

Police Department
City of Keene, New Hampshire

Date: February 14, 2024

To: Steven Stewart, Police Chief *SMS#106*

From: Mike Kopcha, Police Captain 

Subject: Calendar Year 2023 Recruiting Analysis

I. Identified Objectives

It is the policy of the Keene Police Department to actively conduct a recruitment program to the best extent able in order to fill all vacant positions as quickly as possible, using validated methods and instruments, and ensuring positions are filled with the most qualified candidates.

II. Demographics

The 2023 population of Keene stood at 22,774 (2022 est. US CENSUS). Males comprised 49% and females 51% .This does not include the population of Keene State College's (KSC) approximate 2,777 students or Antioch University, with an estimated 1,045 students. Additionally, Keene is the County Seat and the shopping and business center of Cheshire County. Keene is also home to Keene High School (KHS) with approximately 1,400 students and teachers present per day in attendance. It is estimated (by the City's planning department) that during a weekday there may be between 60,000 and 75,000 people in the City of Keene.

In 2023 the population of Cheshire County was at 77,350. The State's population is 1,402,054. It is a rural state, with the largest population density located in the area south and east of Concord, NH and, specifically, Manchester, NH. For recruitment purposes the following demographics are offered:

City of Keene: Population 23,047 (2022 est. US CENSUS)

- Females comprised 51 % of the population
- Males comprised 49% of the population
- 92.9% of the population is white
- 1% of the population is black
- <1% of the population is Asian
- <1% of the population is American Indian
- 5% identified as two or more races

Cheshire County: Population 77,350 (2022 est. US CENSUS)

- Females comprise 50.6% of the population
- Males comprise 49.4% of the population
- 95.2% of the population is white
- < 1% of the population is black
- 1.7% of the population is Asian
- < 1% of the population is American Indian
- 1.8% of the population is two or more races

New Hampshire: Population 1,402,054 (2022 est. US CENSUS)

- Females comprise 50% of the population
- Males comprised 50% of the population
- 92.6% of the population is white
- 2% of the population is black
- 3.2% of the population is Asian
- <1% of the population is American Indian
- 1.9% of the population is two or more races

The Keene Police Department's end of calendar year (CY) 2023 sworn ranks were as follows:

- Authorized full time strength during 2023 was 44
- 34 positions filled at end of CY 2022
- 88% of sworn officers were male (30)
- 12% of sworn officers were female (4)
- 5% of sworn officers are minorities (2)

Achieving a 50% female number of sworn officers for the department is unlikely. Therefore, we use a nationally accepted number of 14%. If fully staffed at 44 sworn positions, this would lead us to a goal of having on staff a minimum of 6-7 (6.5) female officers, a goal we continually strive for.

We currently employ 2 Reserve Police Officers (part-time, sworn). Both are male.

The Keene Police Department's full and part-time non-sworn ranks (excluding crossing guards) were as follows:

- 14 non-sworn positions (includes Assistant County Attorney Prosecutor)
- 11 were female (78%)
- 3 were male (22%)
- All are Caucasian

III. Recruitment Efforts

In 2023 the Department's sworn officer shortages stayed fairly consistent between 8-9, budgeted positions. Our highest number of officer vacancies was at 9 budgeted positions.

Two (2) Probationary Officers were hired in calendar year 2023, which still leaves the department at the end of the CY with nine (9) open, budgeted sworn positions.

In CY 2023 our department experienced four officer resignations. Two officers resigned from our agency and are now working in the private sector. Two other officers resigned from our agency and took a position with another local police agency.

We also had three civilian employees resign: our Office Manager, our Animal Control Officer, and a Dispatcher.

In 2014, through efforts with the City Manager, City Council, and Finance Department, we have been authorized to hire one extra Officer above funded strength. This effort has been made to help mitigate the issue of only hiring to authorized strength, only to lose a trainee in the FTEP or having an Officer retire and leaving us again short of authorized funded strength. We see this effort as a step in the direction of having qualified Officers already hired before another Officer retires or resigns. As of this writing, we are still trying to fill this "one above" position, having never been able to achieve this through qualified candidates.

The department continues to use the Great Bay Community College (GBCC) testing alliance as our secondary testing/recruiting mechanism. However, GBCC testing alliance has also experienced challenges in attracting interested applicants for their tests. At least one of their scheduled tests in 2023 had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. In CY 2023 we received zero applicants from the GBCC testing alliance.

