 0.49%<br>1        | 205   |
| The members of the Fire Department conduct themselves in a professional manner. | 47.80%<br>98  | 37.56%<br>77 | 14.15%<br>29               | 0.49%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0        | 205   |
| The Fire Department responds to fire emergency calls in a timely manner.        | 40.69%<br>83  | 35.29%<br>72 | 21.57%<br>44               | 1.96%<br>4  | 0.49%<br>1        | 204   |
| Members of the Fire Department treat people with respect.                       | 53.69%<br>109 | 29.56%<br>60 | 15.27%<br>31               | 1.48%<br>3  | 0.00%<br>0        | 203   |
| Telephone calls to the Fire Department are handled effectively.                 | 33.17%<br>67  | 28.22%<br>57 | 35.64%<br>72               | 1.98%<br>4  | 0.99%<br>2        | 202   |
| The ambulance and EMT personnel respond to emergency calls in a timely manner.  | 40.69%<br>83  | 29.41%<br>60 | 26.96%<br>55               | 1.47%<br>3  | 1.47%<br>3        | 204   |
| The Fire Department is providing appropriate community outreach programs.       | 20.69%<br>42  | 31.03%<br>63 | 45.32%<br>92               | 2.46%<br>5  | 0.49%<br>1        | 203   |
| The Fire Department does its job well.  | 50.97%<br>105 | 34.47%<br>71 | 14.08%<br>29               | 0.49%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0        | 206   |

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## Executive Summary

This Report documents the work of the Essex Public Safety Committee, whose charge was to evaluate the Town's public safety operations (specifically Police, Harbormaster, Fire and Emergency Services/Ambulance) and to develop recommendations for specific scope and level of services for each department that will serve the Town for the next 30-year period. The Committee was to ensure those recommendations meet minimum operating standards as judged by the Committee. The full charge is contained in the Introduction section of this report. The Committee formed and commenced work, in October 2013 and concluded its work with this Report in June 2015. A summary of the major work is listed below:

- Meetings with the Police and Fire Chiefs and their support personnel, and tour of the existing facilities
- Engagement of an independent fire safety consultant (Essex County Fire Chiefs Association – ECFCA)
- Public safety survey of Essex residents
- Tour/examinations of Rockport Police and Fire stations, and interviews with their Chiefs and personnel
- Demographic, operational and budgetary comparisons to neighboring towns
- Over the course of this study all Committee meetings were open to the public.

The Committee conducted a great deal of research and gathered input from a broad variety of sources. Some of the research involved gathering and evaluating hard data, such as demographic and budgetary data, while other information was gleaned from interviews, expert opinions and a public survey. The Committee met numerous times with the department Chiefs to build and clarify our understanding of the organizational structure, operations, needs and goals of the departments, and then to analyze all those in light of the future needs of the town. In all cases the Committee took great care to debate and challenge the information before drawing its own conclusions. This report, therefore, is not simply a recitation of gathered data, but instead a careful and critical analysis of the research as applied to the Committee's charge from the Board of Selectmen.

Perhaps the most significant finding of this work is that the Town's public safety systems work well. The Police, Fire and Emergency operations provide satisfactory-to-high levels of service, as borne out by both hard data and the Committee's Public Safety Citizens survey responses. The systems are well-managed by capable and extremely dedicated Chiefs and department leaders. They are staffed with sincere and committed personnel, whether full-time paid or part-time on-call. They do their best to comply with industry standards for training, safety and performance, and they look forward to the future needs of the townspeople. Further, the Committee reviewed force structure and associated budgets and spending in towns of comparable demographics on the North Shore and found Essex's public safety budgets to compare favorably, i.e., no significant differences in spending vs. services provided. The Town's Police budget is in line with neighboring communities and our Fire budget is generally lower than other towns due our part-time On-call operational model.

There were also several areas where the Committee found the need for improvement or corrective action. The Committee's most important finding is the confirmation that the condition of the existing public safety facilities, i.e., buildings, grounds and office/work spaces, is inadequate for today's needs, and less so as a stable base for future operations. Our public safety personnel operate in substandard facilities that can make their jobs unnecessarily challenging, including some health and safety deficiencies presenting elevated risks that the Town should not be willing to bear.

Sometimes, due to lack of proper facilities, public safety personnel are compelled to make personal sacrifices or contributions to operations that are above the call of duty and/or create unacceptable risks. These sacrifices often go unrecognized, and therefore unaddressed, by the citizenry. A few examples of this are: firefighters/police routinely take incident-contaminated gear home to wash due to lack of proper holding/washing facilities at the station; on-call firefighters personally direct traffic at downtown intersections due to lack of a traffic control system; all personnel work in a stationhouse that lacks proper smoke and fire protection; police store evidence in the locked women's restroom due to lack of adequate space for evidence storage, thereby excluding women from a dedicated restroom; the Police Chief's office is a modular unit separate from the main building; and while firearms and ammunition are stored in a locked safe, that safe is in a room to which the public has access – hardly an optimal arrangement.

Looking to the future, the Town is projected to have little population growth over the next 20-30 years. This means that a major expansion of current operations and services is not required. It is expected that current staffing levels and operational practices will continue to be adequate, requiring only minor modifications over time. The caveat is that these operations require facilities that meet, at a minimum, contemporary standards for small towns or small-business-like operations. While "state-of-the-art" facilities, i.e., ultramodern or cutting edge, are not required, the Town should endeavor to provide facilities that meet industry standards for worker safety, proper procedure, and operational efficiency, in a cost-effective manner. Certainly, the Town must address compliance with current applicable codes for buildings, operations, office space, record-keeping, public interaction, etc.

Regarding facilities, the Committee recommends that the Town strongly consider an upgrading of the current facilities or construction of new facilities to house one or all of our public safety operations. This should include consideration of a) the *requirements* of our public safety operations, i.e., the physical space and building infrastructure required for organizational size, equipment storage and maintenance, office/administration, training, employee safety, readiness-to-respond, public interaction, etc., b) the comparative *costs* of upgrade vs. new construction, c) some allowance for *modest growth* of operations, say 10%, over the next 30-year period, and d) a *final facilities recommendation* to the Town. The Committee strongly recommends the Town take deliberate and decisive action so as to ensure the Town is not negatively impacted by the facilities' lack of regulatory compliance and inadequate working conditions.

Further, there are certain health and safety items that should be rectified as soon as possible in the existing building rather than waiting for a major capital project for new facilities. These include, but are not limited to, for example, smoke/carbon monoxide detection and diesel exhaust removal. To help prioritize these items the Town should consider requesting an opinion from Town Counsel regarding the risk these items pose and therefore attach the appropriate sense of urgency to their correction.

Mutual aid and shared services are a significant and growing element of the Town's police and fire safety operations, including the regional dispatch call center, shared lock-up with Essex County, Fire Department mutual aid, State Police backup, and the Cape Ann Regional Task Force for police. Further efforts to regionalize would require very significant changes in the Town's approach to public safety and are beyond the scope of this Committee's capacity, as explained further below in the body of the report. The prospect of significant cost reductions in broader regionalization is unknown. Furthermore, the impact to the Town in areas such as emergency response time, ability to maintain close ties with the community (youth and adults) and even net dollar cost would require far more in-depth study and citizen involvement.

The Fire Department's organization and leadership are to be lauded for their commitment and resourcefulness in always having ready a cadre of On-call firefighters to meet the Town's emergency needs. The On-call operational model under the Chief's and Engineers' leadership has historically worked very well, and is deemed appropriate for the Town's future needs. Its operational performance is quite good and is well appreciated by Essex citizens. Additionally, the Committee finds that the "Board of Engineers" (Chief and two Fire Engineers) management model is effective and appropriate for management of the day-to-day leadership, staffing, training and operations. The Committee recommends retaining this command structure while taking steps to improve communication and collaboration between the Chief, the Board of Engineers and other On-call Fire Company personnel. This report also contains recommendations for improvement in fire safety inspections, personnel standards and training. None of these are considered insurmountable and all are within the capacity of the current organization to improve over time. Of these, the Committee recommends the Town focus first on fire safety inspections, as these may present the most imminent risks in terms of safety and liability.

The Committee notes that it is critical for the Fire Company to maintain a stream of up-and-coming, sustaining personnel to balance losses due to attrition. This may be a special challenge in a small town like Essex, in a time when fewer Town residents work locally. We are encouraged that the Company has started an outreach and recruitment initiative and hope that this effort will continue over the long term and ensure the viability of the On-call force.

The Police Department's organization is considered right-sized and its performance is considered very effective, as reflected in the public survey. Numerous improvements in utilizing regional services have provided more efficient operations and substantial cost savings to the Town. The Committee believes that Department operations and organizational planning will be improved through the rigor of maintaining its Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission (MPAC) Certification.

For the Police, as well as Fire and Ambulance, a unique and significant aspect of Essex is its large waterfront and the commensurate public and commercial activity it gives rise to. The Police force, especially, must provide professional on-the-water safety services in the form of specially trained personnel, dedicated equipment and other operational capabilities that land-locked towns typically would not need. The maintenance of this functionality has an impact on budgets, staffing and operations. All this falls under the leadership of the Harbormaster, which in Essex is a role assumed by the Police Chief in addition to regular duties. The Committee found the Town's Harbormaster services to be adequate, though in the future the Town may consider upgrading water-traffic management and search-and-rescue capabilities, as noted below in the report.

An important accomplishment for the Police Department is attainment of Certification by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission in June 2015. This self-initiated Certification brings police “industry standards” to the forefront in Essex, ranging from policy and procedure to accountability to assessments in operational effectiveness, all of which should result in a higher operating condition for the Police Department.

Quoted from the Massachusetts Municipal Association website, April 2, 2013:

These carefully selected [Certification] standards reflect critical areas of police management, operations and technical support activities. They cover areas such as policy development, emergency response planning, training, communications, property and evidence handling, use of force, vehicular pursuit, prisoner transportation, and holding facilities.

The program not only sets standards for the law enforcement profession, but also for the delivery of police services to citizens.

Participation in the program:

- Provides a norm for an agency to judge its performance
- Provides a basis to correct deficiencies before they become a public problem
- Requires agencies to commit their policies and procedures to writing
- Promotes accountability among agency personnel
- Provides a means of independent evaluation of agency operations for quality assurance
- Enhances the reputation of the agency and promotes public confidence in the agency

In conclusion, the Committee hopes that the report provides Essex residents and public safety officials with needed insight into the Town’s public safety services. The comparisons to neighboring towns, the process of learning how our public safety systems currently operate and most of all the dialogue between the Committee and the departments are all ways of keeping the Town’s needs, capabilities and expectations in alignment. For these reasons the Committee strongly recommends that the Town follow-up with repeat Public Safety Committee reviews, building upon this one, every 3-5 years. Future committees will have this report as a starting point and should be expected to improve its insights to ensure the Town has the public safety services it needs in the present, as well as thoughtful plans for the future.

## I. Introduction

This report documents the work of the Public Safety Committee, whose volunteer work spanned approximately October, 2013 through June, 2015. The Committee's Charge from the Board of Selectmen is shown in full below.

### **Public Safety Committee Charge**

The charge of the Public Safety Study Committee is to review the spatial, budgetary, and organizational needs of the Town of Essex Safety departments against a backdrop of any minimum required service standards, the potential to share services among departments, and the public's level of support to provide services beyond minimum requirements (if any). The Committee may, subject to appropriation by Town Meeting, utilize the services of a consultant to arrive at minimum service requirements and the Committee shall collect public input with respect to the level of services that is actually desired. The Committee shall ultimately issue a final report to the Selectman recommending a specific level and scope of service for each department over the next 30 years that at least meets minimum requirements but may also add services that go beyond the minimum requirements, based upon the public's appetite. This report, in turn, will inform the Town's process for setting the future building space desired for each department, the budgetary constraints for each department, and the future organizational makeup of each department (which may include regionalization).

### **Methodology**

The Committee engaged in a process of data-gathering, analysis and thoughtful discussion that resulted in the Observations and Recommendations presented in the next section of the report. The Committee carried out interviews with Essex public service personnel, conducted site visits in Essex and neighboring communities, analyzed census data and comparative departmental statistics, reviewed police, fire and EMS standards, and conducted a community survey yielding over 250 responses.

The following specific sources of data were developed and utilized:

- Condition of current Police, Harbormaster, Fire and Ambulance facilities and operations
  - o Inputs from Chiefs on operations
  - o Survey of conditions of facilities
  - o Evaluation of operations by independent experts:
    - Police Department Certification by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission (completed February, 2015).
    - Review of Fire Department facility, equipment and operations by the Essex County Fire Chiefs Association (EFCA), who identified the legal and industry standards for firefighting procedures, equipment, job performance requirements, and reviewed Essex Fire Department operations, equipment, facility, and management/administrative functions, for adequacy both in the present day and into the future.

- Comparison to nearby towns of similar demographics, including public safety budgets and essential manning and operations metrics
- Detailed evaluation of Rockport police and fire operations and comparison to those of Essex
- Community survey
- Consideration of future operational needs in terms of facilities and operation including regionalization considerations

## **Organization of the Report**

### **Executive Summary**

**I. Introduction:** Containing the Committee’s Charter and methodological approach for the work, and report structure

**II. Summary Observations and Recommendations:** Containing high level overview of the Committee’s observations and corresponding recommendations for the main elements of the work

#### **III. Current Public Safety Operation:**

- Responses from Chiefs to Committee questions
- Summary condition of current facility, from 2012 Study
- Regionalization
- Evaluation by independent experts

#### **III. Comparison to neighboring towns:**

- Budgets
- Public Safety operation
- Rockport operation

**IV. Community survey:** containing a summary of the responses received from the residents of Essex in the Spring of 2014.

#### **V. Future Operational Needs:**

- Facilities
- Operation
- Regionalization considerations

#### **Appendices:**

- Police Certification Overview
- Police Office to Population Ratios
- Full Public Survey Results
- Independent Fire Assessment (remove?)

## II. Summary Observations and Recommendations

Essex being a small town bears upon nearly every aspect of our public safety systems. With limited budgets and lacking the economies of scale enjoyed by larger municipalities, our police and fire departments are continually challenged to perform at a high level, despite operating under a variety of financial and operational constraints. The residents expect their public safety services to keep pace with the levels of service enjoyed by comparable towns. This remains a continual challenge, as no public safety system can remain static in the face of changing technologies, regulations and social norms. Essex's town services must continually adapt to meet the residents' public safety needs and comply with changing regulatory requirements within the limited and often stagnant budgets found in such a small town.

### **The Committee presents the following major findings:**

**Observations:** Existing buildings and facilities available to Police, Fire and Ambulance are in fair-to-poor physical condition and require significant upgrading. Adequate space is lacking in nearly all areas. Administrative infrastructure (offices, furniture, fixtures, secure areas, etc.) is aged, cramped and often serves multiple conflicting purposes. Fire, Police and Ambulance personnel often, due to lack of alternatives, utilize their personal vehicles and homes in the course of storing and maintaining equipment. In many cases, for example, equipment that has been used at emergency calls and fires, and therefore exposed to smoke, soot, fire-fighting and biological substances, is brought home for cleaning and storage in whatever manner the public safety worker sees fit. Proper cleaning and storage is not available at the station, nor are personal cleansing facilities, e.g., showers, available for personnel returning from incidents or calls.

*Police:* Among the deficiencies noted in the Police Station are: The Police Chief's office is a modular unit detached from the main building and separate from the rest of the Force; the women's rest room has been converted to an evidence locker (and not replaced); firearms and ammunition are stored locked, but in an open-traffic area of the office; administrative (desk) areas are shared in extremely close quarters, basically one small room for all on-duty personnel other than the Chief; lack of private interview areas and ingress/egress; no juvenile holding area. While the Police "make-do" with such deficiencies, the Committee feels these conditions should be deemed unacceptable.

*Fire:* The Department presently meets applicable standards for all equipment, including personal protective gear, radio equipment, fire hose, nozzles, and fittings, self-contained breathing apparatus, firefighting tools and small equipment, and vehicles and apparatus. However, there are deficiencies at the existing fire station, including lacking fire/smoke/carbon monoxide detection and alarm systems, particularly in the apparatus storage areas and a diesel soot evacuation system. These deficiencies, to some extent, also apply to the portion of the building used for the police.

**Recommendations, General:** The town should provide larger and upgraded facilities for Police, Fire and Emergency so as to provide reasonable minimal office work spaces, secure areas, technically functional areas and areas-of-interface for the public, as well as some accommodations for rest and physical fitness. In addition to serving the purely functional needs of the departments and helping to ensure future performance levels, such an upgrade is vital to attracting and retaining the competent and

dedicated personnel expected by the Town. Indeed, the Town should not minimize the negative impact of substandard facilities on the morale, performance, professionalism and culture of the Police and Fire departments. The current facilities project a message of neglect from the Town, and this message is undoubtedly received in some fashion by our public safety workers. The Committee feels this is unhealthy for those organizations and therefore unhealthy for the Town. A better approach would be to demonstrate, in this case through facilities improvements, higher levels of support and respect for these key Town personnel, thereby promoting a culture of stronger mutual respect and higher performance.

**Recommendations, Fire Department-specific:** The noted deficiencies in alarming and soot evacuation pose significant personnel health and safety hazards, as well as a potential threat to Fire Department apparatus and equipment, and should be rectified in the existing building in the near term rather than waiting an undetermined period for major capital facilities projects to take place. Near term priorities to be addressed are:

- Lack of fire/smoke/carbon monoxide detection alarm systems
- Lack of specialized extraction washing equipment to decontaminate personal Protective clothing
- Lack of washer and dryer facilities for soiled uniforms
- Lack of personal Protective Clothing storage area
- Lack of diesel soot evacuation system
- Insufficient records storage facility

The Committee commends and encourages the Department to continue its focus on equipment inspection, maintenance and replacement schedules.

**Observations: Personnel and management infrastructure** (staffing levels, organizational structure) are adequate though certain aspects warrant attention going forward.

*Police:* Essex has a total of 9 full time Police Officers comprised of 1 Chief, 1 Sergeant and 7 Patrolmen (per the Chief). This compares favorably to national police structure standards (see Appendix B) and to neighboring small towns of Manchester (about 50% higher population) with 1 Chief, 4 Sergeants and 7 Patrolmen; Wenham (about 30% higher population) with 1 Chief, 1 Captain, 3 Sergeants and 5 Patrolmen; and West Newbury (about 25% higher population) with 1 Chief, 2 Sergeants, and 5 Patrolmen. Essex also has reserve officers and “special” officers working part-time and in some cases unpaid. These officers supplement full-time staff during summer season, at special events, and on traffic details and otherwise fill in as needed.

*Fire:* The Department is currently comprised of 43 on-call firefighters and 8 fire officers of varying ranks including a Chief, two deputy chiefs, a captain and four lieutenants (per 2014 Town Report). Twenty-eight members, including the Chief, are EMT’s, and all remaining staff is trained in Basic First Aid and CPR. The Department is overseen by the Board of Fire Engineers, consisting of the Chief and the two Deputy Chiefs.

Coverage at the station includes the Chief and an administrative assistant at eight hours each per week, and per diem On-call personnel in the daytime on weekdays and weekends. In 2014, department

coverage began including a firefighter on daytime duty at the station to do maintenance, issue burning permits and be available to the public, as needed. This staffing schedule is generally sufficient to meet the safety needs of the community and hopefully will prevent any lapses in station coverage. It is not clear if this staffing level is sufficient to fully support other necessary, non-emergency Fire Department functions such as record-keeping and fire inspections (these matters are addressed separately below).

The Department's safety performance is quite good, as shown by the objective measures of On-call personnel response times for fire (average 6.53 minutes) and ambulance (6.22 minutes) calls.

The size of the force compares favorably with those of nearby towns, including Rockport, which is the only neighboring town with a completely On Call department (having 51 personnel, and no ambulance duties). Boxford, Hamilton, Rowley, Topsfield and Wenham each have three or four full time personnel in addition to 20+ personnel on call. Of interest as a point of comparison is the fact that almost half of Manchester-by-the-Sea's Fire Department is full time, with 13 of 29 personnel being full time.

The Essex Fire and Emergency recruitment model is ad hoc and not formalized to the degree that new recruits can be assuredly sourced (found and enlisted) on a regular basis.

Vacancies on the Board of Engineers are filled by a process in which the remaining Board members recommend replacements to the Board of Selectmen. The members of the Fire Department may also suggest candidates. No clear-cut criteria exist for these appointments.

New firefighters go through a probationary period of approximately one year, after which their performance is reviewed. If performance is judged sufficient, then they are considered regular firefighters. The performance review is conducted by the Board of Engineers; no clear cut criteria exist for promotion.

