



**GARDINER CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**



<b>Meeting Date</b>	11/10/2021	<b>Department</b>	City Manager
<b>Agenda Item</b>	4.e) Consideration of a police department sign-on bonus proposal		
<b>Est. Cost</b>			

**Background Information**

As is happening throughout the State of Maine, the City of Gardiner is having difficulty finding applicants for the 3 opened positions at the police department. Attached is an email sent out by the Acting City Manager and a potential solution to the problem.

Chief Toman has utilized this solution in previous rounds of hiring and he will be available to the Gardiner City Council to answer any questions they may have about sign-on bonuses.

<b>Requested Action</b>	"I move to accept the recommendation to offer sign-on bonuses as an incentive to apply for a position at the Gardiner Police Department."
<b>City Manager and/or Finance Review</b>	Acting City Manager recommends the above motion.
<b>Council Vote/ Action Taken</b>	
<b>Departmental Follow-Up</b>	

<b>City Clerk Use Only</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Reading _____	Advertised _____	EFFECTIVE DATE _____
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading _____	Advertised _____ w/in 15 Days	
	Final to Dept _____	Updated Book _____	Online _____

Dear Councilors,

Chief Jim Toman has accepted the resignation of another police officer this morning. It is this resignation that has prompted me to email you today. Though the information is public, I ask you for your discretion with this email. First and foremost, Gardiner has full police coverage 24/7 and I need to be sure and say that right at the beginning of this email. However, this coverage is hard to sustain and Chief Toman has had to make some tough decisions. Please refer back to his departmental reports as he has been mentioning this issue for months. Simply put, he has been 1 – 4 staff members down since last January. This shortage is not all due to resignations. We do have one officer attending the academy and as soon as he finishes his 18 week tenure, we will be sending along another officer in January to the 18 week police academy so that they may get their full-time certification as required by statute.

At this point in time the Chief is getting extremely limited in his options, as the following is now being done:

- 80 hours of OT is being utilized monthly to maintain staffing levels of there being at least 2 officers on duty from 3pm-7am each day. With vacations postponed and well deserved time off delayed, the current staff is physically tired to put it quite simply.
- Chief Toman has put Detective Sergeant Todd Pilsbury back into uniform and on patrol. Though Sgt. Pilsbury enjoys working out in the field, it does delay the criminal investigations that he performs on a daily basis.
- Today Chief Toman had to make the unfortunate decision of pulling one of our SRO (School Resource Officer) away from the school and back onto a patrol shift. In three weeks we will go from 2 SROs to just one throughout the whole district. I am sure I don't need to tell you how important this position is for the emotional and physical well-being of our students.

A fully staffed Gardiner police department has 12 employees and a Chief; we currently have 9 employees and a Chief...we are down 25% of employees in our current department. To me, it is a concern that our Gardiner PD staffing level is down that low.

Though people leave an organization for different reasons and people join an organization for similar diverse reasons, Chief Toman has noticed a lack of applicants during the past 8 months. Vacancies remain open and no viable candidates are stepping up. Departments throughout Maine report similar problems. A quick glance at MMA's job bank shows that more than 10 communities are offering incentives to applicants so that they may build up their organizations. I have given Chief Toman permission to offer sign-on bonuses to successful applicants and these bonuses will be partitioned out to these new employees in a scheduled fashion. This seems to be the only way other municipalities are successfully hiring new recruits and this is a very competitive market. It is an incentive we have used in the past. Both Scott Morelli and Christine Landes employed this bonus model previously.

I believe this added tool will allow Chief Toman to hire on the best of the best. We all know that Gardiner is a great place to work, this added recruitment tool should make potential employees look seriously at these vacant positions and seek a job with us.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Chief Toman if you have any questions. Once we have finalized the advertisement, I will send it along so that you may help in the recruitment!

Anne Davis  
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