The Department finds it more beneficial to advertise our open positions on-line. By soliciting applications on a more consistent basis, it allows the department to administer in-house hiring processes more frequently.

Additionally, we have in the past signed up for several college Job Boards advertising our open positions. We continue to advertise our open positions with the use of social media. The department has accounts with Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The department also advertises our open positions on the City's website and has a dedicated website called kpdjobs.com (redirects to <https://keenenh.gov/police/employment>). This site leads candidates to our department employment website. We continuously use the employment website Indeed to advertise our job postings.

In addition to the above social media, the department has advertised our open positions on the following platforms: Police App.com, Military.com, Equal Opportunity Employment & Education Journal, and CALEA.

In CY 2018 we created a recruitment video. Since the video was created in CY 2018, the video is still relevant to today's department. The video was professionally done in order to attract candidates to our department. The video focuses on five different officers within the department. Each officer explains what they may encounter on a daily basis. Some of the officers talk about the overall atmosphere of the agency. Other officers discuss why they were interested in applying to our department. The video also demonstrates the different types of department teams and other ancillary responsibilities within the department. The

video lasts 2 minutes and 27 seconds. The video was posted on all of our social media sites as well as YouTube. The following link plays our video on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h81th1q-ZGg&feature=youtu.be>

As of this writing, the video was viewed 3,800 times on YouTube, and 20.8K views on our Facebook page.

We continue to have incentives in place to attract candidates from the heavier populated areas of the state (Central and Seacoast) and Certified Police Officer whether In-State or Out-of-State Certified.

The incentives were posted on our department website and social media sites. The incentive packages, as of July 2023 are as follows:

NH Certified Officers (\$10,000)

Out of State Certified Officers (\$8,000)

Uncertified hires

- 6 months Probationary schedule increase (successful interim evaluation)
- 12 months Step increase (probation completion)

All newly hired probationary officers (certified or uncertified)

Vacation leave

- 40 hours of vacation leave during the probationary period after completion of 6 months of employment and a successful interim evaluation

Relocation Assistance (if required to move from longer distances)

- Up to \$2,500 paid out on a reimbursement basis for moving, housing, or related expenses

We have the ability to start certified officers off at a higher starting pay grade within the CBA contract, due to their various levels of work experience. The department in the past has bought out certified officer's contracts with other local departments to allow them to move to KPD sooner than they would have been able to.

Although in CY 2023 the department hired two (2) new officers under the hiring incentive program, the current incentive package was not yet in place, so the hiring incentives did not play a role in the candidates' interest in the Keene Police Department. Based on our current shortage of officers, I would recommend keeping the incentives in place in order to stay competitive within the employment market.

As briefly noted above we expanded the offering of in-house written testing for all those who sent in applications. In CY 2023, we ran an in-house test every month.

IV. 2023 Sworn Officer Hiring Processes:

During CY 2023, the Department conducted Twelve hiring processes.

An **in-house process** is when candidates express self-initiated interest in a career with our department. **Mixed hiring processes** are candidates that express self-initiated interest in a career with our department and candidates from the GBCC test. A **certified officer hiring process** is for candidates previously certified that express interest in our department. An **individual hiring process** is rarely utilized at our department. There are certain circumstances this process will be utilized when a candidate cannot attend the other hiring processes listed above.

Those that take a Police Written Exam with our testing alliances are invited to the hiring process if they score a 75% or higher in either the overall score or the cognitive score (GBCC). GBCC written exams consist of three scores, cognitive, personality, and overall. In 2023, no participants from any GBCC exam expressed interest in our department.

Those who take our in-house test must score a 70% or higher on a validated Police Written Exam we purchase through a vendor.

It should be noted that we invite back most candidates from the previous processes that failed the written test or physical fitness test (PFT), with an emphasis on getting female and minority candidates to return if possible.

Below is a summary of each monthly process from CY 2023:

January, 2023

On January 30, 2023 I administered an in-house Police Written Exam. I scheduled one morning session for the written exam and physical fitness test.

During the AM session, I invited fourteen (14) candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. Nine candidates positively responded to the invitation. Six of the candidates showed for the written exam.

I also invited one (1) additional candidate to just take the PFT. This candidate previously passed the Police Written Exam given in September of 2022. This candidate failed to show for the PFT test.