**Recommendations, Police Department-specific:** The Committee considers the Police Department to be properly sized and staffed with appropriate levels of personnel. The Department may choose to consider minor re-organization as needed to maintain Certification and/or under guidance from the standards indicated by the MPAC certifying body.

**Recommendations, Fire Department-specific:** The Town should continue with its on-call Fire Department and Board of Fire Engineers. This structure and personnel are appropriate for Essex, given the size of the Town, the Town's budget constraints, and the benefit of having all-local personnel with strong knowledge of the Town and its citizens.

The Committee suggests the Fire Department bolster its average coverage to address immediate fire safety inspection and administrative needs. This can be drawn from the current management and On Call personnel of the Department.

Ensuring the presence of an adequately-sized On Call Fire Department into the future is a significant challenge that requires strong commitment. To that end and their credit, the Essex Fire Department has started an Explorer Scout troop in cooperation with the Manchester Fire Department, one of the aims of which is to feed new young members into the force. To augment this effort the Board of Fire Engineers and the Fire Department should develop even further strategies and plans to ensure the interest and entry of new members into the Fire Department.

Promotional criteria should be developed for the Chief, Deputy Chiefs, and officers of the Fire Department, including a re-examination of the requirements in the Essex Fire Department Service Manual for service time in Essex as criteria for several command and management positions. The

Committee feels that service time in the Essex department is a significant consideration, but is potentially limiting as a requirement and might be beneficially eliminated. Related, the Department should develop clear criteria for promotion of a probationary firefighter to regular firefighter, including drill and response requirements.

Finally, the Committee recommends the institution of CORI checks for new hires and physical fitness requirements for all personnel, as recommended by the Town's insurer. The Town should investigate the potential for these items to result in reduced insurance premiums and/or other benefits.

**Observations:** Overall public safety services provided to Essex residents by the departments are comparable, in terms of types of service thereof, to towns of similar size and demographics. In general the Committee found Essex residents to be very satisfied with fire, police and emergency services (this was reflected in the town-wide survey conducted by this Committee).

With the concurrence of the Fire Chief and Engineers, the Committee notes that the Fire Department is falling short on fire inspections. The Committee views this as a significant public safety matter and a potential liability concern for the Town. One Fire Lieutenant is currently conducts the inspections.

The Essex Fire Department provides the primary ambulance service for the Town. This consists of basic life support service (BLS) on a 24/7 basis utilizing two ambulances, with available staffing of 28 on-call emergency medical technicians (EMT's), including seven EMT paramedics (EMT-P). The Department averages 230 medical calls each year, of which 80 percent involve transport of patients. Twenty percent of the transports are for advanced life support (ALS), to which EFD responds first and then meets an ALS ambulance (from Manchester Fire Department or Lyons Ambulance Service) en route to transfer the patient. ALS as currently provided appears to work effectively.

The Town has a revolving account for billings and payments for ambulance service. The service is thus financially self-sustaining. The Committee's research indicates that a private ambulance service would not be cost-effective at the current call volume level.

**Recommendations:** Given the flat future demographic projections for the Town, i.e., very low growth over the next 20-30 years, the Committee recommends no significant changes in either the type or amount of services provided.

Notably, the Town of Essex has several unique characteristics including intensive recreational boating activity on the Essex River and Chebacco Lake, as well as significant transient summer visitor activity. These characteristics mandate that Essex have additional expert capabilities and competencies including harbormaster, marine patrol, search and rescue, traffic management and law enforcement to manage high summer and shoulder season tourist influxes. These items set Essex, and towns like Nahant and Rockport, apart from non-waterfront, non-touristed towns. The Committee recommends the Town support development and maintenance of high-quality services in these areas. This includes river and lake safety/rescue services, a visible harbormaster presence in no-wake zones and the capability to keep visitors safe and render them aid when called upon on land or water, among others. These public

services are not only necessary and appreciated, but may also mitigate any potential liability to the Town.

The Fire Department should move quickly to ensure that all required fire inspections are conducted in timely fashion. Fire Department management should provide data as to the types and numbers of inspections required annually, the staffing and budget required to do the jobs, and recommendations for ensuring inspections are conducted properly and on time, whether with existing department personnel or third party resources. This function should be self-sustaining with fees structured so as to ensure all reasonable costs are borne by the inspected parties.

With regard to Advanced Life Support (ALS) services, the Town may consider whether in-house ALS service provided by EFD paramedics would be more effective in the medical sense, while also examining training and equipment requirements, costs, and revenues. Such an endeavor should be well-examined, however, as the costs and resource dedication would be significant only to replace an ALS system that is already adequate.

**Observations:** Training of on-call Fire and Emergency staff is considered generally adequate, though the part-time, on-call nature of the Force mandates that special attention be paid to ensure adequate participation and retention of highly skilled individuals. The Fire Department has low minimum training attendance (50%) and fire response (5%) criteria for call firefighters compared to those of other towns.

**Recommendation:** The Fire Department should apply greater scrutiny to “minimum training and participation requirements” including their application to individuals and the Department overall as well as documentation thereof, impact on overhead costs, and potential to influence recruitment, training and operational effectiveness. The same scrutiny should be applied to skill-specific training, response drills, etc., with potential adjustments for specific rank/position within the department, e.g., specialist positions, management/authority positions, etc.

**Observations:** Operating budgets for the departments are on par with towns of similar size and demographics. The Town of Essex budgets were analyzed over the past ten years, showing an increase of just over 100%, from \$3M in 2005 to just over \$6M in 2015 (does not include School and Enterprise Budgets) with the largest by far being Debt and Interest due to the financing of the Regional Middle / High School. In the context of this report, the Police Department budget (~\$1.1M in 2015) has grown approximately 70% over the past ten years, equating to a compounded rate of 5.4% annually. From a 2012 comparison, the Police budget at \$970K was among the lowest compared to similar sized neighboring towns, comparable to Wenham and Newbury, each of which was approximately \$1M; Merrimack was the only town with a lower budget, at \$0.8M.

Our analysis of sixteen North Shore towns showed that Essex has the third highest per capita police budget, at \$280, about \$70 higher than the overall average. Nahant, another coastal town, has by far the

highest per capita budget at nearly \$350. It is noteworthy that Nahant and Essex have, by a significant margin, the two smallest populations among the sixteen towns analyzed and both are also waterfront communities, therefore needing to support Harbormaster and other water safety services. We conclude that these two towns' higher per capita costs are in some significant measure due to certain fixed staffing and equipment needs common to every town's police department but disproportionately borne by the smallest towns. In Nahant's and Essex's case, the fiscal burden is increased by the added responsibility of public safety services for the waterfront.

The Fire Department Budget (\$370K in 2015) has seen a much larger increase (> 200%), due principally to its relatively low budget in 2005, and necessary expenses such as new equipment leases over the assessed time period. From a 2012 comparison, the Fire budget at \$235K was the lowest of the comparison towns; the next closest were: Rockport (\$284K); Merrimack (\$366K); Rowley (\$397K); Georgetown (\$425K).

**Recommendations:** Current operating budgets are considered adequate and appropriate for the services provided. The Committee recommends no immediate changes to the operating budgets.

**Observations: Essex Community Survey:** The survey respondents feel very safe in their community and in their homes. The overall feeling of the citizens of Essex concerning their public safety agencies are that they are professional and doing their jobs very well. Of the citizens who have had any contact with the public safety agencies in the last five years they are overwhelmingly satisfied with the results of their interactions with the agencies and how they were treated. The survey did, however, show that citizens are concerned when it comes to motor vehicle violations, pedestrian safety, domestic violence and juvenile crime issues.

**Recommendations:** The Community Survey was but one source of insight into the performance and perception of Towns public safety services. While the Committee has no specific recommendations arising from the Survey, the Police and Fire Chiefs are encouraged to review it and determine if, in their estimation, there are any areas to be improved, further probed or compared to other metrics. As noted, the Survey respondents were, overall, very satisfied with the performance of the departments.

**Observation: Regionalization:** In 2012 and 2014 respectively the town of Essex modernized its public safety communications and booking operations by becoming a member of the Essex County Regional Emergency Communications Center (ECRECC) and taking advantage of access to the new suspect intake and booking center located at the Essex County Jail. These moves have provided Essex with major financial savings, reduced the community's potential liability and given the Town highly professional, 24-hour, well supervised state-of-the-art facilities to enhance their ability to provide the necessary services to the citizens of Essex, now and into the future.

**Recommendations:** The Committee recommends continued participation in these regionalization programs. The Committee, however, did not research further expansion of regionalized or shared services, which may be considered on an as-needed, as-justifiable basis by the Town in the future.

### III. Current Public Safety Operation

This section provides a description of the current public safety operation for Police and Harbor Master, and Fire and Ambulance.

The section has four main parts:

1. Inputs provided by each Chief, Chief Silva for Police and Harbor, and Chief Doucette for Fire and Ambulance; based on a set of standard questions asked of both Chiefs.
2. Condition of current public safety facility (from 2012 Building Committee Report)
3. Assessment of Regionalization
4. Evaluation of the current operation by independent experts

#### Part 1 – Inputs from the Chiefs

##### a. Police Chief and Harbor Master

The following are responses to the questions provided by Chief Silva to the Public Safety Committee in March 2014.

**Question 1: Detail the size of your force, broken out by full time, part time, and volunteers – provide summary rationale for the force size, and command structure.**

The structure of the full time Essex Police Department is as follows:

- Chief Peter Silva (29 years)
- Sergeant Paul Francis (20 years)
- Detective Ryan Davis (7 years)
- Detective Tom Shamshak (7 years)
- Officer Robert Gilardi (28)
- Officer Michael French (24 years)
- Officer James Romeos (7 years)

This current complement of full time officers INCLUDING the two officers we need to send through the full time police academy, provide for the basic 4 & 2 schedule which simply means working 4 days on, and then two days off. This averages 15 and one third days off more than working a traditional Monday through Friday or 5 days on and two days off. Presently, I have assigned the Sergeant as the Certification Manager and he primarily works a day line with the sole responsibility of preparing our department for Certification. In the next few months, our department will be taking on the task of being evaluated for compliance. This presently creates a major hardship because the Sergeants ordinary responsibilities

include overseeing the day to day operation and supervision of all officers. Every other department which I sent to the Public Safety Committee operates with a complement of ranking officers to oversee the personnel, and to monitor the daily operation of their department. Even one of the smallest departments, the Newbury Police Department had more Sergeants in their supervisory line up than our department. The lack of supervision within our department exposes our department to litigation, and is an area in which we must make obvious changes within the near future.

### **Reserve Officers (presently under manned, usually at 12 officers)**

Reserve Officers are sworn officers who are paid less than a full time officer and who typically work in the absence of full time officers. They are required to attend the Reserve officer academy which is not as long as the full time academy. Our community greatly depends on the service of the Reserves at a reduced cost.

- \*Officer Alex Edwards (attending full time academy on 3/10/14)
- \*Officer Dan Bruce (will attend full time academy when Edwards graduates).
- Officer David Kent
- Officer Mark Brewer
- Officer Tom Berube
- Officer Melissa Cennami
- Officer Chad Lipinski
- Officer Paul Peoples
- *[Committee note: As of May 2015 Officers Edwards and Bruce are full time; Officer Berube is no longer with the department]*

### **Specials (unpaid/volunteer)**

Last week we just added 3 new Specials. The Special's are required to go through a thorough background check, they are required to submit to all pre-employment drug, medical, and psychological testing, all of which is an added cost to our agency. There is no special pre-hiring line item of which expenses come from when we are adding these individuals to our roster. They are also required to attend all comparable training which all of our officers are required to participate in including, use of force, OC spray, handcuffing, law training, as well as firearms etc. Uniforms, leather gear, batons, and all required police gear to outfit these officers are taken out of the regular lines which support our regular officers.

**Rationale of force structure: clarifying question 1:** Would you give the rational for the administrative structure currently of the Police Department. (Why there is only 1 Sergeant?).

Answering this question requires looking back at the history of our department. I was appointed to the position of Chief of Police in 2005. Prior to that time, there was an absence in some respects, within the department, regarding a lack of oversight within the department. In layman terms, the department functioned, but there was not a great deal of emphasis directed towards supervision within the whole department. We had a Chief, a Sergeant as we do now, and there was little focus on looking at measures of performance as a public product that our department puts out on a daily basis. During this time, the

union was active in trying to bargain for more supervision through rank within the department. Unfortunately, rank and compensation for supervision never came to fruition through the bargaining process.

When I took over as Chief, I started a complete reorganization of our department. We lacked policy and procedures, rules and regulations, training, and community focus. Change does not come overnight but I have worked diligently every year to increase the operating standards, and one of the most important areas that I have been focusing on is departmental training. This is unfortunately closely tied to budgetary constraints every year. When you are making all of the productive changes that our department has done to provide the best level of service to the community, safety for the residents, as well as for the officers, it is imperative that the foundation of any police agency is supervision. I provided comparatives of a variety of police agencies. There clearly is a huge disparity in the lack of supervision within this department. People will ask, does this come at a cost. The simple answer is yes, of course. But our community has not been absent of litigation. The lack of supervision, or the lack of funding for training has been highlighted by courts who have said this is not a defense in time of litigation. A clear example of this is the current training that many of our town employee's attend through our insurance carrier, MIIA. The philosophy is quite simple, invest in our workforce and train to avoid problems in the future. Our community actually receives credits for all of the training, including for supervisors, when we attend these classes.

Please consider the fact that we have full time, reserve officers, harbormaster employees, special police officers, and all that we presently have is one Sergeant and myself to oversee administration responsibilities, public matters, investigations, Certification organization (massive), patrol duties, and countless other responsibilities that the Sergeant and I do on a daily basis. We have had robberies, sexual assaults, increased fraud reports, countless domestics, drug matters, etc. Shame on anyone who thinks that "nothing happens in Essex". I am identifying a weakness within the agency regarding the lack of supervisors for all of the above. This is the perfect time as you are putting things into perspective to look at this issue. We have identified a problem and we need to focus on addressing this issue. I would like to highlight a few things if I meet with your Board again. It is important to look at where we were pre 2005, where we are today, and where we hope to be in the future.

**Question 2: Summarize overall facility space with major attributes (e.g., vehicle storage, # offices, dispatch, change areas, mission specific storage & other)**

To summarize the overall facility space with major attributes, one must know and understand the work that the Town Building Committee has done to look at our operating structure. The police department works out of two offices. One is the old Chief's office, which now was turned into the Detectives office and which doubles as the interview room. As well as the general police office where most business is conducted. As every member on the Public Safety Committee should have seen, as you look around the police office, this room doubles as a roll call room, locker room, an armory, a booking area, just to name a few. This set up exposes the department to risk and liability. You have a general office desk which includes tools for general office use such as pens, scissors, sensitive information which should not be in ear or eye shot of the public, and these tools put the officers and public at risk of injury. The absence of an Armory, is substituted by a huge firearms safe. This holds all of our required firearms and ammunition, but it is in the main area where the general population has access to within our department.

The current set up of our station challenges the officers to work in the worst conditions, but at the same time, service the public's appetite to have us put out the best product. Often times our officers are called upon to render medical care to patients at their home, or as the result of a motor vehicle accident. The officers are frequently exposed to a variety of toxins and bodily fluids in the regular course of their duties to the public. When this happens, there are no showers for the officers to clean up so that they may return out in the public and continue to perform their duties. Most times, officers can only return to their personal homes for a change of clothes and to shower and decontaminate in the same area where their family uses the shower.

We presently do not have a designated area within the current department where the Harbormaster can work from. There is a huge need for something as simple as an office that the Harbor employee's can work from. They are transients within their own building. They need to be let in by police officers when they come on to duty.

There is no kitchen area where the officers can prepare their dinner. The officers end up eating in their work area which creates an unsanitary work environment.

The lack of storage for the bare necessities such as office supplies, files and records continue to plague our department. Our department has 4 cruisers, two Harbormaster boats, two ATV's in a trailer, a light tower, and a sign board. Most of these pieces of equipment I obtained through grants, or for no cost at all. These are all very expensive and important pieces of equipment which need to be kept out of the elements of the weather. Because we have no inside storage, the integrity and finish of these items has greatly deteriorated more quickly because we have to leave them without cover. Even for the transport of prisoners or even for inclement weather such as rain or snow, the cruisers do not have a place where they can be taken where transport can safely allow discharging of passengers without putting them at risk of the weather. There are countless times which the lack of inside storage space comes to mind. Our department currently rents a 10 feet X 20 foot storage unit at the cost of approximately \$3000.00 per year and it is almost always full. We store stolen/recovered bikes, equipment, and a variety of other boating supplies there. This is an inconvenience when you need something, but it has been a way of life for the way that we need to do business because of the lack of space. I would also say that our department is grossly undersized with operating office space (including the additional trailer space), but also for work areas to effectively conduct our day to day operation.

**Question 3: List your department's major mission, apparatus used to conduct your mission, and provide summary rationale**

The department has the following cruisers, a Taurus which is all wheel drive, Crown Victoria front wheel drive, a Ford Expedition which has 4 wheel drive, and an Interceptor which is all wheel drive. Huge improvements have been made this past year when I introduced the Interceptor which provides all wheel drive. The vehicle looks similar to an SUV, but it is Ford's answer to a crossover style cruiser. It sits on the Taurus frame and actually gets 1 mile less per gallon than the Taurus, while providing dependability getting the officers to resident's houses in even the worst of snow. The Crown Victoria cruiser is a traditional rear wheel drive vehicle which performs extremely poor in snow and ice. The Crown Victoria also is no longer in production. Many departments are actually transitioning to all Interceptors. Our department does not have a vehicle which is primarily used for undercover work. This becomes a problem if we are investigating someone, or have to go out of town for an investigation. Our

department also lacks additional vehicles when we need them for officers to go to court, driver training, and especially during defensive driving while officers are attending the police academy.

I have had the good fortune of being able to maintain a Jet Ski which is one of the cheapest pieces of equipment to run, and the vessel draws less than 9 inches of water. This has been a constant challenge within the Essex River due to the lack of dredging. This ski can go where no other boat on the River can go, and can be the number one tool during a search and rescue operation in Essex waters. This may be viewed by some as a “toy” but I can assure you if you or a member of your family was lost Kayaking or is overdue in a boat, you may be very happy to see this piece of equipment looking for you.

#### **Question 4. Describe your community outreach programs / initiatives**

I have been the Chief of Police since 2005. During this time, our department has been on the constant service of programs for this community. We have been involved in the following programs for Essex residents, TRIAD program [a community safety initiative that focuses on empowering, educating and improving the safety, security and peace of mind of the senior population] with our Seniors, RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) program, VIN (Vehicle Identification Etching) program, DARE, Touch-a-truck, Prescription take back program, Car Fit program for Seniors, Read a Book program, Child Safety Seat Technician Training, Essex House Numbering Program, Boating Safety Day at Town Landing, Boating Safety Classes, Bike program, Special Police Officer program, and the Governor Safety Highway Grants to keep Essex roads safe. I have also conducted a couple of police auctions selling surplus police equipment, as well as property which has been recovered and remained unclaimed. These items have been sold at public auction and returned back to the public for revenue which came back to the Town of Essex. This has been very popular, and it brings people from the community out in search for a bargain. My most recent program has exploded in popularity. It is called the “P.E.T.E. Program” (Police Educational Trading Card Experience). I developed this program after the Newtown tragedy.

The Psychologist at the Elementary school was concerned about having our officers at the school after the Newtown incident because the children did not know us. I developed this program to address this concern. I had Police Trading Cards made for every officer. On the back of each card, it contains personal information about the officer. The children had to approach each officer at the station, or out on the street and ask for their card. When they collected all of the cards and put them in a specially designed book with sleeves to hold all their cards, they bring the book in to me to stamp and then I will enter them into a drawing for many prizes which include two brand new bikes donated by my wife and I. I also have a host of other prizes that the kids can win from ice cream, to bowling, roller skating, etc. Every child which collects all cards are guaranteed to win a prize for participating. We have not only met the children, but countless parents as well who we might never have known. The drawing for the prizes is taking place on March 10<sup>th</sup> at the school. I want to give you a quick example of how simple and quickly this program worked. A child came in to get my card at approximately 3:30 pm. I told him and his mother to come back at 4 pm when the change of shift would provide another opportunity for the child to get two more cards from the oncoming evening shift. At approximately 5 pm, the child came back and in front of his mother, said from memorizing the back of my card, “you have been the Police Chief since 2005, you play guitar, drums, and you are currently in a band”. This occurred in front of two of my officers who may not have believed how simple this could work. It worked like magic in an hour and a half.

