

POLICY

2017-01

Revised 7-10-17

TO: MILTON SELECTBOARD
FROM: DON TURNER, JR., TOWN MANAGER
RE: ACCEPTANCE OF PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT RE-STRUCTURE

DATE: JULY 7, 2017

Effective Date- Immediately

Purpose: Transition to a "Public Safety Department" type structure to manage emergency services in the Town of Milton.

Background

The Town of Milton operates three separate public safety departments, with three distinct functions. The Milton Police Department handles all law enforcement and investigatory matters. It also oversees Town employee background checks and manages animal control. The Milton Fire Department has three separate divisions. Two handle fire suppression, rescue, and public education on fire prevention. The third is the Division of Rescue, the ambulance service (Milton Rescue) which operates as a completely independent department, but is managed by the Fire Chief.

Basic Structure

The basic structure of this proposal is as follows: The position of Public Safety Director (PSD) would be created to handle management and leadership functions as outlined later in this memo and discussed with the Selectboard.

Our first step would be to appoint a Public Safety Director and then operational fire and rescue chiefs to assume responsibility of the departments on January 1, 2018. They would be each paid by stipend. The department head for the Police Department would remain the Police Chief under the current staffing scheme.

Next, upon the retirement of the current Police Chief, responsibilities of the police "department head" would be consolidated to the Public Safety Director.

Leadership of Individual Services

I suggest the following structure initially be used to lead individual services under the Public Safety Director model. This organization would be subject to change under future long-term plans.

Fire Department:

Leader: Fire Chief, numerous deputy/assistant chiefs (as needed)

Appointed by: SelectBoard at recommendation of Town Manager

Responsibilities: Fire suppression, fire rescue, fire education operations

Changes from current system: Remove Rescue Division responsibility, addition of Battalion Chief

Rescue Division

Leader: EMS Chief, numerous deputy/assistant chiefs (as needed)

Appointed by: SelectBoard at recommendation of Town Manager

Responsibilities: ambulance, public education operations

Changes from current system: new structure does not include oversight from Fire Department

Police Department

Leader: Police Chief, no deputy/assistant chiefs

Appointed by: SelectBoard at recommendation of Town Manager

Responsibilities: police operations as defined by state law

Changes from current system: none

Operational Responsibilities

It must be made clear that major responsibilities and authority for operations would remain under the control of each department's appointed Chief. This means day-to-day operations for police, fire, and rescue services would remain the responsibility of each service leader. This remains especially true for police services where State of Vermont law would require at least a part-time (Level II) police certification for anyone managing daily operations. The PSD shall have no actual operational responsibilities outside the normal policies and procedures of each service, but as department head, would reserve the right to manage each department as required.

Duties of Public Safety Director

The proposed duties of the new Public Safety Director can be sorted into two categories. First are the responsibilities that would be removed from each service department head and reassigned to the Public Safety Director and their staff. The second are new responsibilities that are currently not assigned to any single Town employee or are simply not accomplished in the Town of Milton.

Reassigned Responsibilities

Task/Responsibility	Description	Benefit
Budgeting, finance/fiscal management	Assigned to PSD for all services, overall responsibility for budget development and implementation	Global public safety budgeting process recognizes replicated services and increases access to collaboration
Capital equipment planning	Assigned to PSD for all services to standardize capital acquisition standards	Single capital acquisition process recognizes public safety as a single function and acquires equipment with a single strategy
Human resources	Assigned to PSD staff for all services, excluding proprietary police matters, consolidate training/volunteer record keeping	Increased compliance with state law, improved ability to keep records across all three services, single recruitment and retention strategy
Communications/IT management	Assigned to PSD for all services, includes radio, phone, computer systems, IT infrastructure, upgrades, capital planning, etc.	Recognizes need for single strategy across all public safety services, consolidates three communications funding plans into single strategy to maximize effectiveness and equipment leverage

New and Additional Responsibilities

Task /Responsibility	Description	Benefit
Emergency management, pre-planning	Consolidate current emergency management and planning operations, including shelter operations, school response plans, fire/rescue planning	Develop new and detailed emergency plans across all services that increase interoperability and improve overall service and protection to the Town
Emergency Operations Center establishment	Establish/reestablish formal relationships for EOCs, maintain appropriate resources and agreements for these	Improved safety and operational capabilities, improves current capacity
Long-term planning/strategy	Continuous review of current operations to present Town with best long term options for managing	Improve current capacity, create single strategy for public safety
Global recruitment strategy/public information strategy	Public safety wide recruitment/staffing strategy managed centrally	Improve volunteer recruitment for both services, help improve overall management of web/social media presence using best practices
Public notification system implementation	Public notification system maintained centrally	Adds capacity, oversees notification operations
Accreditation implementation	Implement accreditation procedures across services, managed centrally	Adds capacity, improves service, and ensures operations occur at nationally recognized levels of best practice.
Grant writing	Centralize F/R grant management/application	Adds capacity with Fire/Rescue only

Public Safety Director Office, Staff, Operations

The PSD should be housed in an individual office, if possible outside the confines of any service station. This will allow independence and show no favorability to any individual service; the PSD will be responsible globally for operations that effect each service.

If possible the PSD should be appointed a part-time administrative assistant. This position will be responsible for general recording keeping and strategy implementation for the responsibilities outlined above. For example, the administrative assistant would handle intake of new members, management of training records, day to day financial operations. In addition, this person's increasing responsibilities could include developing public outreach events and strategies, working as a service volunteer, and communicating with town staff.

The PSD should start as a part-time job, working a flexible schedule between 16 and 24 hours per week. This will allow sufficient time to accomplish necessary tasks and remain flexible for after-hours meetings and/or emergencies. Its structure will also promote fiscal responsibility while the position is established and determination about its future responsibilities.

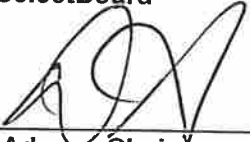
Funding

The current Fire Chief salary would be used to fund these positions.

POLICY: The Milton SelectBoard, acting in regular session July 10, 2017 voted in the favor of following:

"Voted in favor of re-structuring the public safety departments, as outlined above. Further that this referenced Policy shall be part of the permanent record of the attachment of the same to the minutes of the aforementioned Meeting."

Date: July 10, 2017
Milton SelectBoard



Darren Adams, Chair

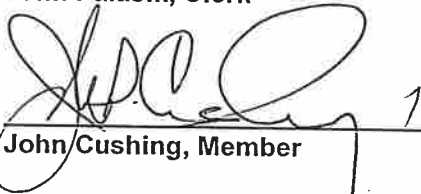
Ken Nolan, Vice Chair



John Palasik, Clerk

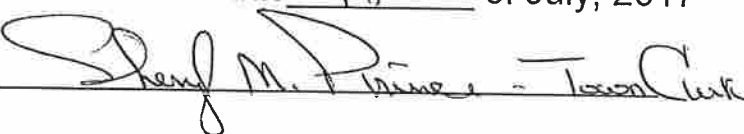


Chris Taylor, Member



John Cushing, Member

Filed with the Town Clerk this 18 of July, 2017

ATTEST:  Town Clerk