

Sterling Police Department
Annual Town Report
2005

It is difficult to believe that another year has passed. 2005 saw many changes take place within the police department. We have had some changes in personnel and a promotion take place in 2005. In January, Sean Gaudette was promoted to the rank of sergeant. He has adapted well to his new position and takes the responsibilities of his position seriously and serves the Town with dedication.

Two Officers left Sterling to accept position with the Massachusetts State Police. Stephen Gregorczyk and Todd Girouard both represented the Sterling Police Department well in the State Police Academy and are now serving as State Troopers. Both Todd and Steve are a fine example of the quality of police officers that Sterling has.

We are committed to hiring the best personnel available to serve as police officers in Sterling. We have a ridged process for hiring that consist of physical testing, psychological examination, medical and drug testing, extensive background investigations, numerous interviews as well as other requirements. We have difficulty in obtaining qualified candidates that can pass all phases of our requirements. However, when a candidate is selected we feel that we have put the best available person there is in a Sterling Police Department uniform. We have replaced one of the vacant positions with Michael Norberg who was appointed in December 2005. Michael is currently serving on a probationary status and is continuing his training. The second vacancy is in the process of being filled and the selection should be made early in 2006.

We have acquired new and additional equipment during the year that will allow us to provide a better quality of service.

A new four-wheel drive vehicle was acquired to replace the ten-year old SUV that was previously in use. The old vehicle will continue to service the Town and will serve as the animal control vehicle. The new vehicle will allow us the capability of maneuvering during severe weather conditions and the ability to respond for calls in all areas of the Town, and to do so reliably. It will also be used to tow the speed monitoring board and our other equipment trailer. This new SUV and the new cruiser wear a new traditional black and white design that also prominently displays the name of Sterling.

Other various types of equipment placed in service during the year were; patrol rifles placed in the cruisers. This will give us additional options to use in critical situations. Stinger spike strips were deployed in the cars to help end high-speed chases quickly and safely. Recording equipment was installed to record suspect interviews so the evidence can be used in court. A Lojack receiving unit was installed in a police vehicle to assist in the quick recovery of stolen vehicles equipped with the lojack transmitting device.

To assist in issuing firearms licenses, an automated computer was installed. Time clocks were installed in the cell area to ensure that prisoners are physically inspected regularly.

We are currently in the process of equipping the police cars with Mobile Data Terminals. These on board computers will assist the officer on the road and put necessary information at his disposal quickly.

During 2005 we strived to improve our relationship with the community through various community police projects. Many residents took part in some of these programs. We conducted a Citizens Police Academy. Under the direction of Officer Pomeroy who arranged and coordinated the project many residents had the opportunity to view the inner workings of their police department.

We continued to conduct child safety seat inspections at the police station by appointment. We have also implemented a program called W.H.A.L.E. and acronym for we have a little emergency. This program provides emergency service personnel with vital information on children who are passengers in a motor vehicle in the event of an accident.

We plan on continuing these programs and have several more planned for 2006. Hopefully many more citizens will take advantage of these programs.

Sterling continues to be a safe place to live and raise a family. There were one hundred and thirty four (134) accidents in 2005, nineteen less than 2004. There were no fatalities in 2005, there were 34 injuries reported. January was the month that reported the most accidents with twenty-two being reported, June reported the fewest with six. The three roads that reported the highest number of accidents were Redemption Rock, Leominster and Chocksett Rd. Of the one-hundred-thirty-four (134) accidents reported, sixty (60) occurred at an intersection. Route's 140 and 62 reported ten accidents; the intersection of Leominster and Chocksett Roads had seven accidents. Friday at 5 PM was the day and time that reported the most number of accidents. Over 1300 motorist were stopped and issued a citation or a warning. There were twenty-two people arrested for driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor.

Eighty-seven people were arrested for various charges during the year. There were three hundred thirty eight incidents investigated. Some of these incidents are listed below:

Rape	4
Aggravated Assault	8
Burglary & Breaking and Entering	22
Theft from a building	7
Vandalism	41
Narcotics Violations	20
Driving under the Influence	22
Trespass	9
Statutory Rape	2
False Pretenses, bad checks, fraud all types	31
Simple assault	16

Also under the direction of the police department is the communication division. The dispatch center is located within the police department and is staffed 24 hours a day seven days a week. The personnel who staff the dispatch center are the first contact many people have with a Town department. In 2005 the dispatch center received seven thousand six hundred seven (7607) calls for service. There were eight hundred ninety four (894) 911 calls.

In addition to these police and fire calls the dispatch center also receives calls during non-normal working hours for the animal control officer, the department of public works, and the light department. In addition to all the calls for service the dispatch center received countless calls of a general inquiry nature.

We were somewhat successful this year in increasing the pay scale for the part time dispatchers. Hopefully, this will stop the trend of our training the dispatchers and then their leaving after being fully trained for more lucrative position in other agencies.

The animal control office also falls under the control of the police department. Louis Massa has been in this position for a year and he has received certification as an animal control officer. Steven Jones, who has been an alternate for the past year, assists him.

There were four hundred nine (409) animal related calls in 2005. These calls can be anything from a loose cow to a dog bite investigation to a nuisance complaint.

There are approximately 1500 dogs licensed in Sterling. The animal control officer works closely with the Town Clerk to ensure all dogs are licensed annually and have received their proper vaccinations.

This year the District Court was utilized in cases where residents failed after repeated warnings to license their animals.

All the members of the Sterling Police department including the sworn officers and support staff continue to strive to maintain the same level of safety and security in Sterling that you have come to expect. We look forward to the challenges of the upcoming year.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary M. Chamberland
Chief of Police