**Questions 3, 4, and 5 have to do with Police Certification, and the responses are contained in Appendix A as provided as a whole by Chief Silva.**

**Question 6: Would you please detail the number of times during the past five years that you or your officers have needed to decontaminate.**

This is a twofold issue. The first part of the question can be answered simply by saying probably several times a week in one respect. For example, if an officer is working a detail, which happens almost every day, they are subject to road dust, exhaust, sweat, elements of the weather, etc and the officers many times get off of a detail, come directly to work, and try to make themselves presentable. Speaking from experience working many details in my career, nothing would have been better than to have a quick shower to refresh the officer, and simply be clean and presentable to those who we serve from the public. Road work is part of our job, and you may often see uniforms covered with items of dust or dirt from the days work. I encourage the officers to be attentive and presentable when they come on for their cruiser duty. We have rusted lockers, a decrepit locker room facilities, and essentially no place to freshen up. Imagine working in your yard during a hot summer day, sweating, and not showering and just putting on another shirt or pants without taking a shower. I would not expect any of you to do that, nor would I probably want to be working by your side. It is not reasonable, it is unsanitary, and it does not encourage officers to present themselves in the most professional way to the community.

The second part of this is when we are at work, we have a host of calls which we respond to which can be nothing shy of disgusting. At accident scenes, medical calls, and any variety of calls that we respond to, the officers are exposed to blood, bodily fluids, chemicals, pathogens, and fluids from vehicles. The same principal applies. In a perfect world, we try to take simple preventive measures such as gloves to provide a small level of protection. This practice went out the window when I was called to the lake for a man who dove into the lake and never came back up. His mother screaming for me to help find her son. I had to strip down and dove into the water. Her son drown despite our efforts, but we recovered the body. I was offered the use of a resident's shower, which I took advantage of, and he provided sweat pants and a shirt until I could get a suitable uniform.

One of my officers responded to a serious motor vehicle accident near the Ipswich line. A female was seriously injured and he had to climb into the vehicle to provide stabilization to her neck in order to avoid further neck damage or possibly paralysis. I had to purchase several pieces of uniforms for him because they were soaked with blood from the victim.

I was called to an apartment in town for an unattended death. The victim apparently had a major internal bleed which resulted in his demise. This occurred just prior to the victim vomiting the most amount of blood that I have ever seen in my almost 29 years of experience. Blood covered the walls, pooled on the floors, and was in places that I can't even imagine how it got there. It looked like a murder scene, and we worked with the State Police to come to the conclusion it was medically related. I truly wanted to throw my whole uniform away, shoes included and take a shower immediately. It was tragic for the victim, and I realize that this is part of our responsibility as police officers, but the absence of a shower, and the fact that I had to risk bringing in elements to my own home is a disgrace. There was also another unattended death which had not been reported for some time on a hot day. The officers did what they had to do and entered the house. If you have not been exposed to this odor, words cannot describe what it is like. To describe it in layman terms, when you go to a restaurant and come out

smelling like food, the same applies with human odor. It gets in your nose, your clothing, footwear, etc. and it is with you until you change your uniform and shower. Again, no shower. I can go on and on, but the simple fact is that even basic burnt food on a stove calls that we get from time to time, stay with you because the officers run into resident's homes or businesses to make sure that no one is injured inside. I hope that you get the gist of this issue. This occurs all of the time.

**Question 7: Would you please clarify if all of the service programs you list for the community in answer #4 are still current, including having a Child Safety Seat Technician.**

The answer to your question is no, not all of them are currently in effect. The DARE program for example was in effect for many years. Sergeant Paul Francis was the DARE officer at the Essex Elementary School. This program was a very powerful program with the children. To this day, I have been with the Sergeant in town when older kids have come up to him and said "Hi Sergeant Francis." When I have asked him who they were, he tells me that he or she was one of his DARE students. That program pays dividends to this day. The program ceased to exist due to lack of funding from the state. The program also seemed to take its course. Today, it seems that "School Resource Officers" have taken off where DARE left off. Officers in the school are common faces to students. They can teach, mentor, assist with incidents that occur in the school setting, and with the unfortunate rise in violence throughout the country, the appetite for having police in the schools has become more popular. We have been in talks with the Manchester/Essex School to explore having this type of relationship with our students. We have begun to come up with creative ways to share this concept with the Manchester Police Department. Our relationship with the school is tenfold of what it used to be. I strongly believe that we must work with our youth to build the relationships that need to be established. My "P.E.T.E. Program" (Police Educational Trading Card Experience) was one of the most powerful programs that is basic and powerful as far as establishing relationships with parent and students alike. I have never seen where children literally run in to the police department, and where parents meet the police officers of their department and provide unsolicited positive comments about this program.

The Vehicle Etching Program was part of a grant at the time that we did it. We are seeing decreased funding for these type of programs because of cuts throughout the state. When Officer Justin Zwicker recently left our department for employment with the Beverly Police Department, this left a void in many areas. One skill which he took with him was the Child Seat Technician. I have since recently retrained two officers. We now have a male and a female officer who will conduct these installations and checks. The diversity with our female officer has come with countless positive remarks from residents. Most of the listed programs are still in operation. The bike program was quite popular when our department received "Community Policing" funding from the state. We paid the officers through this funding. I would absolutely love to redeploy the bikes for summer visibility patrols. It promotes health, safety, and visibility in neighborhoods. We are challenged by funding to make this more of a reality, but I am still hopeful that we may see limited bike patrols for short periods of time in the future. I am putting on a classic car show behind the station on May 18<sup>th</sup>, weather permitting. This will be in part as a fund raiser for funding for a motorcycle patrol. There are very reasonable lease options for departments, and the officers have expressed interest getting out in the community with this tool. Provided that the show goes off with the weather, the officers have agreed to make a donation of a small portion of the proceeds to establish a fund for the Veterans Memorial Fund replacement. The current memorial is currently in disrepair.

**Question 8: Would you please explain to the Committee the average response time for an emergency call and if it varies depending upon time of day.**

The simple answer to this question is, there is no simple answer. As a basic guideline for your Board, there are so many parts to this equation. Time of day certainly plays a part of the response time. Other things which effect response time include time of the season, weather, location of the call, location of the officer, nature of the call, etc. Most times, a normal response time may be several minutes. If we get a call for an alarm on Red Gate Rd and we are at the station, a 3 or 4 minute response time may be reasonable. If we get a call to a motor vehicle accident at Conomo Point Rd, or to Gregory Island Rd. and we are responding from the station, it would certainly be increased. Again, inclement weather may slow the response down, or an officer may already be in the area and the response time could be a minute or two. Our officers are absolutely out and about more than in years past. If you have a scanner, you will hear that they are active and visible in the community. They may be conducting RADAR patrols in areas where we have received complaints from the public, or they may be conducting area checks for certain locations throughout the town. As you can see this is a difficult scenario to provide an absolute answer and be accurate. I am confident that our officers work diligently to respond as timely as possible. We want them to get to the location quickly, but we have to weigh in on safe operation of the cruisers, and for the traveling public. Timely reporting is most important. It is aggravating to us because people are not always timely when they report things. We always encourage the public to report things asap. Timely reporting is paramount.

**(Question 5.) List the top three (or more) things you most like about your current operation, and the top three (or more) needs improvement – provide summary rationale**

The top three things that I most like about my operation can be best described by the three “P’s”. The officers’ conduct their business with Pride, Passion, and the utmost Professionalism. I think that it is powerful when my own officers take a personal interest in everything that they do. We work in a profession where people often times are quick to criticize the good work of police officers because of their own ignorance. I have had the opportunity to work for two very different police departments, and three different police Chiefs. I certainly can attest to when officers take great pride in the work that they do. Our department provides a work environment which is rich in education. Our officer have taken great pride and passion to further their education and to focus on self-improvement, while giving back to their community. The officer’s willingness to focus their professionalism on providing a product of customer service. I can say with complete certainty, that the Essex police officers go the extra yardage when other agencies do not. I know that the officers in my home town are quick to say something derogatory when it comes to the public. Essex has a close friend appeal which promotes good will among others, particularly, my officers. If you pay attention to the customer service that we provide, it is unmatched with other departments. I know that even when I call other departments and identify myself as a Chief, it is very difficult to speak with the Chief of that department without an appointment. I pride myself that in Essex you can walk right in and see the Chief if I am available. This is more unusual that most realize. I enjoy working for an agency which promotes success and encourages everyone to work hard at what they do.

I believe that the top 3 things which need improvement are, infrastructure (new station), supervision, and staffing for both now, and into the future. If there is any additional information that I can provide to

your Board, please let me know.

## **b. Fire Chief Input**

The following are responses to the questions provided by Chief Doucette to the Public Safety Committee in March 2014.

### **Question 1: Detail the size of your force, broken out by full time, part time, and volunteers – provide summary rationale for the force size, and command structure**

The department is made up of 45 on-call paid members that include the following:

- 1 Chief
- 2 Deputy Chiefs
- 1 Captain
- 4 Lieutenants
- 37 Firefighters

25 are certified EMT's or Paramedics; remaining staff are Basic First Aid and CPR trained.

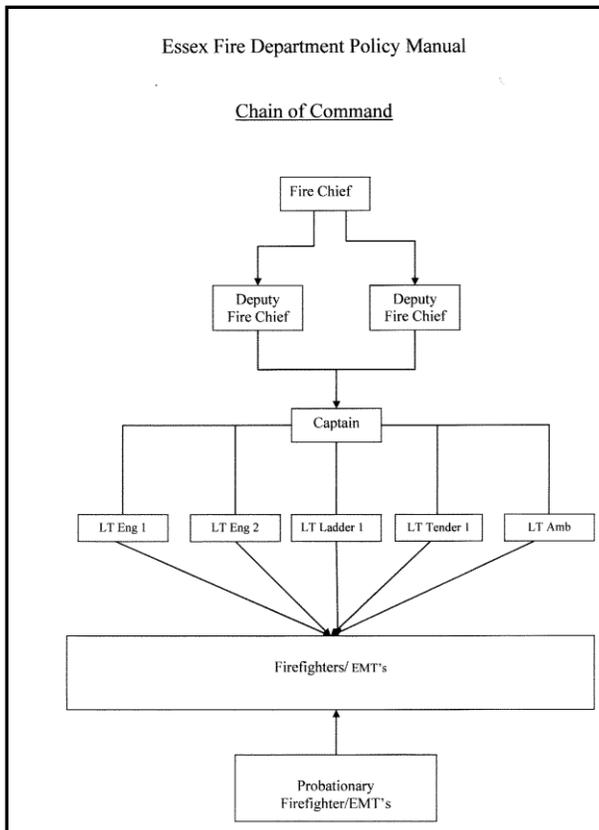
While Firefighter 1 / 2 [National Fire Protection Association exam levels] is not mandated at the department or state, approximately 1/3 [of the force] has completed it. A typical class is 320 hours in length.

High ranking officers are currently elected by members of the Essex Fire Company, while most time promoting the appropriate person the system is antiquated and these position need to be filled based on knowledge and experience of the individual.

Higher ranking Fire officers are required to attend addition NIMS class and participate in department officer meeting. Additional training for Fire Officers would be beneficial, but if required who necessitate some type of compensations. Currently The Captain and Lieutenants area paid by the hour at same rate of Firefighters and do not receive any added compensation for being in the position.

### **Clarifying Question (1): Would you give the rational for the administrative structure currently of the Fire Department?**

The current Fire Department Command structure of 1-Chief, 2 Deputy Chiefs, 1 Captain and 4 Lieutenants has evolved over time and I feel is appropriate for the Department, allowing for a span of control at incidents and emergency scenes. While the number of officers is appropriate, the method for selection of the members of the structure could improve. The Fire Department also has a part-time administrative clerk for 8 hours per week.



**Chief and Deputy Chiefs:**

Currently the Fire Chief and 2-Deputy Chiefs are members of the Board of Engineers appointed by Selectmen and are organized according to Mass General Laws as below:

**Chapter 48: Section 45. Engineers; appointments; removals; vacancies**

Section 45. The selectmen, except as provided in the three preceding sections, may establish a fire department, and thereafter shall annually, in April, appoint a suitable number of engineers, not exceeding twelve, for one year from the following May first, and until others are appointed in their stead; may, for cause, remove an engineer, after seven days' notice to him and a hearing, and shall fill all vacancies.

**Chapter 48: Section 46. Organization of engineers**

Section 46. They shall, immediately after such appointment, notify each of said engineers to meet at a time and place designated. At such meeting the engineers shall choose a chief engineer, a clerk and other necessary officers.

**Chapter 48: Section 47. Engineers; powers and duties**

Section 47. The engineers, in the extinguishment of fires, shall exercise the powers of firewards and, in the nomination and appointment of such firefighters as necessary therefor, shall exercise

the powers and perform the duties of selectmen. They may appoint such men to the engines, hose and hook and ladder carriages, and constitute such companies for securing property endangered by fire, as they deem expedient.

**Chapter 48: Section 52. Board of engineers; duties**

Section 52. The board of engineers shall have the care and superintendence of fire apparatus and related equipment, buildings, fixtures, and equipment and all pumps, reservoirs for water and apparatus owned by the town and used for extinguishing fires and shall cause the same to be kept in repair or renewed and shall make necessary alterations therein and additions thereto at an expense not exceeding \$1,000 in any one year unless the town has authorized a larger appropriation.

The current manner for selecting a chief is out dated and the Town should consider adopting Chapter 48: section 42. If adopted the Chief would then appoint Deputy Chiefs, Other Officers and Firefighter as necessary.

**Chapter 48: Section 42.** Towns accepting the provisions of this section and sections forty-three and forty-four, or which have accepted corresponding provisions of earlier laws may establish a fire department to be under the control of an officer to be known as the chief of the fire department. The chief shall be appointed by the selectmen, and shall receive such salary as the selectmen may from time to time determine, not exceeding in the aggregate the amount annually appropriated therefor. He may be removed for cause by the selectmen at any time after a hearing. He shall have charge of extinguishing fires in the town and the protection of life and property in case of fire. He shall purchase subject to the approval of the selectmen and keep in repair all property and apparatus used for and by the fire department. He shall have and exercise all the powers and discharge all the duties conferred or imposed by statute upon engineers in towns except as herein provided, and shall appoint a deputy chief and such officers and firemen as he may think necessary, and may remove the same at any time for cause and after a hearing. He shall have full and absolute authority in the administration of the department, shall make all rules and regulations for its operation, shall report to the selectmen from time to time as they may require, and shall annually report to the town the condition of the department with his recommendations thereon; he shall fix the compensation of the permanent and call members of the fire department subject to the approval of the selectmen. In the expenditure of money the chief shall be subject to such further limitations as the town may from time to time prescribe. The appointment of the chief of the fire department in any town or district having a population of five thousand or less may be for a period of three years.

**Captain and Lieutenants:**

The Captain and 4 Lieutenants are currently selected by members of the Essex Fire Company that is a non-profit relief association. The membership of the Fire Company consists of all members of the Fire Department Roster with the exception of the Chief and 2- Deputies (Board of Engineers), and they elect their officers which consist of 1-Captain and 5 Lieutenants on a yearly basis in the month of June. The Chief and Board of Engineers has no input on this process currently other than establishing a job descriptions for these positions as in our SOG's (Standard Operating Guidelines).

This system is also antiquated and need to be replaced by a system administrated by the Fire Chief that evaluates the knowledge, experience and qualifications of an individual for these positions.

**Are there separate administrative structures for the Fire and the EMT/ambulance? If yes, what do they currently look like and what would you like them to look like?**

Currently all administrative functions of the Fire and Ambulance Department are handled by the Fire Chief. The two budgets are separate, while the Fire Budget is raised from taxation, the Ambulance budget is self supporting through revenue generated by fees for service. Some of the administrative functions of the Fire Chief include;

- Plans, organizes, directs and evaluates EMS, fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency and rescue programs, and hazardous waste incident management strategies; develops program objectives and establishes strategic plans, goals, and standard operating procedures and guidelines; reviews incident reports to determine that proper procedures and protocols are followed.
- Responsible for all administrative functions of Ambulance service including operations, ambulance service license from Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and adherence to State and/or Federal Laws, regulations and protocols. Also is liaison to contracted billing company to insure proper collection of revenue for services provided.
- Determines resource allocation for personnel equipment, and facility requirements; recommends capital equipment and facility improvements and upgrades; directs the preparation of short and long-term range plans for the Department.
- Oversees preparation and administration of Department budget; responsible for ensuring that budget is effectively managed; regularly monitors the status of the budget and makes/recommends changes regarding expenditures, as necessary.
- Responds to citizen inquires, questions, and complaints.
- Establishes and maintains strong ties to community and civic groups, the school systems, and other municipal departments.
- Responsible for ensuring through subordinate officers and departmental training programs that personnel are provided the appropriate level of training to effectively provide service to Town; monitors quality and evaluates service delivery.
- Interacts with department staff, municipal departments, and other Fire departments, elected and appointed officials, and the public regarding Department goals and programs; provides community and interagency support. Maintains current professional's knowledge through peer association, review of literature, and attendance at meetings, seminars, specialized schools, and continuing education related to duties and responsibilities.
- National Incident Management System (NIMS): Complete required sections to maintain command proficiency and promote use of system consistent with Dept of Homeland Security guidelines.
- Interprets and applies the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws any collective bargaining agreements, and the Town's personnel policies and procedures to Department personnel issues. Plans, monitors, and evaluates the work of subordinates, with significant involvement in decisions relating to hiring, promotion, discipline, or termination of Department employees.

- Submits the annual town report on the Department.
- Responds to major incidents and directs operations, as appropriate.
- Service on the Regional Emergency Communication Committee.
- Serves as Forest Warden.
- Serve as Emergency Management Director

**Question 2: Summarize overall facility space with major attributes (e.g., vehicle storage, # offices, dispatch, change areas, mission specific storage & other)**

Overall our facility is inadequate since a short time after the addition was added to the original 1950's structure in the early 1970's. At the time of the construction the existing building was built for the needs of strictly the Fire Department, with no space allotted for the Police Department. The police Chief at that time told the Town officials that his current office spaces located at the Town hall were sufficient and that the Police Department did not need space in a new building. Within a few years a new Police Chief took the helm of the Police Department and requested his department move into the new building, taking area allotted for current and future Fire Department use.

Current facility lacks the following.

- Adequate garage space and door size to accommodate current vehicles.
- Adequate ramp size in front of garage doors to allow vehicle parking.
- Apparatus maintenance/ wash bay.
- Administrative offices for Chief, Command, EMS and Fire Prevention.
- Records storage room.
- Watch/ radio room.
- Locker room and shower area for both male and female Fire Personnel to decontaminate following a medical or fire call if needed.
- Day room
- Training room with A/V
- Fitness/ workout room.
- In house laundry for washing of uniforms and clothing.
- Washer/extractor and gear dryer for cleaning of contaminated Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Ventilated area for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Storage.
- SCBA Maintenance area.
- SCBA Compressor room.
- Equipment wash/ disinfection area.
- Equipment maintenance area.
- Dormitory or sleeping area for instances when personnel on-duty for storms.
- Equipment storage, i.e. hose, hand tools and loose equipment.
- Medical Equipment storage area.

- Fire alarm System
- Sprinkler system.
- Central HVAC.
- Computer server room.
- Adequate Parking for responding personnel.

**Question 3: List your department’s major mission, apparatus used to conduct your mission, and provide summary rationale**

The primary mission of the Essex Fire Department is to provide a range of programs designed to protect the lives and property of the citizens of the town of Essex from the effects of fires, medical emergencies or exposure to dangerous conditions created by either man or nature.

