

**REPORT OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**By Chief Michael L. Befford**  
**2023**

This year brought change to the organization with the retirement of long term Chief David Darrin. I want to thank Chief Darrin for his commitment to the employees of the Spencer Police Department and to the community and all the best in retirement. I am honored to have been chosen to succeed him as police chief. I am honored to serve in this capacity and look forward to serving our community.

The Spencer Police Department continues to conduct policing on a proactive basis. In today's society, Police Officers can no longer just react to crime. They must instead, respond to the wide variety of issues and problems impacting the fear of crime and quality of life in our community.

The Spencer Police Department continues to participate in the Central Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council (CEMLEC), which allows access to specialized assets including a SWAT Team along with K9, Motorcycle, Drone and Collision Reconstruction Units. The Spencer Police Department currently has one Officer assigned to the Collision Reconstruction Team and, considering involvement in additional disciplines.

The Spencer Police Department conducts a variety of community outreach programs, including but not limited to: the deployment of our speed radar dolly and trailer; the collection of unwanted pharmaceuticals and syringes through our lobby kiosk; the installation and inspection of child safety seats (179 installs were completed in 2023); participation in the annual "Goods for Guns Buyback" and "National Drug Take Back" events; providing "Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events" (CRASE) Instruction to local businesses; having Officers certified in "Crisis Intervention Team" (CIT) training; The Department employs the Crisis Intervention Management System (CIMS) to track overdoses and other mental health crisis and schedule visits from a recovery coach and lastly the use of social media, Instagram, Facebook & Twitter to keep the public informed.

The Spencer Police Department maintains affiliations with the following organizations to further our effort to fight crime: Worcester County Detectives; Worcester County Fraudulent Check Association; Street Violence Prevention Group; Tri-Valley Elder Task Force; District Attorney's Opioid Task Force; Worcester County Anti-Crime Task Force, and the Massachusetts Financial Crimes Task Force.

Continued and comprehensive training of all Spencer Police Department personnel is of paramount importance in the areas of law enforcement and public safety. Officers attend firearms qualification and Proficiency training in the use of the semiautomatic pistol, semi-automatic rifle and shotgun. In addition Officers attend annual in-service training as provided by the Massachusetts Police Training Committee (MPTC), while Dispatchers also train in the same manner, attending in-service by taking classes in accordance with standards promulgated by the State 911 Department.

In addition to the School Resource Officer Program, we offer a variety of programs to help our students navigate the complexities of staying safe - including but not limited to the following: Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate (ALICE) Active Shooter Program.

What was new in 2023?: after a troubling yearly homeless census by Open Sky in January 2023, we took an active role in helping this population. With the leadership of Lt. Hodgerney, we partnered with Open Sky and Central Mass Housing Alliance (CMHA) to provide services and housing for some of our homeless population. Lt. Hodgerney leads monthly homeless meeting involving Open Sky, CMHA and representatives from Office of Inspectional Services and the Senior Center. We also have a seat at the table with Southern

Worcester County Homeless Task Force that holds quarterly meetings. We have been able to reduce our homeless population from 18 in January of 2023 to 5 in December 2023.

This year we also partnered with Leicester High School, Anna Maria College and Fitchburg State University to host student interns. Students were partnered with officers to learn about various aspects of policing to help their decisions in becoming involved in the criminal justice system. They participated in patrol observations, observing the 911 dispatch center, observing and working with the detective as well a role playing at recruit academies.

Whenever possible the Spencer Police Department makes application for Federal and State grants. Grants are important, as they allow a community to address issues that may be beyond their financial resources. This year the Spencer Police Department was awarded a variety of grants, including: \$5,490 from the State 911 Department for Dispatch training; \$67,176 from the State 911 Department for Dispatch overtime; Executive Office of Public Safety and Security provided a surplus of child safety seats for distribution; \$10,000 from the Department of Mental Health for Crisis Intervention training; \$1,300 from the Med Project for our Drug Collection Program; \$54,672.

There were several personnel changes in 2023 starting with of the retirement of Chief Darrin in March 2023. With my promotion; Sergeant Norman Hodgerney was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant. Officer Valerie Morin was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Officer Nicholas Tessier was hired in January to replace a resignation from 2022. Officer Cameron Caldwell was hired to replace Officer Paul Magierowski who moved on to take a sergeant's position with the East Brookfield Police. Officer Kyle Lareau was hired to fill the vacancy from the retirement of Chief Darrin. Dispatcher Kim Thebeau resigned as a fulltime dispatcher. Lastly, Paul Magierowski, Thomas Moughan and Sean Baxter were appointed as Auxiliary Officers II.

In closing, I wish to thank the members of the Spencer Police Department for their dedication and support. I also wish to thank the Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen, along with all other Town Officials, Boards and Departments for their assistance in providing the citizens of Spencer with exceptional public services.

#### **ARREST & COMPLAINTS:**

Murder	0
Rape	0
Armed Robbery	0
Unarmed Robbery	2
Assault & Battery	41
Assault w/Dangerous Weapon	22
Burglary	9
Larceny	28
Motor Vehicle Theft	0
Vandalism	15
Arson	0
Warrants	44
209A/HPO Violation	29
Misdemeanor – Miscellaneous	38
Felony – Miscellaneous	14
Motor Vehicle – Miscellaneous	86
Minor in Possession of Alcohol	1
Possession of Drugs	17
Distribution of Drugs	5

Disorderly Conduct	27
Protective Custody	28
OUI – Alcohol/Drugs	17
Mental Health 123-12	85
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>508</b>

#### **OFFENSES:**

Murder	0
Rape	0
Robbery	0
Assault	34
Burglary	18
Larceny	210
Motor Vehicle Theft	6
Vandalism	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>319</b>

#### **SELECT CALLS:**

Accidents	313
911 Calls	3,301

Medical Calls	1,771
Fire Assists	244
Alarm Response	480
Detain Prisoners - Other	76
Disturbances - General	387
Disturbances - Domestic	135

**CALLS BY SHIFT:**

11pm-7am	8,575
7am-3pm	8,821
3pm-11am	7,064
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,460</b>

**ANIMAL CONTROL:**

Calls	638
Impounds	21
Transfers	8

Bylaw Violations	48
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**CITATIONS:**

Motor Vehicle Stops	729
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Civil Infractions	74
Criminal	56
Warning	261
Arrest	24
Parking	430
Bylaw – Police	47
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>892</b>