This brings the total number of invitees to fifteen (15); three (3) females and twelve (12) males. Out of the fifteen (15) total invitations one moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process (7%).

On January 31, 2023 oral boards were conducted as scheduled with Lt. Nugent, Lt. Chidester, Ofc. Ostrowski and myself presiding. This candidate was recommended by the oral board. (100% pass rate).

**This process was the first process where we utilized our new written test. After reexamining our historical usage of a 75% passing score, we have decided to change our required passing score to 70%. With this change, I have invited 2 male candidates back to take a PFT (their written test scores were 72% and 73%, respectively). This PFT took place on February 8, 2023.

February, 2023

On February 27, 2023 I administered an in-house Police Written Exam. I scheduled one morning session for the written exam and physical fitness test.

During the AM session, I invited ten (10) candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. Six (6) candidates positively responded to the invitation. Four (4) candidates showed up to participate in the process; two (2) of the original six (6) candidates that positively responded to the invitation had family issues that arose last minute and informed me that they would not be present for this process. Those two (2) candidates have indicated that they would like to participate in the next process, however.

The four (4) candidates that took the written test all passed and moved on to the PFT.

Two (2) of the invited candidates were invited to just take the PFT. These candidates had previously passed the Police Written Exam given in January of 2023. Both of these candidates showed up and participated in the PFT portion of the process.

The results of the PFT were as follows. Out of the six (6) participants in the PFT, only two (2) passed, resulting in a 33% pass rate. One of the two (2) that passed the PFT was a candidate that had participated in the January 2023 process where they had failed the PFT.

The ten (10) candidates invited to this process were comprised of two (2) females and eight (8) males. Out of the ten (10) total invitations, two (2) moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (20%).

On February 28, 2023 oral boards were conducted as scheduled with Lt. Nugent, Lt. Chidester, Ofc. Pannell, and myself presiding. These two (2) participating candidates were recommended by the oral board. (100% pass rate).

**This process was the second process where we utilized our new written test. After reexamining our historical usage of a 75% passing score, we have decided to change our required passing score to 70%. With this change, I had invited 2 male candidates that had participated in the January 2023 process back to take a PFT (their written test scores were 72% and 73%, respectively). This PFT took place on February 8, 2023. Both of these candidates successfully passed the PFT and were recommended by the Oral Board.

The single candidate that was previously recommended by the Oral Board from the January 2023 process was dismissed during the pre-polygraph process.

March, 2023

On March 27, 2023 I administered an in-house Police Written Exam. I scheduled one morning session for the written exam and physical fitness test.

During the AM session, I invited 15 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 3 candidates positively responded to the invitation. 1 candidate showed up to participate in the process.

The 1 candidate that took the written test passed and moved on to the PFT.

2 of the invited candidates were invited to only take the PFT. These candidates had previously passed the Police Written Exam given on an earlier date. Both of these candidates participated in the PFT portion of the process along with the new candidate that passed the written offered on this day.

The results of the PFT were as follows. Out of the 3 participants in the PFT, only 1 passed, resulting in a 33% pass rate; this passing candidate is the same candidate that had passed the written test earlier in the day. The 2 candidates that had returned to take the PFT only both failed the PFT again.

The 15 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 4 females and 9 males. Out of the 15 total invitations, 1 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (6%).

On March 28, 2023 an oral board was conducted as scheduled with Lt. Nugent, Lt. Chidester, Det. Truman, and myself presiding. This candidate was recommended by the oral board. (100% pass rate).

The single candidate that was previously recommended by the Oral Board from the February 2023 process was later dismissed during the pre-polygraph process.

April, 2023

On April 24, 2023 I administered an in-house Police Written Exam. I scheduled one morning session for the written exam and physical fitness test.

During the AM session, I invited 20 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 4 candidates positively responded to the invitation. 3 candidate showed up to participate in the process; 1 candidate passed the written test.

The 1 candidate that passed the written test also passed the PFT.

The 20 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 4 females and 16 males. Out of the 20 total invitations, 1 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (5%).

On April 25, 2023 an oral board was conducted as scheduled with Lt. Nugent, Capt. Tenney, Sgt. Richmond, and myself presiding. This candidate was recommended by the oral board. (100% pass rate).

Of the two candidates from the March 2023 process that were recommended by the Oral Board, one was dismissed and the other completed all facets of the process and was hired on 4/17/2023.