Current Fire Department apparatus;

- 2- Pumpers- 1250 gallon per minute pumps, carries a crew on 5 FF’s, 1000 gallon of water, 1000 feet of 4” supply line and various hand tools.
- 1-Aerial Ladder truck- 1500 gallon per minute pump, carries a crew on 5 FF’s, 300 gallons of water, 500 feet of 4” supply line, gas powered saws and fans.
- 1- Tanker/ Tender- 1250 gallon per minute pumps, carries a crew on 5 FF’s, 2250 gallon of water, 800 feet of 4” supply line and various hand tools.
- 1-Forestry/ Squad- 500 gallon per minutes pump, 320 gallons of water, floating and portable pumps.
- 2- Transporting BLS Ambulances.
- 1- 18 foot aluminum boat

**Current apparatus response guidelines**

| Incident Type  | Red Denotes automatic response,<br>Yellow if needed.                          |          |          |              |                      |               |
|--|---|----------|----------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|
|  | AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARMS/<br>STRUCTURE FIRES/ ODOR OF<br>GAS OR LEAK IN BUILDING | ENGINE 2 | LADDER 1 | ENGINE 1     | TANKER               | RESCUE 1      |
| AUTOMATIC FIRE ALARMS/<br>STRUCTURE FIRES/ ODOR OF<br>GAS OR LEAK IN BUILDING<br>OUTSIDE HYDRANT WATER<br>SUPPLY | ENGINE 2  | LADDER 1 | TANKER   | ENGINE<br>1  | RESCUE 1             | MUTUAL<br>AID |
| CARBON MONOXIDE CALLS  | ENGINE 2  | RESCUE 1 | LADDER 1 |              |                      |               |
| HELICOPTER LANDING ZONE<br>OPERATIONS  | ENGINE 1  | SQUAD 1  |          |              |                      |               |
| HAZARDDOUS MATERIAL<br>INCIDENTS   | ENGINE 2  | RESCUE 1 | LADDER 1 | OIL<br>SPILL | DISTRICT 6<br>HAZMAT | DECON<br>UNIT |

|  |                    |          |          |                      |  |  |
|--|--------------------|----------|----------|----------------------|--|--|
|  |                    |          |          | TRAILER              |  |  |
| INVESTIGATIONS/ ODOR OF GAS OUTSIDE / WIRE DOWN/ LOCK OUTS | ENGINE 2           | LADDER 1 | RESCUE 1 |                      |  |  |
| MEDICAL AIDS   | RESCUE 1           | RESCUE 2 |          |                      |  |  |
| MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES                                      | RESCUE 1           | ENGINE 2 | RESCUE 2 |                      |  |  |
| MOTOR VEHICLE FIRES  | ENGINE 2           | TANKER   |          |                      |  |  |
| MUTUAL AID OR LINE BOX REQUEST FOR ENGINE                  | ENGINE 1           |          |          |                      |  |  |
| MUTUAL AID REQUEST FOR LADDER                              | LADDER 1           |          |          |                      |  |  |
| OUTSIDE FIRES  | ENGINE 2           | TANKER   | SQUAD 1  |                      |  |  |
| WATER RELATED INCIDENT OR ICE RESCUE                       | RESCUE 2 WITH BOAT | RESCUE 1 | ENGINE 2 | BEVERLY FD DIVE TEAM | *HAMILTON NOTIFIED IF ON CHEBACCO LAKE |  |
| WOODS OR BRUSH   | SQUAD 1            | TANKER   | ENGINE 1 |                      |  |  |

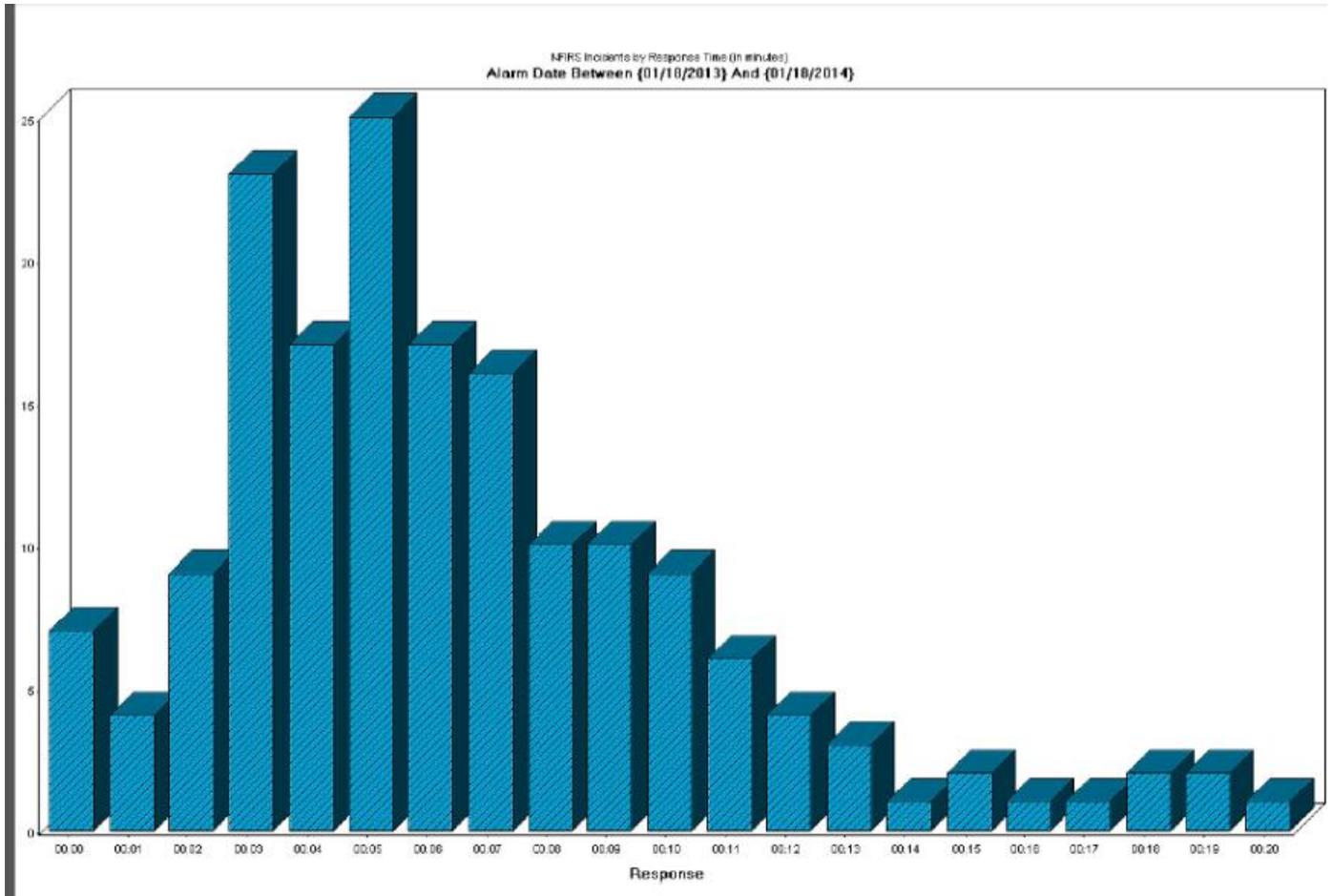
The current apparatus is sufficient for the mission of the Essex Fire Department with the exception of a needed Fire Command vehicle.

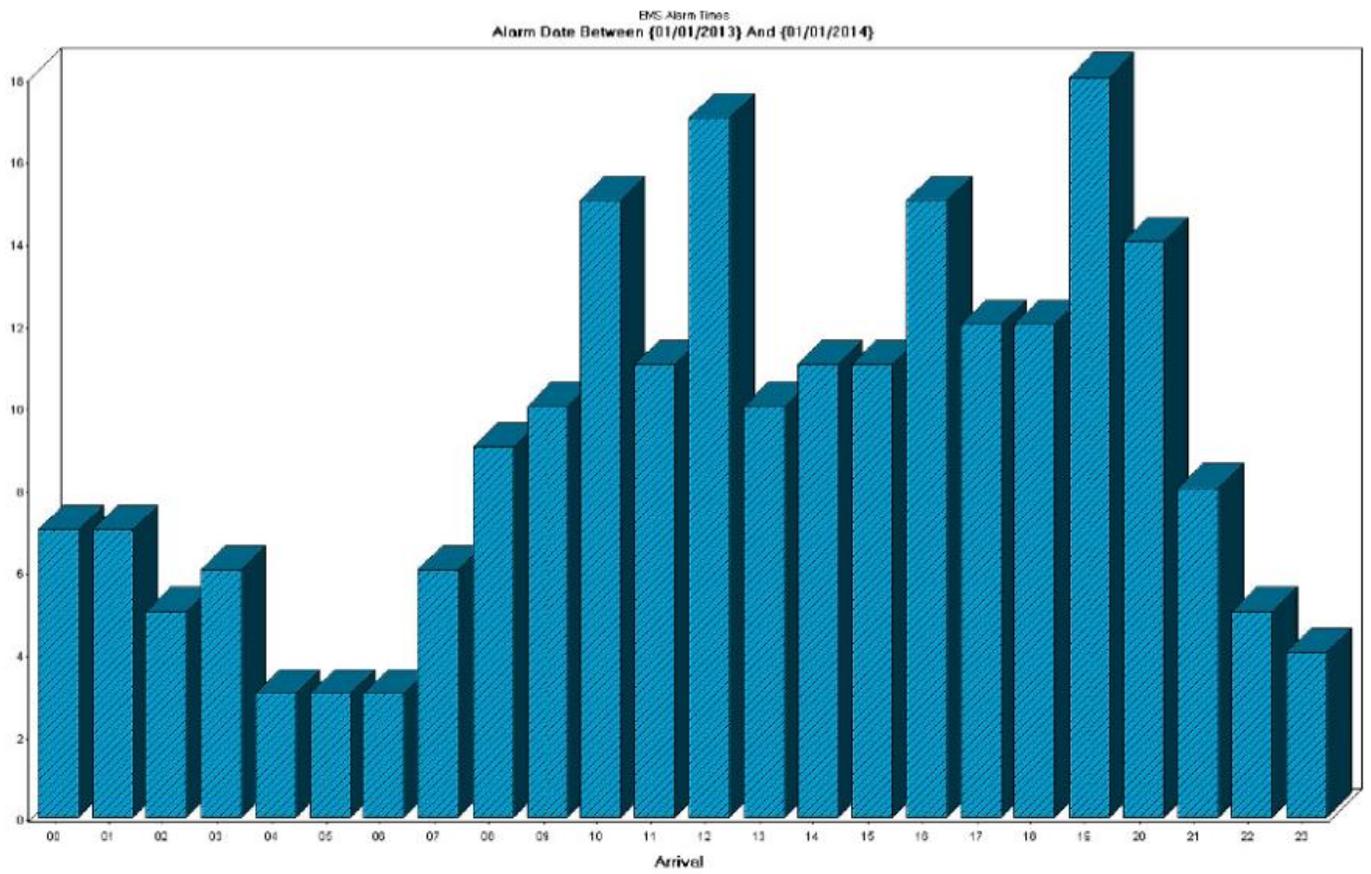
**Question 4. Describe you community outreach programs / initiatives**

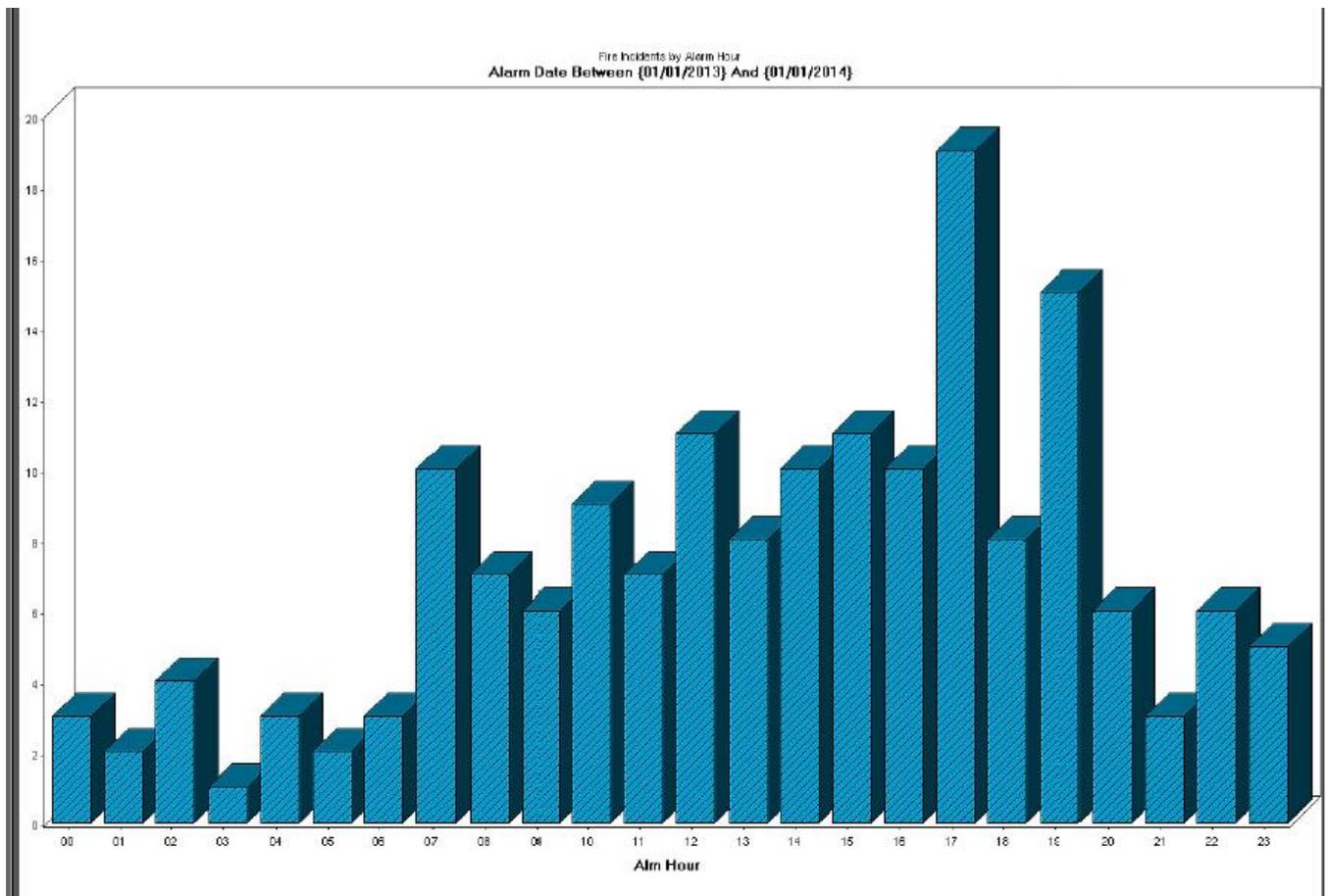
The Essex Fire Department has been involved in the following community outreach programs which had allowed us to interact and inform the public of our mission and the personnel that makes up our department. Often this is our opportunity to educate the public on the make-up of the department and the way we do business.

- Fire prevention Open House.
- Annual Spaghetti Dinner.
- Essex Elementary Health Fair.
- Essex Elementary and Little Sprout’s Pre-school fire safety visits/ education.
- School visits to Fire Station.
- Participation in annual Turkey Trot, Happy as a Clam and Essex Youth Triathlon road races.
- Fire equipment demonstrations during Essex Clamfest
- Senior Education for TRIAD
- Coordinate and provide personnel/ apparatus for Essex River Day Bon-fire.

**Clarifying Question: Would you please break down the Alarm Data (total calls by hour) you provided the committee in to Fire calls per hour of the day and EMT/Ambulance calls per hour of the day.**







**Clarifying Question: Would you please detail the number of times during the past five years that you have needed to decontaminate the PPE and how that has been done.**

I cannot give you a number of times that an individual had to decontaminate their PPE, this is not an item tracked in our reporting software. Anytime someone is in a hazardous environment or has a potential blood born pathogen exposure during patient care, needs to have their gear cleaned and clothing in an effort to avoid off gassing or cross contamination. Currently firefighters may use a hose or travel to Manchester Fire to use their washer/ extractor. Having facilities such of these is an accepted standard.

**Clarifying Question: Would you please give us information of the average numbers of individuals who respond to fire calls and the number of individuals who respond to EMT/ambulance calls. Do these numbers vary by time of day?**

*[Committee note: Update not available]*

**Clarifying Question: Would you please explain to the Committee the average response time for a fire call and the average response time for an EMT/ambulance call and if it varies depending upon time of day.**

*[Committee note: Update not available]*

**Question 5. List the top three (or more) things you most like about your current operation, and the top three (or more) needs improvement – provide summary rationale**

**Most liked things:**

- Our apparatus and equipment are in good shape and currently adequate for our mission. Over the years the Town has been very supportive of our needs and we have tried to maintain our apparatus and equipment as best we can to increase its longevity.
- The transition to the Essex County Regional Dispatch has been relatively smooth and we have seen in an improvement in the quality of service. Further changes in the future will only help the overall operation of the Fire Department.
- The current Officers and Firefighters of the Fire Department are an extremely dedicated group, who are always willing to go the extra mile and to do what is needed, often when not the best of circumstances and conditions.

**Things that need improvement:**

- Need daytime coverage to supplement the on-call system. Would like to see daytime staffing of at least 2 personnel (Chief and 1- part-time Firefighter/ EMT) to insure responses during times when limited call personnel are available. While we continue to have interest from individual to join the Fire Department, most have jobs out of town. This includes creating the full-time position of Fire Chief and budgeting for the part-time hours required.
- Facilities need to be replaced as per section 2 above, in an effort to better protect the citizens and the Firefighters of the Department.
- Fire Prevention activities of the Fire Department including;
  - Quarterly building/ business inspection.
  - Hazardous Material processing permitting/ compliance.
  - Pre-fire planning.
- Public education/ outreach to groups that meet during weekday which is currently difficult due to lack of daytime staffing.
- Fire Department training. Make efforts to better plan, schedule, and the use qualified instructors for training.
- Look to improve level of care of our Basic Life Support ambulance service. This may be done by either upgrading to the Advance Life Support (paramedic level) on our own or entering into a partnership with another community such as Manchester Fire.

**Clarifying Question: Would you please expand upon the last two bullets of #5, training and lack of qualified instructors?**

Fire Department training can be improved by better planning, scheduling and used individuals who are qualified or have expertise. While I think our training has improved, it still could be better. This could be better accomplished by a full-time Fire Chief, with the time and resources to organize and schedule training. Not sure where lack of qualified instructor came from. Cost associated may include and increase in budget for cost of instructors and staff hours.

**Clarifying Question: Please explain the differences between Basic Life Support ambulance service and Advance Life Support and the cost to make that happen?**

Our current licensure is as a Basic Life Support Ambulance service providing basic life support. An Advanced Life Support service utilizes Paramedics who are trained in advanced airway, IV therapy, EKG's and medication administration. Currently we utilize a private provider who bills for service when we utilize them.

Capital cost for such a venture would be initial startup up cost of cardiac monitor, gear bags and other loose equipment that could be covered from revenues generated by fees for service. Ambulance Budget line items would have to be increased to cover a higher Paramedic pay rate and additional training hours. Currently we have 5 Paramedics on our roster and one in school. The increase in the budget line item should be recouped by our ability to bill for the advanced level service.

## Part 2 - Condition of Current Facility, based on Feasibility and Cost Study Replacement of Municipal Buildings, April 2012

The intent of the *Feasibility and Cost Study Replacement of Municipal Buildings* was to identify the most advantageous solution to the Town's long-term Municipal Facility needs. The detailed recommendations of the study have been intentionally removed, as they were not the purpose of this section.

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Town of Essex Public Safety Building is comprised of a two-story, low slope roof, exterior concrete block bearing walls, pre-stressed concrete floor and roof plank framing system, see the pictures below. The building was built in 1950, has a total of approximately 7,880 sq. ft. and is located at 24 Martin Street, Essex, MA. The footprint of the existing Public Safety building is approximately 2,970 square feet with a total existing building area of approximately 4,630 square feet.



**Public Safety Facility: Aerial, Front and Rear Views**

The facility contains the Police headquarters, which has a minimally secure entry Lobby, Dispatch/ Communications room, and Administration area, Chief's office on the upper level and a small storage area on the Lower level.

The Fire department has a three-bay Apparatus room, housing two fire trucks and an emergency vehicle on the Upper grade level. Available circulation space around the apparatus is narrow and unsafe during a call. The Fire Chief's office and Training room/Kitchen are located on the upper level with a common corridor connecting the two departments and small men's and women's restrooms.

The Lower level has a one bay, not very tall, Apparatus room, housing two fire trucks, a rescue vehicle and a rescue boat. A rear addition provides storage for an antique fire fighting vehicle. The Lower level also includes a hose tower, storage space, a boiler room, and men's and women's toilet/locker rooms.

The site slopes sharply to the rear, with the Upper level apparatus apron fronting Martin Street and the West side apparatus apron accessing a side driveway. Parking is limited to spaces along the West side of the building sloping to the rear, and parking is farther to the rear of the building. A single handicapped space is available adjacent to the main entry and accessible ramp.

RAI Architects and Engineers reviewed available documentation and drawings of the existing Public Safety building and Town Hall and Library building and visited each facility to review current building conditions and identify observed deficiencies. RAI staff included My-Ron Hatchett, A.I.A., Architect; Paul Babin, PE Electrical Engineer; and Russell Stephens Mechanical and Fire Protection Designer. Their on-site investigations and observations are detailed within this Study for each building. Observations concentrated on building conditions affecting the continued use or adaptive reuse of the building.

