



TOWN OF MEDFIELD
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Selectmen Statement Regarding the Medfield Police Department

In recent weeks, there has been public discussion surrounding the Medfield Police Department and concerns about the level of staffing. While the Town is unable to share confidential personnel information due to laws governing employee privacy, there are some facts that the Town can share in order to provide important and accurate context to the situation.

Since March, there has been an ongoing Internal Affairs investigation into allegations of serious misconduct by multiple Medfield Police Officers. These allegations include officers intentionally sleeping on duty for several hours (at times exceeding five hours of a regularly scheduled eight-hour shift) on a regular basis. When Chief Guerette became aware of these allegations, the Town engaged an independent investigator to conduct a thorough investigation. Two Medfield Police Officers were immediately placed on paid administrative leave and currently remain on leave. A number of police personnel resigned following the initiation of this investigation.

While the investigation is ongoing, it has already revealed a consistent pattern of officer inactivity during the midnight shift. This inactivity has been revealed to be conduct of intentionally sleeping on duty or concealing themselves in or around the station for the purposes of intentionally avoiding active patrols.

The union calls this “reactive policing” and is condoning this behavior. The Town and the Chief believe in the value of proactive policing. Patrolling our streets, protecting our homes, stopping drunk drivers, and preventing local businesses from being broken into overnight is the standard of safety that Medfield residents deserve. The actions of the union make it clear that they do not share our values of proactive policing.

Medfield Police Officers are expected to perform their duties regardless of which shift they work. However, the union believes that it is a “change in working conditions” for the midnight shift to be expected to actively patrol during the overnight hours. The Medfield Police Department is funded by our tax dollars

and the residents of Medfield should expect that all of our police officers are engaged in active patrols during all shifts.

One of the core principles of the Medfield Police Department is our commitment to proactive community policing. Long, consistent periods of inactivity do not meet the standard of service that the Chief requires and that the citizens of Medfield deserve.

The Town would also like to address the public discussion regarding perceived forced overtime issues and vacancies within the Police Department. Police departments must maintain certain levels of staffing for each shift in order to ensure they are meeting their communities' public safety needs. As a result, vacancies in shifts must be filled. In accordance with Medfield Police Department procedures, officers are first offered the overtime on a voluntary basis. If all officers refuse the overtime opportunity, the Police Chief is then forced to order an officer to cover the shift. Since beginning the narrative that officers should be allowed to sleep on the midnight shift, the union has engaged in a concerted pattern of refusing voluntary overtime to "create" a force. Payroll records show that Medfield police officers have worked less overtime shifts in Fiscal Year 2022 than in any of the preceding six fiscal years. This demonstrates that the Union's narrative about overworked officers under Chief Guerette's tenure is clearly false and an attempt to distract the public from the gross misconduct of certain officers.

We are committed to providing the quality and level of service that the citizens of Medfield deserve from their Police Department. We will take the necessary steps to ensure that actions by individual officers do not jeopardize that quality and level of service.