May, 2023

On May 22, 2023 I administered an in-house Police Written Exam. I scheduled one morning session for the written exam and physical fitness test.

During the AM session, I invited 16 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 3 candidates positively responded to the invitation. 1 candidate showed up to participate in the process; 1 candidate passed the written test.

The 1 candidate that passed the written test also passed the PFT.

The 16 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 4 females and 12 males. Out of the 16 total invitations, 1 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (6%).

On May 23, 2023 an oral board was conducted as scheduled with Lt. Maxfield, Capt. Tenney, Ret. Capt. Lawrence, and myself presiding. This candidate was recommended by the oral board. (100% pass rate).

June, 2023

On June 26, 2023 I administered an in-house Police Written Exam. I scheduled one morning session for the written exam and physical fitness test.

During the AM session, I invited 16 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 2 candidates positively responded to the invitation. 1 candidate actually showed up to participate in the process; 1 candidate passed the written test.

The 1 candidate that passed the written test also passed the PFT.

The 16 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 2 females and 14 males. Out of the 16 total invitations, 1 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (6%).

On June 27, 2023 an oral board was conducted as scheduled with Lt. Maxfield, Lt. Nugent, Lt. Chidester, and myself presiding. This candidate was recommended by the oral board. (100% pass rate).

July, 2023

On July 17, 2023 I administered an in-house Police Written Exam. I scheduled one morning session for the written exam and physical fitness test.

During the AM session, I invited 17 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 3 candidates positively responded to the invitation. 1 candidate actually showed up to participate in the process; 1 candidate passed the written test.

The 1 candidate that passed the written failed the PFT.

The 17 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 1 female and 16 males. Out of the 17 total invitations, 0 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (0%).

August, 2023

On August 14, 2023 I administered an in-house Police Written Exam. I scheduled one morning session for the written exam and physical fitness test.

During the AM session, I invited 19 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 3 candidates positively responded to the invitation. 2 candidates actually showed up to participate in the process; 1 candidate passed the written test.

The 1 candidate that passed the written failed the PFT.

The 19 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 1 female and 18 males. Out of the 19 total invitations, 0 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (0%).

September, 2023

On September 12, 2023 I administered an in-house Police Written Exam to one candidate. I scheduled one morning session for the written exam and physical fitness test. That candidate passed both the written and physical test. The following day, September 13, 2023, that

candidate participated in an oral board and was recommended by the board. That candidate passed both the polygraph and psychological tests, and is now in the background phase.

On September 18, 2023, I administered an in-house Police Written Exam to 7 candidates. 5 successfully passed the written test, and of those candidates, 4 went on to pass the physical test. On September 19, 2023, those 4 candidates participated in an oral board: 3 were recommended and 1 was not recommended.

During the AM session, I invited 18 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 9 candidates positively responded to the invitation. 7 candidates actually showed up to participate in the process; 5 candidates passed the written test.

The 1 candidate that passed the written failed the PFT. The other 4 successfully passed the PFT.

The 18 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 3 females and 15 males. Out of the 18 total invitations, 4 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (22%).

October, 2023

On October 18, 2023, I administered an in-house Police Written Exam to 5 candidates. 3 successfully passed the written test, and of those candidates, 2 went on to pass the physical test. On October 19, 2023, those 2 candidates participated in an oral board: 2 were recommended.

During the AM session, I invited 25 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 6 candidates positively responded to the invitation. 5 candidates actually showed up to participate in the process; 3 candidates passed the written test.

Of the 3 candidates that passed the written, 1 failed the PFT. The other 2 successfully passed the PFT.

The 25 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 3 females and 22 males. Out of the 25 total invitations, 2 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (8%).

November, 2023

On November 13, 2023, I administered an in-house Police Written Exam to 4 candidates. 1 successfully passed the written test, and of those candidates, 0 went on to pass the physical test. No Oral Boards were conducted as no candidates passed both the written and physical tests.

During the AM session, I invited 31 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 6 candidates

positively responded to the invitation. 4 candidates actually showed up to participate in the process; 1 candidate passed the written test.

The 1 candidate that passed the written test failed the PFT.

The 31 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 3 females and 28 males. Out of the 31 total invitations, 0 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (0%).