These conditions include but are not limited to the physical conditions of building materials and building systems, age and lifecycle of building components, integrity of the elements of the building envelope (walls, roof, windows...), energy performance of existing construction and systems, adaptability to renovations, code criteria for repairs, alterations/ renovations and additions, and other observations impacting possible repair or renovation expenses.

The following Existing Conditions Report is provided of the existing Police/ Fire Public Safety building at 24 Martin Street. A later report in this Study will document the existing conditions of the Town Offices/ Library structure.

#### **EXISTING CONDITIONS:**

The Police facility occupies a small portion of the Public Safety building. The Administration area is overcrowded and lacks any storage facilities or privacy. The Dispatch area is tight, and the Chief's office is small and very cramped. The police are able to share the Fire Department's multi-purpose room for training, which doesn't allow for any privacy when other functions take place. The upper level Apparatus room appears to be suffering from previous settlement resulting in cracks in the floor and walls. The Basement or lower level has a continuing water infiltration problem, as reported by the occupants, for some time. An exterior drainage project a few years ago may have helped alleviate the problem, yet the results of continued water infiltration have left damage to the interior and the possibility of mold. The occupants have reported the indoor air quality in the building is poor and the building has no mechanical ventilation system to alleviate this condition. The building has metal casement replacement windows, some windows do not close properly allowing air infiltration and dust to accumulate in the interior. This condition contributes to very poor indoor comfort.

The building has a low slope Carlisle EPDM membrane roof. Examination of the roof reveals standing water over the Administration office where there are active roof leaks. The roof has one roof drain that does not fully drain the roof because the roof does not pitch to the drain. Some of the membrane seams are starting to loosen and delaminate. The age of the roof could not be determined from available information, yet the overall condition of the roof is less than satisfactory. The lower rear roof is in poor condition, appears saturated with water and is covered with moss and mildew.

Some portions of the exterior masonry and concrete walls have experienced some spalling, water intrusion, and missing mortar joints. The building is of single wythe masonry block construction (12" thick) that may lack much, if any, insulation. There is no indication of weep holes at the bottom of the walls to let out moisture that builds up in the cavity. This moisture can migrate to the interior and also cause failure of the mortar joints.

The facility has an exterior accessible ramp, though the building does not have public accessible

toilets, signage or door hardware. The interior finishes are old and worn due to age and long-term use. As mentioned above, water damage has occurred to some interior finishes.

**ASSESSMENT:**

The roof is in need of replacement and a re-design to add a roof drain and to pitch the storm water to the drains. The rear low roof should be replaced in its entirety to get rid of the moss and mildew and replace any damaged roof decking. The exterior masonry walls should receive re-pointing work to seal the missing mortar joints and cracked stucco. The spalling masonry and concrete need to be repaired to reduce further deterioration. The cracked interior walls and floor should also be re-pointed and repaired.

The interior finishes should all be repaired, updated and refreshed to transform and brighten its appearance. Any future renovation work will require a Hazardous Material assessment of the building to identify existing potential hazardous materials and to ensure the safety of the workers involved. Full accessibility compliance will need to be implemented and corrected if the work performed is 30% or more of the full and fair value of the building. Probable accessibility improvements would be extensive and involve exterior ramp, elevator access of the several levels, handicap accessible restrooms, lever door hardware, all doorways do not have required clearances, public counter does not have an accessible area, and signage is not compliant.

Possible future renovations may also enact new automatic fire suppression/ sprinkler requirements and associated retrofitting costs if the value of the renovations exceed one-third of the building's value. The proposed repairs to the building have been reviewed within the provisions of Chapter 34 of the MA Building Code (780 CMR), the International Existing Building Code (IEBC) 2009 and MA Amendments to the IEBC. The primary code features and impacts to the proposed repair are as follows:

The method of determining compliance with the existing building code shall be either the Prescriptive Compliance Method (Chapter 3) or the Work Area Compliance Method (Chapters 4-12).

The Prescriptive Method requires alterations to comply with the requirements of the code for new construction. An alteration is defined as any construction or renovation of an existing structure that is not defined as either a repair or addition. Generally, only those building areas or components that are altered have to be design/ built to meet current code requirements for new facilities.

Prescriptive Method requires limited review of structural impact of proposed work/ alterations. Our review indicates the gravity and lateral carrying structural elements of the building may not to be altered by the proposed repairs. Any future building addition or more substantial renovations would directly affect the gravity and lateral carrying ability of the building requiring structural modifications to the building. Structural modifications may be significant based on the Police/ Fire occupancy and this code mandated essential use/ category of a Police/ Fire building.

The Work Area Compliance Method is another option to achieve code compliance for changes to an existing building. This method consists of categorizing varying degrees of work from ordinary repairs to more extensive work characterized by three levels of possible work scope as follows:

- Repairs would include all proposed on-site roofing, masonry, and window repairs and

shall comply with the repair provisions of IEBC Chapter 5.

- Level 1 Alterations would include the removal and replacement or the covering of existing materials, elements, equipment or fixtures using new materials, elements, equipment, or fixtures that serve the same purpose. Level 1 alterations include all new proposed replacement materials/ systems (roofing, windows, etc.) and shall comply with of the code for new construction.
- Level 2 Alterations would include the reconfiguration of space, the addition or elimination of any wall, door or window, the reconfiguration or extension of any system, or the installation of any additional equipment. Level 2 alterations are probable in even minor renovations and enact additional structural review and improvements of the building structural life safety systems.
- Level 3 Alterations apply where the overall area of work or renovations exceeds 50 percent of the aggregate area of the building. Reconfigured spaces may be probable in the project scope. Therefore Level 3 alterations may apply to the proposed project scope and would require full compliance of the building to the code for new construction or as-if the original building were to be rebuilt to today's code requirements. Compliance with Level 3 requirements is likely to greatly increase renovation costs.

Based on above additional code criteria it would be less restrictive to apply the Prescriptive Method of code compliance for any proposed repairs or alterations. Any proposed addition though would need to comply with the MA Building Code for new construction.

The following pages provide a photographic documentation of the existing conditions, with some additional textual description.



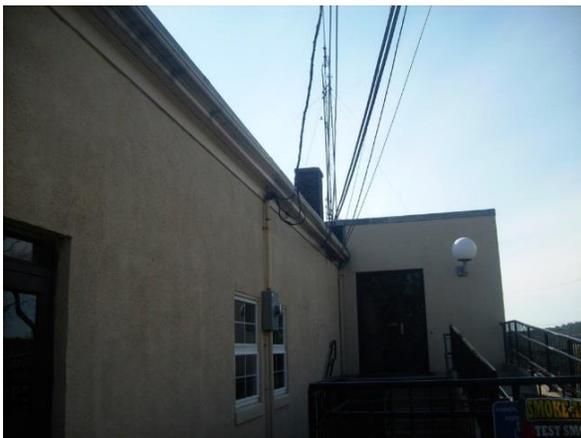
**Police Dispatch and Administration**



**Training Room and Training Room Kitchen**



**Upper and Lower Apparatus**



**Main Service Entrance and Poor Existing Wiring Standards**

## **ELECTRICAL SERVICE AND DISTRIBUTION:**

The Police Station is fed by a 200A 120/240V single phase service. The distribution system comprises of several small panels fed from the main 200A panel. The facility is back-up by a 35KW Kohler generator. The existing wiring methods consist of mainly surface mounted conduit and metal clad cables. A minimum of power outlets are available and many work stations are serviced by extension cords. Many of the outlets are surface mounted. The 911 outlets are identified and are in a quad configuration.

## **LIGHTING:**

The majority of the lighting consists of surface mounted two lamp florescent fixtures. The lamping consists of T12 technology. The meeting room/kitchen is equipped with recessed parabolic. The upper apparatus bay is illuminated with recessed prismatic 2 X 4 fixtures, while the lower bay is illuminated with pendant and surface mounted industrial type fixtures. Many of the lenses are missing and/or in disrepair. Some areas have incandescent fixtures with some lenses missing. Emergency/egress lighting consists of battery packs, illuminated exit signs, and remote heads.



**Obsolescent/ Broken Lighting and Inadequate Electrical Power Receptacles, Loose Wiring**

## **FIRE ALARM:**

There appears to be no formal fire alarm system in the building. There is no Ansul system for the hood in the kitchen.

## **TELECOMMUNICATION/CCTV:**

Telecommunications are not housed in any formal MDF (Main Distribution Frame) or IDF (Intermediate Distribution Frame) rooms. Telecommunications are housed in the Dispatch Offices and the 911 equipment is installed in its own closet (since removed / not used as the service is not provided as regionalized with Middleton). Servers and other equipment share circuits with other equipment. Air conditioning for telecommunication equipment is accomplished by wall mounted standalone air conditioner. There is no dedicated AC unit for the 911 equipment closet. Tel/Data

cable is run either above drop ceiling or surface on existing block walls. Many of the Tel/data outlets are surface mounted.



**Unprotected Communications Equipment**

## **ELECTRICAL DEFICIENCIES**

This section describes the deficiencies with the existing electrical systems.

### **SERVICE AND DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS:**

The service is inadequate for existing loads. The service is equivalent to a large residential service. The present system has neither the capacity nor the spare circuitry to accommodate any renovation or addition to the facility. There have been several instances of overloaded circuits and outages. The service should be relocated and a three phase service installed. The present location will not meet the required clearances per Massachusetts Electrical Code. The 911 equipment is sandwiched into a closet that would not meet any of the present clearance requirements. The power supplied to the 911 equipment is minimal and should be upgrade to incorporate any renovations to the dispatch and applicable areas. The building has experience water damage and several electrical circuits may have been compromise. These circuits should be tested and/or replace if any renovation or additions are implemented.

The facility is limited in the amount of outlets to isolate equipment and areas. Isolation is needed to eliminate the nuisance tripping of circuits in one department that may affect other departments. Additional outlets should be added to eliminate the need for extensive amount of extension cords.

### **LIGHTING:**

Most of the lighting is inadequate. The present lighting is energy inefficient and would not comply with the present energy codes or the Massachusetts Stretch Code. The missing lenses or the bare lamp strip fixtures present a hazard by having exposed lamps subject to breakage above working areas. The quality of light and levels does not meet the present Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) lighting quality levels. Some interior fixtures show sign of water damage and degradation of lighting output. The interior lighting should be totally replaced if any significant

renovations are performed. The exterior lighting should be replaced with more efficient type fixtures such as Led type which may qualify for utility incentives.



#### **Apparatus Bay Lighting Poor Emergency Lighting**

Emergency/egress lighting may not comply with the present NFPA 101 Life Safety Code standards and should be supplemented with newer LED type fixtures as well as adding additional exit lights where required. The egress lighting needs to be measured with light meter to assure proper levels are met. Additional battery packs will be needed since the present system appears to have some areas which are not covered to the proper level. The facility seems to be lacking in exterior egress lighting. Exterior egress paths will have to be upgraded to meet the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code lighting levels.

#### **FIRE ALARM:**

An Ansul system needs to be added to the kitchen hood. A fire alarm system should be installed to protect valuable equipment and personnel.

#### **TELECOMMUNICATION/CCTV:**

The telecommunication systems should be upgraded to meet the demands of any renovation. The present system does not comply with the Electronic Industries Alliances (EIA)/Telecommunication Industry Association (TIA) standards which should be met as a result of any renovation. The present system is not equipped with the proper grounding system as prescribed in the standards mentioned above. The cables are not supported properly as describe in the Massachusetts Electrical Code. Proper MDF and IDF rooms should be established to protect the equipment, to include the 911 equipment. Additional telecommunication drops are needed to eliminate the need for draping cables across the floor and walls.

Training room is not equipped for multi-media provision to support training requirements necessary for certificate training. Additional power and Tel/Data drops should be installed to support any additions or renovations to the space.



**Training / Meeting Room**

Radio antenna and associated cabling should be rerouted and supported properly to protect personnel from hazards associated with standing water on the roof.



**Roof Top Antenna and Cabling**

**EXISTING ELECTRICAL CODE ISSUES:**

Egress lighting to be verified and upgraded as needed to meet NFPA 101 Life Safety requirements.

**ELECTRICAL CODE OR STANDARDS AS A RESULT OF A RENOVATION:**

- Clearance and panel space for distribution panels (527 CMR 12,

Massachusetts Electrical Code) MDF and IDF rooms for telecommunications

- Proper support for power and Tel/Data cables Fire Alarm system
- Lighting upgrades
- Grounding upgrades for both power and telecommunications

**ELECTRICAL RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Additional power outlets and circuitry installed to eliminate extension cords and provide necessary isolation. Exterior lighting upgrades.
- Upgrade Tel/Data.
- Upgrade service and panels. Egress lighting upgrades.

**Part 3 – Regionalized Services**

The town of Essex has modernized its public safety communication and booking operations by becoming a member of the Essex County 911 dispatch center and through the use of the new suspect intake, booking center located at the Essex County Jail. These moves have provided Essex with major financial savings, reduced the community’s potential liability and given them highly professional, 24 hour, well supervised state-of-the-art facilities to enhance their ability to provide the necessary services to the citizens of Essex, now and into the distant future.

The Booking center at the Essex County Correctional Center provides professional lockup services which have eliminated the need for the law enforcement department to contract with Manchester and will save the town a significant amount of money. The new lockup will reduce the need for any type of overnight cells in a law enforcement or public safety facility only requiring a single, small, very temporary holding cell at the most.

Additional regionalization of services has been incorporated in both the fire department and the law enforcement department. The fire department is a member of the regional fire response system which will provide additional response from area fire departments if necessary. The law enforcement agency is a member of regional task forces and also benefits from the State Police agency major crime investigations.

**Part 4 - Assessment by the independent auditors:**

This section presents important audits by independent experts. First, the Police Department audit was conducted by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Program (MPAP) concurrent with this report. Following the MPAP discussion, is a summary of the report by the Essex County Fire Chiefs Association.

The Massachusetts Police Accreditation Program is a 501 C3 non-profit organization. It is not a state or federal organization. The program is designed to encourage and assist police departments in achieving

the professional standards that are set by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission (MPAC). The MPAC is a state agency which sets the standards by which all police forces must meet, and abide by. The MPAP helps and directs local police forces to meet the standard which helps to reduce law enforcement liability scenarios through consistent policy as well as make sure the local police department meets and conforms to state (MPAC) requirements.

The town of Essex has applied for and completed MPAP certification.

It is the expectation of the Essex Police that MPAP will continue to advise and help them adhere to procedures, protocol, record-keeping, equipment, facility, and operational standards that are set by the state and need to be met to be certified (MPAP lists deficiencies, after the final assessment, that the Department should fix before certification is granted).

Mock tests were conducted prior to final certification. The mock test is when members of MPAP are sent to review the finished application and check the application against actual operations of the police department being reviewed. Essex has had a mock assessment done. The MPAP sent down three teams, the police captain from Salem, an officer and the chief from Wenham and a lieutenant and an officer from Hamilton to do the mock review for Essex. The Police department has been given waivers for certain items discussed below. The waived items are what we should, and have been, focused on.

An example of the mock process is as follows: The town of Essex filled out a report on how all of their police cruisers are maintained and equipped. The interviewers inspected the cruisers for such things as lights, sirens, barriers, etc., which have to meet state standards. Essex failed on their inspection. Why they failed is that even though they have a disable button for windows and doors, they do not have break bars across all Windows. The police force will now equip all of their vehicles, going forward, with break bars on their windows. (The above is to serve as an example of how the process works.)

Once the town of Essex has finished correcting any issues brought up in the mock examination, the Essex Police re-contacts MPAP and asks for a final review. The Executive Director, Donna T Mooers, will then put together a group of testers and she and the testers will come down for the final assessment.

Essex has received waivers on issues such as for temporary lockup – permanent lockup facilities, animal handling, storage and auxiliary Police.

As part of the follow up on the above, committee representation has talked with Director Mooers, as well as meeting with the Chief and Officer Francis (in charge of the MPAP application). Timing of Essex's final assessment by MPAP was March 2015.

Once the assessment was completed and the Essex Police met all 159 of the state standards then the Essex Police Department was issued a certificate of completion.

The Committee congratulates the Essex Police on attaining certification. And the issues on which the Police Department has been granted waivers, or that the MPAP does not cover (such as present staffing, staffing requirements in the future, space and facility needs, shared services, plus the potential for outsourcing e.g., lock up/call center etc.) have been addressed by the Committee. The MPAP program is set up to be a self-correcting process, and if followed up on by the Police Department, then they will be compliant with MPAC requirements. We recommend, now that MPAP is completed, that the selectmen

review the report so they have a more in depth understanding of state guidelines, MPAC, versus the MPAP report and if the Police Department meets both of them.

## **Fire Department Operations: Results of Essex County Fire Chiefs Association (ECFCA) Assessment**

The Essex County Fire Chiefs Association (ECFCA) reviewed Fire Department operations, equipment, facility, and management/administrative functions, for adequacy both in the present day and into the future, in its report dated September 2014. ECFCA identified the legal and industry standards for firefighting procedures, equipment, job performance requirements, and safety from the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), OSHA, and the Massachusetts General Laws and visited the department several times.

It is important to note that the Department, and ultimately the Committee, did not agree with all of the ECFCA's recommendations. The Committee concurs with the following key findings of the ECFCA:

- Force structure. Coverage at the station is now minimal, including weekday daytime and weekends. The Department is meeting manning and response time criteria for both fire and ambulance calls, but is falling short on fire inspections. ECFCA analyzed a range of manning alternatives, and recommended a staffing level with two firefighter/EMTs from 7 AM to 5 PM (possibly including a full-time chief), with a primary function of manning the ambulance.
- Personnel performance. EFD has low training attendance and fire response criteria for call firefighters compared to those of other towns. ECFCA felt that these result in some skills, qualifications and performance deficiencies and recommended strengthening these criteria; however, they did not identify specific deficiencies.
- Hiring and promotion criteria. ECFCA recommended several improvements:
  - 1) More rigorous hiring process with regard to background checks and physical, medical and psychological testing.
  - 2) A clear cut procedure for promotion of a probationary firefighter to regular firefighter.
  - 3) Improved use of drill and response requirements as an element of promotion criteria.
  - 4) Adoption of a formal promotion procedure for Lieutenant, Captain, and Deputy Chief.
  - 5) Implementation of a professional development plan for EFD officers.
- Equipment. The Department meets applicable standards at this time. ECFCA made several recommendations regarding inspection, maintenance and replacement schedules. ECFCA identified a procedural deficiency in regard to cleaning contaminated personal protective gear and carrying gear in private vehicles, stemming from the station's lack of industrial washer and dryer, and lack of storage capacity for the gear.
- Fire station. ECFCA identified 28 specific deficiencies in the existing station and is skeptical on the question of its possible reuse and upgrade, mainly due to the small size of the building.

They identified eight deficiencies that the new building design by Reinhart Associates does not address.

- Administration. ECFCA noted that records are now electronically managed by the regional dispatch service, but pointed out that training records are inadequate, and recommended improved software and physical storage space.
- Ambulance service. ECFCA ruled out private ambulance service as cost prohibitive at the current call volume level and recommended increased daytime staffing at the station to man the ambulance more effectively. Advanced life support (ALS) service is currently provided by outside services, and ECFCA recommended consideration of in-house ALS service (paramedics required), without identifying other requirements or the likely expense of doing so.

## IV. Comparison to Neighboring Towns

This section contains information and analysis of Essex Demographics and Public Safety budgets, and compares that to neighboring towns.

### Population Growth Analysis

The Committee examined the projected growth of the Town of Essex through the year 2035. The table below, from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) MetroFuture 2035 Update (March 8, 2011) was our primary reference (and this MAPC reference closely paralleled other sources). The data below shows that the town's population is expected to grow by roughly 5%, from about 3,400 people today, to 3,567 in 2035. Certainly this does not mean that public safety needs will not change over the next 20+ years, but it does imply that population growth is not likely to be a major factor.

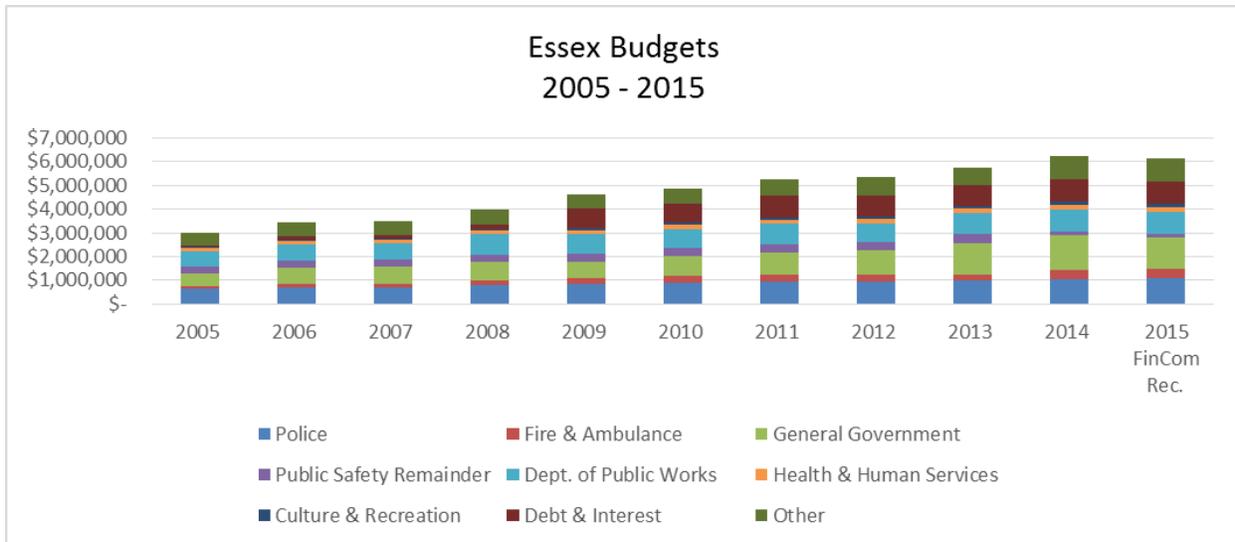
| Municipality         | Age Range | 1990         | 2000         | 2010         | 2020         | 2030         | 2035         |
|----------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Essex                | 00-04     | 207          | 181          | 220          | 236          | 245          | 246          |
| Essex                | 05-09     | 210          | 233          | 182          | 167          | 173          | 175          |
| Essex                | 10-14     | 198          | 242          | 266          | 249          | 258          | 261          |
| Essex                | 15-19     | 198          | 189          | 228          | 210          | 196          | 197          |
| Essex                | 20-24     | 175          | 119          | 115          | 110          | 95           | 94           |
| Essex                | 25-29     | 266          | 159          | 84           | 83           | 65           | 61           |
| Essex                | 30-34     | 311          | 202          | 121          | 130          | 116          | 110          |
| Essex                | 35-39     | 304          | 299          | 241          | 234          | 270          | 279          |
| Essex                | 40-44     | 335          | 322          | 277          | 215          | 247          | 261          |
| Essex                | 45-49     | 216          | 292          | 377          | 300          | 286          | 286          |
| Essex                | 50-54     | 136          | 297          | 402          | 400          | 324          | 297          |
| Essex                | 55-59     | 134          | 169          | 212          | 263          | 238          | 212          |
| Essex                | 60-64     | 156          | 120          | 135          | 153          | 131          | 127          |
| Essex                | 65-69     | 148          | 116          | 134          | 187          | 215          | 230          |
| Essex                | 70-74     | 107          | 122          | 125          | 211          | 265          | 284          |
| Essex                | 75-79     | 89           | 112          | 107          | 144          | 206          | 229          |
| Essex                | 80-85     | 44           | 53           | 76           | 74           | 122          | 142          |
| Essex                | 85+       | 26           | 40           | 57           | 60           | 69           | 76           |
| <b>Total by Year</b> |           | <b>3,260</b> | <b>3,267</b> | <b>3,359</b> | <b>3,428</b> | <b>3,520</b> | <b>3,567</b> |

Change in Essex Population: 1990 – 2035

(Source <http://www.mapc.org/data-services/available-data/projections>)

### Budgetary Comparison

Before comparing Essex Public Services to those of neighboring towns, it is interesting to understand how the Town's department budgets have changed over time, particularly those of the focus of this report – Police and Fire (including ambulance). The plot on the following page presents this information. Note that the school operating budget is not included as it would dilute the comparison of the department changes to the overall budget change. Nor are Enterprise Funds included. However, the debt payment for the regionalized school is included as a major component of the overall Town Debt.



**Essex Departmental Budgets over the past ten years; showing about a 100% increase over the 10 year period; the largest percentage by far are in Debt & Interest (over 2,500%), followed by General Gov't (145%)**

In summary, the budgets analyzed have increased by just over 100% over the past 10 years, from \$3M in 2005 to just over \$6M in 2015. Of that, the largest five components and their corresponding changes are listed below:

|                          | <u>2005</u> | <u>2015</u> | <u>\$ Change</u> | <u>% Change</u> |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-----------------|
| - General Gov't:         | \$550K      | \$1,347K    | \$797K           | 145%            |
| - Police:                | \$650K      | \$1,098K    | \$448K           | 69%             |
| - Other:                 | \$550K      | \$1,015K    | \$464K           | 84%             |
| - Debt & Interest:       | \$ 35K      | \$ 937K     | \$903K           | 2,583%          |
| - Dept. of Public Works: | \$650K      | \$ 911K     | \$260K           | 40.1%           |

In the General Gov't budget, the largest components are Legal – Town Counsel, Treasurer/Collector, Town Administrator, and Town Property; where Town Property and Legal have seen the greatest percentage increases.

The Police budget has grown approximately 70% over the past ten years, an average increase of 7% per year.

The “Other” budget, consisting of Retirement Assessment, Worker’s Comp., Unemployment and Group Insurance, as well as FICA/Medicare costs, has increased 84% or just over 8% per year.

Debt & Interest has increased dramatically, in 2009, due to Essex’s portion of the new Manchester Essex Regional Middle High School as well as the mandated sewer project.

Dept. of Public Works, while a major component of the budget, is noteworthy for its small budgetary increase of only 3.6%, less than a 0.5% change year-over-year.

Although not listed above because it is a relatively small portion of the overall budget at \$370K in 2015, the Fire and Ambulance budget has seen over 200% increase over the past ten years. This is due principally to its relatively low budget in 2005, and needed expenses such as new equipment leases over the assessed time period.

**Comparison of Essex Public Safety Budgets to Neighboring Towns**

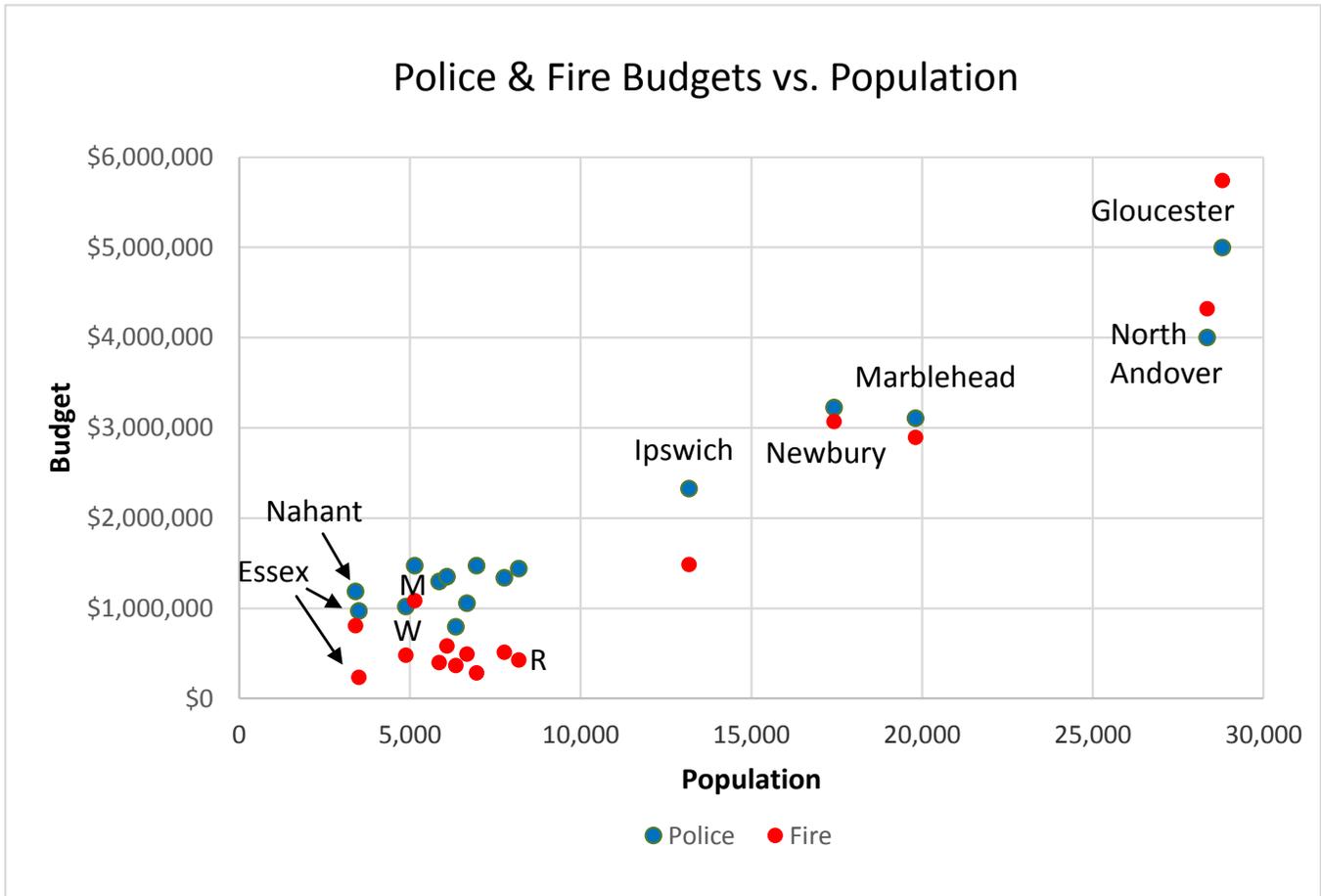
The table below presents a 2012 comparison of Essex Public Safety budgets and other demographics to neighboring Towns (summarized from the following on-line report:

[https://dls.gateway.dor.state.ma.us/DLSReports/DLSReportViewer.aspx?ReportName=Comparative\\_Report&ReportTitle=Community%20Comparison%20Report](https://dls.gateway.dor.state.ma.us/DLSReports/DLSReportViewer.aspx?ReportName=Comparative_Report&ReportTitle=Community%20Comparison%20Report)

From a population perspective, the data show Essex as the second smallest town on the North Shore, only slightly larger than Nahant, which is just a few percent smaller. That being said, Essex has 10 times the land area and just under twice the road coverage of Nahant. Furthermore Essex has more land area than several other neighboring towns including Manchester-by-the-Sea, Rowley, Rockport and Newburyport. Personal property taxes are on the high side of the towns listed with only Hamilton, Merrimack, North Andover, Topsfield, and Wenham being higher.

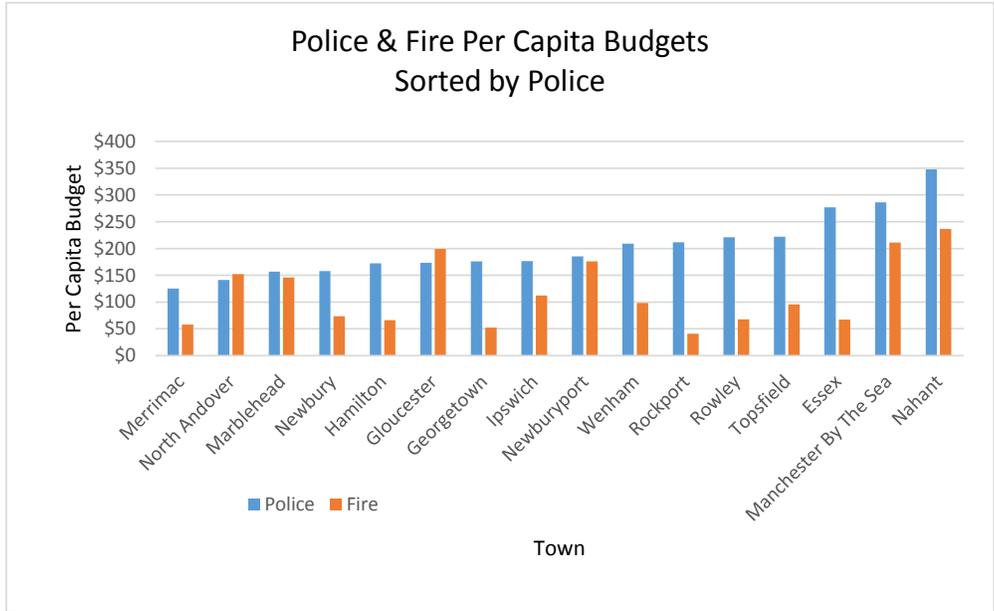
| Municipality          | 2010 Population | 2010 DOR Income Per Capita | Land Area | 2012 Total Road Miles | Personal Property | Police      | Fire        |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Nahant                | 3,410           | 47,392                     | 1.2       | 18.5                  | 10.74             | \$1,185,679 | \$805,977   |
| Essex                 | 3,504           | 46,481                     | 14.2      | 30.0                  | 15.15             | \$970,561   | \$235,435   |
| Wenham                | 4,875           | 76,432                     | 7.7       | 32.1                  | 18.48             | \$1,018,282 | \$478,638   |
| Manchester By The Sea | 5,136           | 96,660                     | 9.3       | 39.4                  | 10.51             | \$1,471,200 | \$1,084,986 |
| Rowley                | 5,856           | 37,557                     | 18.7      | 50.9                  | 14.50             | \$1,294,952 | \$396,641   |
| Topsfield             | 6,085           | 57,151                     | 12.7      | 60.6                  | 15.95             | \$1,350,148 | \$581,755   |
| Merrimack             | 6,338           | 31,161                     | 8.5       | 47.9                  | 15.45             | \$792,413   | \$366,811   |
| Newbury               | 6,666           | 52,133                     | 24.3      | 66.9                  | 11.40             | \$1,053,621 | \$490,764   |
| Rockport              | 6,952           | 37,199                     | 7.1       | 40.6                  | 11.12             | \$1,472,129 | \$283,931   |
| Hamilton              | 7,764           | 52,877                     | 14.6      | 51.8                  | 17.17             | \$1,338,711 | \$513,631   |
| Georgetown            | 8,183           | 38,310                     | 12.9      | 66.2                  | 13.55             | \$1,438,936 | \$425,874   |
| Ipswich               | 13,175          | 43,107                     | 32.6      | 95.4                  | 13.30             | \$2,326,575 | \$1,482,806 |
| Newburyport           | 17,416          | 43,725                     | 8.4       | 76.0                  | 13.32             | \$3,225,164 | \$3,069,431 |
| Marblehead            | 19,808          | 69,497                     | 4.5       | 77.4                  | 10.85             | \$3,104,569 | \$2,895,288 |
| North Andover         | 28,352          | 47,602                     | 26.7      | 148.0                 | 18.85             | \$4,002,451 | \$4,320,794 |
| Gloucester            | 28,789          | 30,676                     | 26.0      | 165.9                 | 13.48             | \$4,996,126 | \$5,742,812 |

It is in the context of the above that we look specifically at the Essex Police and Fire (including Ambulance) budgets compared to our neighbors. It is important to note that although the Essex Fire budget also contains the ambulance budget, the comparison towns may not include ambulance – this breakout was not provided in the Mass. Report. Additionally, Essex’s police budget includes the Harbormaster budget, which not all towns have to bear. These data are plotted in the graph below, with Police in blue and Fire in red; ordered by population. Please note that each represented town has two data points that align vertically, one for Police (blue dot) and one for Fire (red dot). The following is a graphical summary of the data.

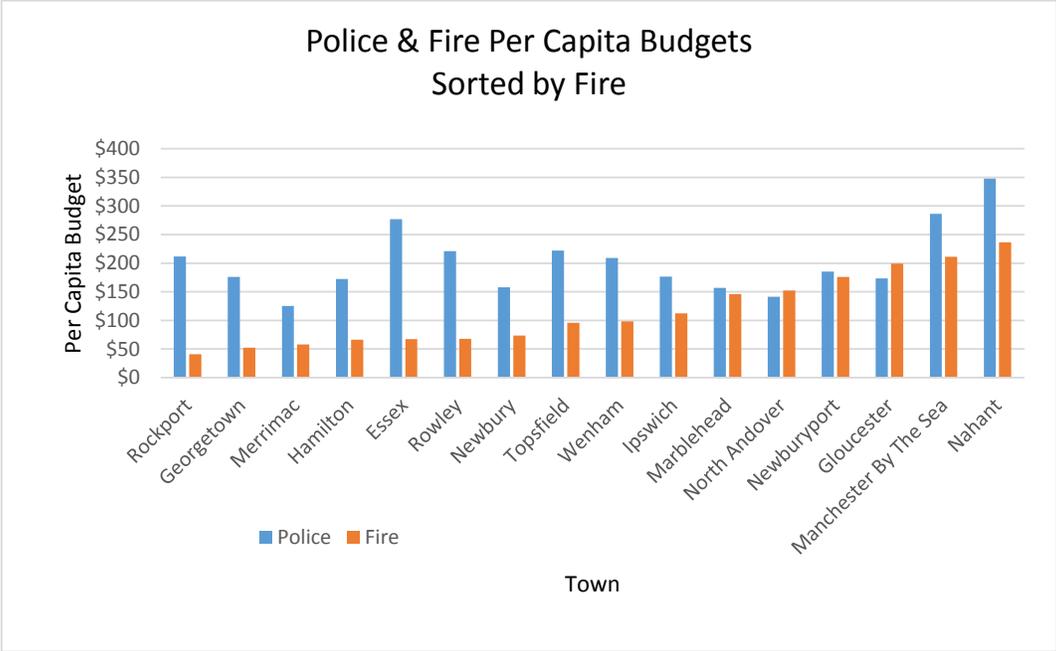


- Police (in blue) and Fire (in red) budgets as a function of population for Essex and neighboring towns
- Overall: The Essex Police budget is generally in line (correlated) with neighboring towns, and the fire budget is the lowest in the region  
Police: Essex has similarly lowest police budget, comparable to Wenham & Newbury at ~\$1M each; Merrimack is the only town with a lower budget, at \$0.8M  
Fire: Essex has the lowest fire budget (\$236K) of any of the comparison towns; the next closest are: Rockport (\$284K); Merrimack (\$366K); Rowley (\$397K); Georgetown (\$425K).

The Following two plots below show Police and Fire budgets on a Per Capita basis, sorted first by Police budget, and then by Fire budget.



**Police (in blue) and Fire (in red) budgets, sorted by Police per Capita budgets for Essex and neighboring North Shore communities.**



**Police (in blue) and Fire (in red) budgets, sorted by Fire per Capita budgets for Essex and neighboring North Shore communities.**

In summary, the above two plots show that Essex Police per Capita budget is in line with neighboring towns of the same size, e.g., Manchester-by-the-Sea and Nahant, at approximately \$275 per Capita, and not too dissimilar from the larger towns of Wenham, Rowley, Topsfield and Rockport, which are all over \$200 per Capita. It is not unexpected that the Police budgets for the three smallest North Shore towns are higher on a per Capita basis than the larger towns, due to the “base cost” of police infrastructure and services regardless of town size. The concept of “base cost” may be further explored by the Town and future Committees so as to better understand the minimums required by law. Smaller towns, such as Essex, clearly do not enjoy the economies of scale that larger towns benefit from and, in effect, simply must spread the “base cost” of infrastructure and operations across a smaller population.

The Per Capita Fire budgets are interesting from the perspective that they are very different (lower) than their corresponding Police budgets, due to the overarching factor that many of our neighboring towns continue to run a largely volunteer Fire Department. Interesting to note that while Essex’s Per Capita Fire budget is low (~\$60 per capita), it is higher than our neighboring towns of Rockport, Georgetown, Merrimack and Hamilton, and very similar to Rowley and Newbury. Also noteworthy is that Essex shows the largest disparity between Police and Fire per Capita budgets. This is due principally not from an abnormally high Police budget, but instead to our neighboring smallest towns (Manchester & Nahant) having a paid Fire Department so their per Capita Fire budgets are much greater than ours.