December, 2023

On December 20, 2023, I administered an in-house Police Written Exam to 5 candidates. 2 successfully passed the written test, and of those candidates, 1 went on to pass the physical test. An Oral Board was conducted the following day; that candidate was not recommended.

During the AM session, I invited 30 candidates based on self-initiated inquiries about employment. Each candidate submitted an application for employment. 6 candidates positively responded to the invitation. 4 candidates actually showed up to participate in the process; 2 candidates passed the written test.

Of the 2 candidates that passed the written test, 1 went on to pass the PFT, the other failed the PFT.

The 30 candidates invited to this process were comprised of 3 females and 27 males. Out of the 30 total invitations, 1 moved on to the oral board phase of the hiring process (3%).

V. Overall Sworn Hiring Statistics for 2023:

Invited candidates, Male:	200
Invited candidates, Female:	33
Total	233
Invited candidates that actually showed up:	41 (17.6% of total invitees)
Passed PFT:	15 (36.6% of those that showed up)
Passed oral board:	14 (93% of those who passed PFT)
Passed background investigation:	3 (21% of those who passed oral board)
Hired	2 (66% of those who passed oral board; 13% of those who passed the PFT; <1% of all those invited)

** One candidate included in the statistics above has completed all facets of the hiring process. That candidate has not yet been hired, as he is out of the country. His projected hire date is 3/26/24, therefore he is not counted towards "Hired".

There was an increase in the number of candidates invited in CY 23 from the previous calendar year. The difference in the number of invited candidates from CY 22 (140) to CY 23 (233) is + 93 or up 66%. It should be noted that many of the candidates reflected in the

statistics above were invited to multiple processes and were counted as “invitees” over multiple months.

VI. Civilian Position Hiring Processes

In CY 2023 the department ran two civilian hiring processes: one full-time Dispatcher position and one part-time Animal Control Officer position.

Due to one of our full-time Dispatchers resigning to work at a different local agency, we had a Dispatcher process in the fall of 2023. The candidate that was ultimately hired was a candidate from a prior Dispatcher process conducted in CY 2022. While she did not accept the position as a result of the 2022 process, she was interested in the position when it became available in the fall of 2023. This singular candidate was successful through the process and was hired on 10/30/2023 bringing Dispatch back to a fully-staffed status.

The Animal Control Officer that was hired in CY 2022 later resigned in CY 2023. We conducted a hiring process at the tail-end of 2023. A candidate from that process was successfully hired in early CY 2024.

We continue our practice of seeking assistance from the City’s Human Resources (HR) Department for the hiring of non-sworn positions. This assistance centers on advertising; the utilizing their automated database for candidates to apply rather than applying directly to the Police Department, as well as assistance in notification to those who have applied for the position posted. Additionally, a member of the City’s Human Resources department has helped in the interview process by being a member of the interview panel.

VII. Ongoing Activities:

Our department has reviewed the Governor’s LEACT Recommendations for Hiring Practices and Background Investigations. The Keene Police Department has done its best to recruit and hire a diverse law enforcement workforce. Our background investigations exceed the LEACT recommendations and subsequent Police Standards and Training Council rule changes to vet out any candidates who possesses or demonstrate an outward bias towards a protected group. This vetting process is done through an aggressive polygraph examination and subsequent background investigation interviews.

Both our College Liaison Officer (CLO) at Keene State College and our School Resource Officer (SRO) at Keene High School continue to provide meaningful interaction between both high school and college students at their respective schools, solidifying the visibility and professionalism of the Department, and participating in job fairs.

VIII. Conclusion:

Recruiting in this part of the state has historically been challenging and continues to be. Younger candidates are often pulled through social and family contacts to the more populated

areas of the south central and eastern portions of the State. This, coupled with resource and budgetary constraints, makes non-standard recruiting practices difficult. Over the recent past we have used a variety of techniques, to include newspaper and radio ads, the mentioned Police Testing Alliances, college fairs, local job fairs, various web sites, and word of mouth. We have also committed to the recruitment of veterans.

What we have found is that the best outcomes are in the continuation of our own hiring process and the established testing alliances to rely on a large number of candidates, as well as our web site, FaceBook page, public web sites such as Police App.com, Military.com, Equal Opportunity Employment & Education Journal, CALEA and college bulletin boards. These constant hiring processes gives us the best chance of drawing a variety of minority and females from a wide area of New England. We also continuously attempt to recruit certified officers from surrounding agencies and elsewhere.