## Operations Comparison

The following tables contain a general comparison of regional Police and Fire Department structures, as provided by the Police and Fire Chiefs. The tables show the following:

- **Police:** Essex has a total of 9 full time Police Officers comprised of 1 Chief, 1 Sergeant and 7 Patrolmen. This compares similarly to neighboring small towns of Manchester (about 50% higher population) with 1 Chief, 4 Sergeants and 7 Patrolmen; Wenham (about 30% higher population) with 1 Chief, 1 Captain, 3 Sergeants and 5 Patrolmen; and West Newbury (about 25% higher population) with 1 Chief, 2 Sergeants, and 5 Patrolmen.
- **Fire:** Essex has a total of approximately 45 “on-call” Fire and Medical Personnel. Rockport is the only other neighboring town with a completely on-call department, with 51 personnel, and no ambulance duties requirements. Boxford, Hamilton, Rowley, Topsfield and Wenham each have 3 or 4 full time personnel in addition to 20+ personnel on call. It is noteworthy that almost half of Manchester’s Fire Department is full time (13 of 29 personnel being full time).
- Note: The tables below are for directional reference and, as they are personally provided by Police and Fire Chiefs, there may be some discrepancies in the data vs. other sources.

| <b>Town</b>       | <b>Department</b>        | <b>Rank Structure</b>               | <b>Population</b> | <b>Building Size</b>                         |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <b>Auburn</b>     | Police                   | 1 Chief                             | 16,500            |  |
|                   |                          | 2 Lieutenants                       |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 7 Sergeants                         |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 29 Patrolmen (Including Detectives) |                   |  |
| <b>Boxford</b>    | Police                   | 1 Chief                             | 8,500-9,000       |  |
|                   |                          | 1 Admin Lieutenant                  |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 1 Patrol Lieutenant                 |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 10 Patrol Officers                  |                   |  |
| <b>Dudley</b>     | Police                   | 1 Chief                             | 11,390            | 11,000-12,000 square feet                    |
|                   |                          | 3 Sergeants                         |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 8 Full -time Patrolmen              |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 12-15 Reserve Patrolmen             |                   |  |
|                   |                          | Dispatch                            |                   |  |
| <b>Essex</b>      | Police                   | 1 Chief                             | 3,900             |  |
|                   |                          | 1 Sergeant                          |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 7 Full Time Patrolman               |                   |  |
| <b>Georgetown</b> | Police                   | 1 Chief                             | 8,600             | 5 cells<br>5,400 square feet<br>2 car garage |
|                   |                          | 1 Lieutenant                        |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 3 Sergeants                         |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 2 Detectives                        |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 4 Full -time Patrolmen              |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 15 Reserve Patrolmen                |                   |  |
| Dispatch          | 4 Full -time Dispatchers |                                     |                   |  |
| <b>Hamilton</b>   | Police                   | 1 Chief                             |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 1 Lieutenant                        |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 3 Sergeants                         |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 8 Officers                          |                   |  |
| <b>Ipswich</b>    | Police                   | 1 Chief                             | 13,500            |  |
|                   |                          | 1 Lieutenant                        |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 5 Sergeants                         |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 18 Patrolmen (2 detectives)         |                   |  |
| <b>Lexington</b>  | Police                   | 1 Chief                             | 32, 500           |  |
|                   |                          | 2 Captains                          |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 5 Lieutenants                       |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 7 Sergeants                         |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 6 Detectives                        |                   |  |
|                   |                          | 28 Patrol Officers                  |                   |  |

|                     |          |  |        |  |
|---------------------|----------|--|--------|--|
| <b>Manchester</b>   | Police   | 1 Chief<br>4 Sergeants<br>9 Patrolmen  | 5,700  |  |
| <b>Marblehead</b>   | Police   | 1 Chief<br>1 Captain<br>4 Lieutenants<br>4 Sergeants<br>22 Patrol Officers                               | 20,000 |  |
|                     | Dispatch | 7 Civilian Dispatchers   |        |  |
| <b>Merrimac</b>     | Police   | 1 Chief<br>2 Sergeants<br>4 Patrolmen  | 6,300  | Small/inadequate   |
| <b>Milford</b>      | Police   | 1 Chief<br>1 Deputy Chief<br>1 Lieutenant<br>8 Sergeants<br>34 Officers                                  | 28,000 |  |
|                     | Dispatch | 9 Dispatchers  |        |  |
| <b>Newbury</b>      | Police   | 1 Chief<br>1 Deputy Chief<br>3 Sergeants<br>11 Patrolmen   | 6,900  |  |
| <b>Rockport</b>     | Police   | 1 Chief<br>1 Lieutenant<br>3 Sergeants<br>12 Patrolmen   | 7,000  |  |
| <b>Rowley</b>       | Police   | 1 Chief<br>1 Detective Lieutenant<br>2 Sergeants<br>7 Patrol Officers                                    | 6,000  | 5,000 square feet<br>(plus 2,000 in basement of old station) |
| <b>Swampscott</b>   | Police   | 1 Chief<br>1 Captain<br>4 Lieutenants<br>6 Sergeants<br>20 Patrol Officers                               | 14,000 | 13,000   |
| <b>Wenham</b>       | Police   | 1 Chief<br>1 Captain<br>3 Sergeants<br>5 Patrolmen   | 4,800  | 4,750 square feet  |
| <b>West Newbury</b> | Police   | 1 Chief<br>2 Sergeants<br>5 Patrolmen  | 4,600  |  |
| <b>Weston</b>       | Police   | 1 Chief<br>2 Lieutenants<br>5 Sergeants<br>1 Court Officer<br>1 Community Service Officer<br>7 Patrolmen | 11,400 |  |
|                     | Dispatch | 4 Dispatchers  |        |  |

The following table shows a Fire Department staffing comparison of neighboring North Shore communities to Essex.

| Community  | Population | Budget          | Employees         | Full-time Employee breakdown                   | Transporting Ambulance | Notes   |
|------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------|--|------------------------|---|
| Boxford    | 8,800      | \$ 458,030.00   | 3 FT/ 51 On Call  | Chief, 2 Lieutenants                           | No                     |   |
| Essex      | 3,500      | \$ 281,000.00   | 45 On Call        | None   | Yes                    |   |
| Gloucester | 30,000     | \$ 5,335,000.00 | 70 FT             | Chief, 4 Deputy Chiefs,                        | Yes                    |   |
| Hamilton   | 7,764      | \$ 564,000.00   | 4 FT/ 20 On Call  | Chief, 1 Lieutenant, 2 FF's                    | No                     |   |
| Ipswich    | 13,219     | \$ 1,500,000.00 | 18 FT/ 17 On Call | Chief, 5 Lieutenants, 12 FF's                  | No                     |   |
| Manchester | 5,200      | \$ 1,250,000.00 | 13 FT/ 16 On Call | Chief, 1 Captain, 3 Lieutenants, 8 Firefighter | Yes                    |   |
| Merrimac   | 6,338      | \$ 508,000.00   |                   |  |                        |   |
| Middleton  | 8,987      | \$ 1,522,426.00 | 10 FT/ 25 On Call | Chief, Captain, 3 L                            | Yes                    |   |
| Rockport   | 6,952      | \$ 181,000.00   | 51 On Call        | None   | No                     | Separate Forest Fire \$29,000.00 and Ambulance 145,000.00 |
| Rowley     | 6,100      | \$ 411,000.00   | 3 FT/ 20 On Call  | Chief, 2 FF's                                  | No                     |   |
| Topsfield  | 6,234      | \$ 600,000.00   | 4 FT/ 21 On Call  | Chief, 2 Captains, 2 Firefighter               | No                     |   |
| Wenham     | 4,100      | \$ 659,000.00   | 3 FT/ 30 on Call  | Chief, 1 Captain, 1 Firefighter                | No                     |   |

### Rockport Operation -- a more in-depth neighboring town comparison

The Public Safety Committee visited the town of Rockport in June 2014 to meet with their police chief and to view their newly built police facility as a more in-depth comparison to Essex's Public Safety operation. As background it is helpful to understand the demographic differences between the two communities, notable that Rockport has over 2x the population of Essex and about half the land area.

|                 | Approx. Population         | Land Area      | Road Miles |
|-----------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------|
| <b>Rockport</b> | 7,500+ (increase seasonal) | 7 (sq. miles)  | 41         |
| <b>Essex</b>    | 3,504 (2010 Census)        | 14 (sq. miles) | 30         |

#### Overviews:

**Police:** The Rockport facility was built with an eye to the future and shows us that you can over build as well as under build and it is very difficult to project needs going forward due to technology changes and regionalization of various tasks. For example, Rockport built a large call center which their chief feels will not be needed because, over a period of time, Rockport will probably become regionalized. Rockport built extensive locker rooms, which the Rockport Chief feels they will never need. Rockport also built too many holding cells, as they underestimated the potential of the regional lockup to provide holding capacity as well as to provide and a place to transfer female suspects.

**Fire:** As in Essex, the Rockport Fire stations are in need of extensive repairs or build-out and clearly are not equipped for current department needs. The alterations done to accommodate the current heavy equipment have compromised the structures and should be repaired.

Below is an outline of the Committee's findings, beginning with Police.

### **Rockport Police Operation**

The building is a 2 ½ story - new construction building. The two and a half stories consist of a first-floor, non-utilized second-floor and a full basement/storage area. The building has off-grade access to the basement area and a 3 car sally port.

### **Rockport facility versus present Essex facility**

#### **1. Reception Entrance Area:**

On entering the Rockport reception area one immediately sees a bulletproof, glassed-in area that is their call center. They are not part of Regional Call Center so they need the space. If they switch to the regional call center it will be wasted area. Adjacent to the reception area is a private conference room used for certain types of issues that arise that should not stay in reception. *Rockport also uses this for a training room, which Essex does not have, other than the utilizing the fire department's kitchen.*

Essex does not have an adequate receiving area or a privacy room. Essex does have a small call center area which is presently being used for evidence storage. *Use for this room is multi-purpose, i.e. property room, temporary evidence and records room.*

#### **2. Rear Area Prisoner Entry:**

Rockport has a single bay garage area which is a secured area once the patrol car enters. From here there is direct access to a holding cell which is referred to as a pre-containment area for temporary booking. This is accessed from the vehicle transfer area. Rockport has five cells off the temporary booking area.

Essex does not have a transfer area, holding cells, or any secured area for prisoner's delivery. It is the opinion of the Rockport Chief that two cells are all that are needed plus a temporary holding area and vehicle transfer area due to the new regional lockup being built in Danvers. *Not having holding area is a problem since our recorded interview room is in our station and lockup is in Manchester. We have to interview here and hold elsewhere. This presents a problem with an uncooperative or violent detainee.*

#### **3. Storage Area:**

Rockport has a storage area which is beside the vehicle transfer area. This is a fenced in and secured area for holding large pieces of evidence such as bicycles, snowmobiles etc. Essex does not have any storage area such as this. *This is a problem because nothing is centralized and we have to go to different locations to retrieve equipment, etc.*

**4. Office Area and Function Area:**

As you leave the reception area and take a right, you first come to the chief's office. The chief's office has its own toilet facility.

Essex presently has a trailer which is used by the chief. There is no toilet facility in the chief's office. The Rockport Chief recommended that we have a toilet facility as during interrogation or interviews privacy is sometimes needed.

**5. Lieutenant's Office:**

Further down the hall on the right is a lieutenant's office.

Essex does not have a lieutenant's office.

**6. Shared Space:**

Across from the two offices is a common area which is shared space for the day shift and evening shift with room for expansion.

Essex has a small area, off the hallway to the firemen's meeting room, which is not sufficient. *This is a problem because the public can view officer's information, also any notifications such as 209A orders, license suspensions put up for "Roll Call".*

**7. Fax and Reporting Station:**

As one proceeds down the hallway there is a fax and reporting station.

Essex does not have such a station.

**8. Kitchen and Training Room:**

Continuing down the hallway is a kitchen which backs up on a training room. The training room is used as community area for the town of Rockport.

Essex does not have a kitchen or training area other than that shared with the Fire Department.

**9. Locker Rooms:**

Continuing down the hallway one encounters the locker rooms with showers which are broken into male and female areas. They were built to be sufficient for tripling the size of their force, which does not look like it is needed.

Essex has no locker room or shower facilities.

**10. Storage Room:**

There is a first-floor storage room for office supplies, cleaning supplies and miscellaneous day-

to-day equipment.

Essex does not have such a room.

#### **11. Basement – Evidence Room, Armory Room and Workout Room:**

In the basement there is a secured evidence room and a separate secured armory room, a workout area which can be used as expansion for the police if needed in the future. There is a major storage area which is used for storage for other departments in the town as well as for police storage. Adjacent to the workout area is a utility room which is too small and in the wrong location.

Essex has no functional evidence room, armory, workout space, storage area, sally port or utility room.

#### **Rockport Fire Operation**

This section outlines our visit to the Rockport Fire Station (headquarters) at 37 Broadway. They also have a satellite station on Granite St., which we did not visit.

The headquarters at 37 Broadway was built in 1939 and is a two story structure of stone and brick. It is located in a central town location. Originally this facility housed both the fire and police departments. Now it is primarily fire-only with 3 other small offices in the rear of the building shared by other town offices.

Since its original construction the building has had minimal upgrades and is in somewhat poor condition.

The ground floor of the building has three bays for storing apparatus. This area has had structural changes in order to accommodate the trucks/engines that are stored there.

The second floor of the Rockport Station contains offices for the fire board's members (which consist of the chief and 2 assistants), a training/meeting room, a small kitchen and a bathroom. The aged and declining condition of the building is very visible -- and it needs considerable updating.

The lower level of the Essex Station houses apparatus, several rooms being used by the police department, and a small area for fire equipment supplies.

#### **Rockport Equipment/Apparatus**

37 Broadway Headquarters hold 2 engines, 1 rescue pumper and a ladder truck

Granite St. holds 1 engine and light rescue truck

Standard safety personal equipment for each volunteer

#### **Essex Equipment/Apparatus**

24 Martin St Station holds 2 pumpers, 1 tanker, 1 ladder, 2 rescue, 1 squad, 1 forestry, 2 ambulances and 1 18ft. aluminum boat

Standard safety personal equipment for each volunteer (note: we were told that most volunteers keep their personal equipment with them in their vehicles due to the limited space in the station and to respond directly to a call).

## V. Community Survey

The Public Safety Planning Committee's survey was taken by over ten percent of the adult population of the Town of Essex during the Spring of 2014. The median age of the respondents was 40 – 59 and the majority of participants have lived in Essex for more than fifteen years. A majority of the citizens who responded were female, and were working. Less than one-third of respondents had school age children and almost twenty percent listed themselves as retired.

The survey has found that the citizens of Essex feel very safe in their community thanks to the members and the operations of their public safety departments. The vast majority of residents of the town are very confident in how both the police and fire departments carry out their duties and believe that the departments do their jobs very well. The most common answer to the question "how satisfied are you ..." is *very satisfied*. (see complete results in the appendix to this report)

The survey found that 75% of citizens of Essex have had some contact with the police within the last 5 years with 45% having 2 – 5 contacts. Over 82% were satisfied with their most recent contact and less than 8% were dissatisfied. The survey also found that a majority of the citizens feel the police presence in town is appropriate; with only 17% felt the police presence is not appropriate. While fewer citizens had contact with the fire or EMT personnel over the last five years, they were very pleased with the services they received with less than 2% of respondents being dissatisfied. The most likely type of contact the citizens had with the fire department was for EMT service. Additionally, over 80% of respondents find the fire department presence appropriate and only 7% do not.

The citizens of Essex did indicate that there are some additional services they might want their public safety agencies to engage in. The most popular one was the establishment of a Domestic Violence advocate. Other additional services which were favored were the establishment of a bike patrol, having a school resource officer, providing more fire prevention programs and a greater marine presence, including on Chebacco Lake. On the other hand a plurality of citizens did not want to see any additional enforcement of the winter parking pan or any greater traffic enforcement.

However, three traffic related problems were found to be of major concern to the citizens of Essex. Drunk driving was the number one concern of people in Essex. The citizens recognized the serious harm that can result from someone engaging in drunk driving and given the amount of traffic that flows through Essex how the citizens and visitors to Essex could easily become victimized by someone driving drunk. The citizens also believe that speeding and pedestrian safety are also of serious concerns to them and need to be strongly addressed by the municipal police department. Additionally, three juvenile justice issues were also found to be of major concern. Juvenile drug use, school bullying and juvenile alcohol use were all seen as needing serious attention by the school and public safety officials. Lastly, but certainly not the least of the citizens' concerns was responding to medical emergencies, but the current system gets very positive marks from the public.

The written comments concerning the public safety agencies provided additional information concerning how the citizens view their public safety agencies. Most of the comments were how professional the members of the departments are and the quickness of their responses to emergencies

is. Other comments also highlighted the public's recognition of their friendliness and how approachable they are. The town recognized how dedicated the members of the fire and police departments are to doing their best in providing the town with services.

## VI. Future Operational Needs

This section provides feedback from the Chiefs regarding future public safety operation and does not necessarily reflect the findings of the Committee.

### From Chief Silva:

**What would you like the administrative structure to look like and your rationale? (What would it look like including new administrative paid positions, increase in number of officers and the rates you would like each administrator to be paid?)**

The administrative structure would be as such:

- Chief
- Executive Officer/Deputy Chief
- Evening Sergeant
- Midnight Sergeant
- Patrol Staff (This does not change)

The Sergeant increase is 15 percent above base pay. Presently, this is a bargain for everything that the Sergeant does, but the fact is that you cannot spread our only Sergeant out like the continuing trend has been going. The problem is that he is doing too many things and the responsibilities should be spread out throughout an evening and midnight Sergeant. The problems exist when he is in the course of his duties and as the Sergeant, he is part of the police union. An executive officer would not be part of the bargaining unit. This would make more sense because an Executive officer would act in my stead without the obstacle of being in the police union and conducting executive business when I am at meetings, away on vacation, or dealing with a question at all hours of the day and night from the patrol staff.

Adding and changing the rank structure would clearly create a more cohesive operation with the needed supervision and direction that our department needs. It also provides opportunity to talented officers who have a very limited opportunity for advancement. We have seen some of our very well trained and educated full time officers leave the department for other professional opportunities with other agencies. Certification has countless benefits, but having a Sergeant on other shifts would provide the much needed supervision within the present rank structure on our department. There are creative ways to address the pay of the Deputy Chief due to scheduling and the present Sergeant compensation percentage. As far as the Sergeant rate of 15 percent, there also may be creative ways of introducing these supervisor positions. Presently, officers get an OIC stipend if they are in charge of their shift. For two Sergeants, this may be able to be directed towards the Sergeant rate. There are also other ideas that could be discussed in a creative way to achieve the goal, but to be fiscally responsible. Again, this restructuring would make leaps and bounds with accountability and operationally [Committee note: the addition of needed supervision to improve cohesiveness and organizational performance, as well to provide developmental experiences, may in fact be a very worthwhile activity for the Police].

## **From Chief Doucette:**

### **What would you like the administrative structure to look like?**

The Town should create a full-time Fire Chief position. For many years we have been able to operate with strictly an on-call department of 45 plus personnel, but the need for on-duty daytime weekday personnel for the purpose of fire and medical coverage, fire prevention, inspections and administrative functions has become of increasing concern. In addition a part-time FF/EMT should be budgeted (\$40,000) to ensure adequate weekday daytime coverage.

The overall structure/ Chain of command should remain the same, but the process by which individuals are selected for positions in the structure as described in question #1 [refer to "Fire Chief Input" on page 21].

These individuals should also be compensated for their position and additional responsibilities and could be accomplished by either a reasonable stipend or a different pay rate.

**SUBJECT:** Essex Fire House List of Deficiencies, as Identified by the ECFA Report to the Public Safety Committee (January 2015)

**BACKGROUND:** The Committee reviewed the list and had questions as to the nature and seriousness of several of the items. Mike Dyer visited the Fire House on January 26, 2015 and met with Chief Doucette and Deputy Chief Reader to observe conditions and discuss the specifics of each item. We agreed that the items on the list can be categorized as follows:

- Items that pose significant and immediate problems that should be addressed in the short term.
- Items that pose significant problems that can be addressed over a longer term, including those that can only be addressed by the construction of a new station.
- Items of lesser significance that can be addressed in the longer term.

**NOTE:** Some items were redundant or closely related and have been combined for the purpose of this report.

### **Significant and immediate problems that should be addressed in the short term**

1. Fire/smoke/carbon monoxide detection alarm system. Station has NO alarming and this poses a personnel health and safety hazard as well as a potential threat to EFD apparatus and equipment. *Should be addressed, with a focus on apparatus storage areas.*
2. Diesel soot evacuation system. Such a system would directly remove exhaust fumes from the engines. Lack of same is a personnel health and safety hazard. *Should be addressed, with a focus on the upper apparatus storage area.*

3. Washer and dryer facilities for soiled uniforms, including specialized extraction washing equipment to decontaminate personal protective clothing. Essex firefighters often carry soiled and contaminated gear in their personal vehicles, posing a health to them and their families. *A clear safety and quality of life issue.*
4. Personal protective clothing storage area. Need for proper storage and “staging” of gear to facilitate quick preparation for response. *Closely related to #3.*
5. Records storage facility. Now a closet with two overstuffed file cabinets and boxes with additional shoehorned into various corners of the building. Records include personnel, training, fire inspections and more. The regional dispatch keeps records of calls/responses only. *This is a mundane but important function, easily and cheaply solved with new file cabinets or other storage boxes, with archival records stored elsewhere, for instance, Town Hall.*

Items #1 and 2 can be done within the footprint of the existing station. Nos. 3 and 4 require space in a building where there is little to spare; however, the nature of the hazard calls for a solution, for instance, a temporary structure added to the site. There is significant risk in all four of these items, and the Town should seriously consider whether it will carry these risks until such time as a new building is available, likely a minimum of five years.

#### **Significant problems that can be addressed over a longer term**

1. Adequate apparatus space. Vehicles currently fit extremely tightly, and working spaces around them are inadequate. In the future it is likely that newer vehicles will not fit as cab and engine compartment sizes have grown.
2. Adequate apparatus bay overhead door dimensions to appropriately accommodate future vehicles. Comments for #1 pertain.
3. Automatic sprinkler system. Lacking at station, but a standard in any new building design. Retrofit would be high-cost, likely for a short service life.
4. Apparatus maintenance and cleaning facilities. Now done in bays or outside the building, with no collection/retention/treatment of wash water, per current standards.
5. Separate shower and locker room facilities for both male and female employees. None such exist at present, and there is no space to accommodate in the existing station. However, this is an important personnel health feature.
6. Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus compressor, maintenance and storage area. None exist at present, and the need is addressed at the Manchester Fire Station.

7. Emergency Medical Service equipment storage and decontamination facility. Existing station has some space for this purpose proximate to the lower apparatus space; it is well below the standard of a dedicated space for this need.
8. Personnel day room/adequate audio-visual training amenities/Fire-Rescue-EMS training room. Existing station has a single multi-purpose room that is well below standards for all of these needs. Should be addressed in new building design. Fire equipment storage and maintenance area. Existing station has some space for this purpose proximate to the lower apparatus space; it is well below the standard of a dedicated space for this need.
9. Adequate ramp/tarmac space in front of the apparatus bay doors to stage the apparatus. The Department deals effectively with this situation and will continue to do so.
10. Traffic control system in front of fire station. Comments for #1 pertain.
11. Central HVAC system.
12. Adequate administrative office space for the Chief of Department, Fire Prevention Officer, EMS Officer, Training Officer and Command Staff. A clear shortcoming of the existing building, but not likely solvable within this footprint. ECFA has probably overstated the scope of the problem. The Fire Engineers feel that shared office space for 2-3 persons should suffice.
13. Computer main frame/server storage area. There is no longer a need for "main frame" computers. Server and networking needs will be met in the future with a small space, likely closet-sized and of secure construction.
14. Fire station watch/dispatch area. Now at a desk in the upper apparatus bay; inadequate but workable for the time being.
15. Separate male/female dormitory facilities for overnight personnel. Station has no dormitory facility at present. However, the need is minimal, only for occasional circumstances such as severe winter storms.
16. Sufficient parking areas for responding call personnel. Often a problem at times of peak parking demand in the municipal lot behind the station, which does not include dedicated spaces for fire personnel.
17. Physical fitness training area. This would be beneficial for both Fire and Police personnel. Should be studied to find the best and most cost-effective solution for both departments in their future facility/facilities.

#### **Public Safety Committee Meeting, Oct. 20, 2014**

Dan Doucette, Ramie Reader, Keith Carter, Ernie Nieberle, and Sally Rich of the Fire Department were present for discussion of several issues, with reference to 1) the ECFA report prepared for the Committee, 2) the Fire Engineers' letter (undated) responding to

questions raised by the ECFCA report, and 3) Joe Maruca (Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association) letter, also undated, responding to several recommendations made in the ECFCA report. This discussion was very informative and helpful to the Committee.

Main points:

- **Command structure.** ECFCA report recommended a “strong chief” command structure. Massachusetts Call/Volunteer Firefighters Association feels there is no need for a “strong chief”. Fire engineers and call FFs present agreed. Chief Doucette feels that a “weak” chief serving full-time would be in a bad position, that is, vulnerable to losing his job and without a full-time job to fall back on.
- **Performance criteria.** Minimums for training attendance and call responses (5% and 25%, respectively) reflect the “balancing act” of maintaining an adequately sized call force while avoiding the loss of personnel who don’t meet standards. [NOTE this quote from ECFCA: “Therefore, the question remains, do you remove people for not attending training or not responding to mandated percentage of the calls, and deplete your roster, or do you administer a lax standard and maintain those people on the roster? The question can also be rephrased as “Do you want a large partially trained group or a smaller well trained group?”]

EFD does not feel that these low criteria result in poor performance, while ECFCA feels otherwise.

These questions address the sustainability of a call FD into the future. EFD has now started an Explorer Scout troop in cooperation with the Manchester Fire Department, one of the aims of which is to foster new young members into the force.

Chief Doucette agrees with ECFCA that personnel should undergo CORI checks and physical fitness tests.

- **Manning.** All EFD personnel present agreed that one full-time person is necessary to effectively manage department affairs and respond effectively to calls. This would likely be the chief, seen as pretty much necessitating a “strong chief”, since nobody present could think of a fire department with a full-time “weak chief”.
- **Fires and calls.** Chief Doucette agrees with the Committee that there is a trend towards fewer fires, due to improved building standards and materials, but thinks the number of calls has not fallen.
- **Fire inspections.** Now carried out by Chief Doucette and Dave Thompson, whose full-time jobs do not allow them to do this job in full. There is a \$50 fee. As ECFCA

pointed out, this is a deficiency. There are apparently no other options (e.g., contracted service) for doing this job.

- **Ambulance service.** EMTs man the day shifts, and EFD now has 6 paramedics. As for advanced life support (ALS) service, currently EFD responds and they usually meet an ALS ambulance (from Manchester or Lyons) en route and transfer the patient. EFD sees this as effective service.
- **“Strong chief”.** Call firefighters are concerned that a sudden change in command structure will have detrimental effects on the department, in particular that call FFS will leave the force, due apparently to losing the democratic governance model now in place (“having a say”).

## **VII. Conclusion**

The Committee wishes once again to thank Police Chief Silva and Fire Chief Doucette, and their staffs, for their cooperation and support in preparing this report. Moreover, the Committee's experience in researching and developing the report strongly underscored the need for continuous communication and collaboration between the public safety departments and Town administration, in particular the Board of Selectman. The amount of data regarding organizations, operations, best practices, community perceptions, neighboring towns' comparisons, budgets, forecasts, historical performance, facilities, etc. simply should not be left to the occasional ad hoc committee. It is therefore the Committee's final recommendation, as noted in the Executive Summary, that the Town undertake to systematically repeat and build upon this Committee's efforts by every 3 – 5 years re-chartering similar Committees of citizens to review and advise on the Town's Public Safety Services. The Town may even consider establishing a permanent Public Safety Advisory Board as a more direct and frequent form of collaboration. Regardless of future chosen methods, the Committee hopes the Town finds this report an objective and sound analysis with useful insights into Essex's Public Safety Services.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Essex Police Certification Overview**

#### **Police Accreditation Program Summary, prepared by the Public Safety Committee**

The Massachusetts Police Accreditation Program (MPAP) is a 501 C3 non-profit organization. It is not a state or federal organization. The program is designed to encourage and assist police departments in achieving the professional standards that are set by the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission (MPAC). The MPAC is a state agency which sets the standards by which all police forces must meet, and abide by. The MPAP helps and directs local police forces to meet the standard which helps to reduce law enforcement liability scenarios through consistent policy as well as make sure the local police department meets and conforms to state (MPAC) requirements.

The town of Essex made application to MPAP to be certified.

It is the hope of the Essex Police that MPAP will advise and help them adhere to procedures, protocol, record-keeping, equipment, facility, and operational standards that are set by the state and need to be met to be certified. MPAP does not list deficiencies until after the final assessment. It allows for police departments to self-evaluate and make changes based on an initial MPAP review, called a “mock” test. When the final evaluation/test is given, if after which there are still deficiencies found or not corrected, a list is issued and the Town’s Police force must correct them to be certified.

Essex has filled out all forms needed to have a mock test done. The Police department has been given waivers for certain items discussed below. The waived items are what we should, and have been, focused on.

The mock test is when members of MPAP are sent to review the finished application and check the application against actual operations of the police department being reviewed. Essex has had a mock assessment done. The MPAP sent down three teams, the police captain from Salem, an officer and the chief from Wenham and a lieutenant and an officer from Hamilton to do the mock review for Essex.

An example of the mock process is as follows: The town of Essex filled out a report on how all of their police cruisers are maintained and equipped. The interviewers inspected the cruisers for such things as lights, sirens, barriers, etc., which have to meet state standards. Essex failed on their inspection. Why they failed is that even though they have a disable button for windows and doors, they do not have break bars across all Windows. The police force will now equip all

of their vehicles, going forward, with break bars on their windows. (The above is to serve as an example of how the process works.)

Once the town of Essex has finished correcting any issues brought up in the mock examination, the Essex Police will re-contact MPAP and ask for a final review. The Executive Director, Donna T Mooers, who I have spoken to, will then put together a group of testers and she and the testers will come down for the final assessment.

I have enclosed a copy of an example of the forms filled out. The copy I have included is, Chapter 46 – Critical Incidence Special Operations and Homeland Security Requirements. You can see on the form where items are checked off for proof of compliance and where things that were not done correctly are not checked off.

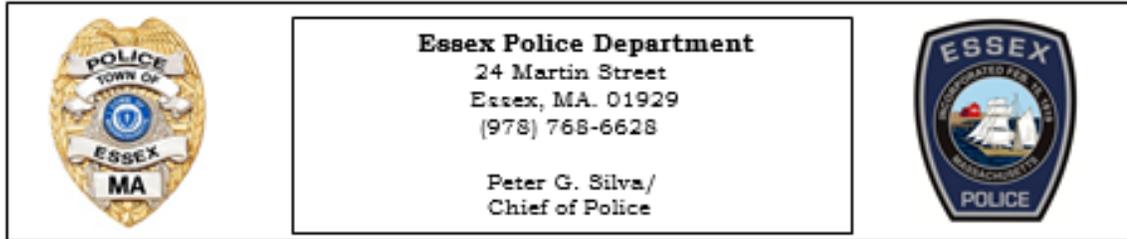
Our focus, as a committee, should be on the areas where the Essex Police department has received waivers, which have been identified as: temporary lockup and permanent lockup facilities, animal handling, storage and auxiliary police.

As part of the follow up on the above, I spent time talking with the director of MPAP, Director Mooers (who is willing to come to one of our meetings if needed) as well as meeting with the Chief and Officer Francis (who is in charge of the MPAP application). Timing for the final assessment by MPAP, according to the Chief, and confirmed by MPAP is late March - early April.

Once the assessment is complete and if the Essex Police have met all of the state standards (159 of them) the Essex Police Department will be issued a certificate of completion. If the assessors (testers) find that the Essex Police have not met all state standards, we will not receive certification and we will have a list of the deficiencies that need to be corrected to be certified. (In other words, what state standards we do not yet meet.)

It is unfortunate we that we will potentially not have the results of the MPAP prior to issuing our report. The good news is that the issues that the Police Department was granted waivers on, or the MPAP does not cover ,such as present staffing ,staffing requirements in the future ,space and facility needs , shared services, plus the potential for outsourcing (such as lock up/call center etc.,) we have addressed. The MAPAP program is set up to be a self-correcting process, if followed up on by our Police department the Essex Police will be compliant with MPAC requirements; however we may want to recommend that after the MPAP is done that the selectmen review the report so they have a more in depth understanding of state guidelines, MPAC, versus the MPAP report and if the Police Department meets both of them.

**Police Accreditation Program Summary, prepared by the Police Chief, Pete Silva**



**Benefits of participation in this program:**

Before the certification process started, we had a very ambiguous system of disseminating rules and regulations and policies and procedures to officers. We started the process knowing that we could not operate in this fashion and that we might incur unnecessary liabilities unless we changed the way we do business. The Certification process is in effect a "Risk Management Program" and no professional police department should forego this process. Some of the benefits are that the process:

1. Provides a norm for an agency to judge its performance, improve on current practices.
2. Provides a basis to correct an agency's deficiencies before they become a public problem.
3. Provides a mechanism to ensure that policies and standard operating procedures are updated as laws change, mitigating the potential for such liabilities as false arrest.
4. Allows officers, who are tasked with making split second decisions on a regular basis, to have the proper tools and training to be effective and take appropriate action if and when necessary.
5. Requires agencies to commit their policies and procedures to writing.
6. Promotes accountability among agency personnel and allows officers to apply these policies in a fair and equitable fashion.
7. Provides a means of independent evaluation of agency operations for quality assurance.
8. Enhances the reputation of the agency and promotes public confidence in it.

**Timeline:**

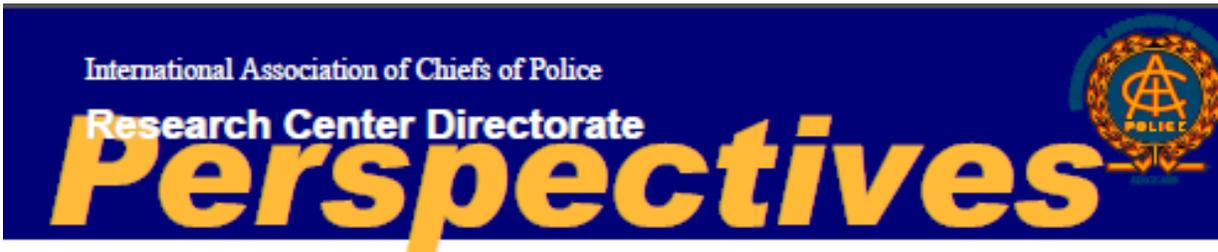
1. Standards Manual Completion and Dissemination date.....3/31/2014
2. Officer Manual review and Manual effective dates.....3/31/2014-5/01/2014
3. Mock Assessment.....5/2014
4. Actual Assessment.....6/2014
5. Compliance process, training, physical building, records, etc.....present - 6/2014

\*Note exact dates in May for Mock Assessment and in June for Actual Assessment will be determined by Assessors based upon their availability in those months.

**Surrounding Towns status:**

1. Manchester By the Sea Police Dept.....In Self-Assessment phase for certification
2. Gloucester Police Dept.....In Self-Assessment phase for certification
3. Ipswich Police Dept.....No Status
4. Rockport Police Dept.....Accredited
5. Hamilton Police Dept.....Accredited
6. Wenham Police Dept.....Certified
7. Beverly Police Dept.....In Self-Assessment phase for certification

As of March 1, 2014, there are (50) Accredited Police Departments, (19) Certified Departments and (105) in Self-Assessment.



## Police Officer to Population Ratios Bureau of Justice Statistics Data

### Introduction

The IACP *Perspectives* series is intended to help local agency decision-making by providing useful information gleaned from our network of information sources. The *Perspectives* series does not present IACP positions on the topic being addressed, nor does it replace long-term research. *Perspectives* publications raise thoughtful issues regarding complex policy topics- in this case, police officer to population ratios- to inform the debate at the local level.

### Ratio Data and Agency Staffing

Before presenting BJS data, it is first important to clarify IACP's position on police to population ratios and why they should *not* be used as a basis for agency staffing decisions. The following is a quote from IACP's *Patrol Staffing and Deployment Study* brochure: *Ratios, such as officers-per-thousand population, are totally inappropriate as a basis for staffing decisions. Accordingly, they have no place in the IACP methodology. Defining patrol staffing allocation and deployment requirements is a complex endeavor which requires consideration of an extensive series of factors and a sizable body of reliable, current data.*

BJS ratio data presented here can be useful to local agencies in other ways, including historic perspective on staffing trends across all US law enforcement, and in conducting long term staffing trend analysis, locally, regionally and nationally.

### BJS Ratio Data

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), within the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), within the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) publishes *Local Police Departments* report every three to four years. This report contains excellent and highly reliable data on state and local police personnel throughout the U.S. One aspect of this report is the average ratio of full time officers per 1,000 residents. The most recent BJS data on this topic (2003), by size of population served follows:

| Population Served  | *FT Officers Per 1,000 Residents | Population Served | *FT Officers Per 1,000 Residents |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 250,000 or more    | 2.5                              | 10,000 to 24,999  | 2.0                              |
| 100,000 to 249,999 | 1.9                              | 2,500 to 9,999    | 2.2                              |
| 50,000 to 99,999   | 1.8                              | 1,000 to 2,499    | 2.6                              |
| 25,000 to 49,999   | 1.8                              | All Sizes         | 2.5                              |

\*Average Ratio

In addition to the *Local Police Departments* publication, BJS also publishes a more comprehensive report intermittently entitled *Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (year): Data for Individual State and Local Agencies with 100 or More Officers*. Both reports can be valuable to local law enforcement agencies. To learn more about the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and their statistical reports on law enforcement, visit their website: [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs).

## Appendix C: Full Public Survey Results

|   | Strongly Agree | Agree        | Neither Agree or Disagree | Disagree     | Strongly Disagree | Total |
|---|----------------|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------|
| The Police Department personnel presence in my town is appropriate.               | 26.51%<br>57   | 39.53%<br>85 | 16.28%<br>35              | 15.35%<br>33 | 2.33%<br>5        | 215   |
| The Police Department is providing appropriate community outreach programs.       | 25.70%<br>55   | 30.37%<br>65 | 38.32%<br>82              | 4.67%<br>10  | 0.93%<br>2        | 214   |
| The members of the Police Department conduct themselves in a professional manner. | 36.92%<br>79   | 43.46%<br>93 | 14.95%<br>32              | 3.27%<br>7   | 1.40%<br>3        | 214   |
| The Police Department responds to emergency calls in a timely manner.             | 35.85%<br>76   | 36.32%<br>77 | 26.42%<br>56              | 0.47%<br>1   | 0.94%<br>2        | 212   |
| Members of the Police Department treat people with respect.                       | 35.51%<br>76   | 42.06%<br>90 | 17.76%<br>38              | 2.80%<br>6   | 1.87%<br>4        | 214   |
| Telephone calls to the Police Department are handled effectively.                 | 25.59%<br>54   | 33.18%<br>70 | 33.65%<br>71              | 5.69%<br>12  | 1.90%<br>4        | 211   |
| The Harbor Patrol personnel responds to emergency calls in a timely manner.       | 14.49%<br>30   | 17.39%<br>36 | 64.73%<br>134             | 1.45%<br>3   | 1.93%<br>4        | 207   |
| The Police Department is providing appropriate community education.               | 19.07%<br>41   | 28.84%<br>62 | 46.05%<br>99              | 4.65%<br>10  | 1.40%<br>3        | 215   |
| The Police Department does its job well.  | 29.44%<br>63   | 42.52%<br>91 | 22.90%<br>49              | 2.80%<br>6   | 2.34%<br>5        | 214   |

|   | Strong Agree  | Agree        | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Disagree    | Strongly Disagree | Total |
|---|---------------|--------------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------|
| The Fire Department personnel presence in my town is appropriate.               | 37.07%<br>76  | 44.88%<br>92 | 10.73%<br>22               | 5.85%<br>12 | 1.46%<br>3        | 205   |
| The Fire Department is providing appropriate community education programs.      | 22.44%<br>46  | 32.68%<br>67 | 41.46%<br>85               | 2.93%<br>6  | 0.49%<br>1        | 205   |
| The members of the Fire Department conduct themselves in a professional manner. | 47.80%<br>98  | 37.56%<br>77 | 14.15%<br>29               | 0.49%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0        | 205   |
| The Fire Department responds to fire emergency calls in a timely manner.        | 40.69%<br>83  | 35.29%<br>72 | 21.57%<br>44               | 1.96%<br>4  | 0.49%<br>1        | 204   |
| Members of the Fire Department treat people with respect.                       | 53.69%<br>109 | 29.56%<br>60 | 15.27%<br>31               | 1.48%<br>3  | 0.00%<br>0        | 203   |
| Telephone calls to the Fire Department are handled effectively.                 | 33.17%<br>67  | 28.22%<br>57 | 35.64%<br>72               | 1.98%<br>4  | 0.99%<br>2        | 202   |
| The ambulance and EMT personnel respond to emergency calls in a timely manner.  | 40.69%<br>83  | 29.41%<br>60 | 26.96%<br>55               | 1.47%<br>3  | 1.47%<br>3        | 204   |
| The Fire Department is providing appropriate community outreach programs.       | 20.69%<br>42  | 31.03%<br>63 | 45.32%<br>92               | 2.46%<br>5  | 0.49%<br>1        | 203   |
| The Fire Department does its job well.  | 50.97%<br>105 | 34.47%<br>71 | 14.08%<br>29               | 0.49%<br>1  | 0.00%<br>0        | 206   |