

Police Department
City of Keene, New Hampshire

Date: December 22, 2022
To: Steven Stewart, Police Chief
From: Todd B. Lawrence, Police Captain
Subject: Calendar Year 2022 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 2022 population of Keene stood at 23,047 (2020 est. US CENSUS). Males comprised 46.8% and females 53.2% .This does not include the population of Keene State College's (KSC) approximate 3,100 students or Antioch University, with an estimated 1,100 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 1,500 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 2022 the population of Cheshire County was at 76,458. The State's population is 1,377,529. 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 (2020 est. US CENSUS)

- Females comprised 53.2 % of the population
- Males comprised 46.8% of the population
- 91% of the population is white
- <1% of the population is black
- <2% of the population is Asian
- >1% of the population is American Indian
- 5% identified as two or more races

Cheshire County: Population 76,458 (2020 est. US CENSUS)

- Females comprise 51.6% of the population
- Males comprise 48.4% of the population
- 92% 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% of the population is two or more races

New Hampshire: Population 1,377,529 (2020 est. US CENSUS)

- Females comprise 49.8% of the population
- Males comprised 50.2% of the population
- 94% of the population is white
- 1.5% of the population is black
- 2.5% of the population is Asian
- 1% of the population is American Indian
- 1% of the population is two or more races

The Keene Police Department's end of calendar year (CY) 2022 sworn ranks were as follows:

- Authorized full time strength during 2022 was 44
- 37 positions filled at end of CY 2022
- 89.1% of sworn officers were male (33)
- 10.9% 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.

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

- 20 non-sworn positions (includes Assistant County Attorney Prosecutor)
- 14 were female (70%)
- 6 were male (30%)
- All are Caucasian

III. Recruitment Efforts

In 2022 the Department's sworn officer shortages stayed fairly consistent between 4-5, budgeted positions. Our highest number of officer vacancies was at 7 budgeted positions. **Three (3) Probationary Officers were hired in calendar year 2022**, which still leaves the department at the end of the CY with seven (7) open, budgeted sworn positions. It

should be noted that 2 of the 3 officers hired started a hiring process in December of 2021. Those officer hires do not calculate in the figures listed in **Section V** of this report.

In CY 2022 our department experienced four officer retirements. Two officers resigned from our agency and are now working in the private sector. We also had one civilian employee resign. This employee resigned while they were in a probationary training status.

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. The Great Bay Community College testing alliance only ran three (3) tests this year. The department continues to successfully use the established testing alliance during our mixed hiring processes. 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 colleges 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. 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 3,200 times on YouTube, and 20.5K 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 are as follows:

NH Certified Officers (\$5,000)

- Successful completion of Departmental Orientation (usually 30 days) \$ 1,500
 - 6 months \$ 1,500 (successful interim evaluation)
 - 12 months \$ 2,000 (+step increase, probation completion)
- \$ 5,000**

Out of State Certified Officers

- Successful Admittance to a NH Police Academy Class \$ 1,000
 - 6 months \$ 1,500 (successful interim evaluation)
 - 12 months \$ 1,500 (+step increase, probation completion)
- \$ 4,000**

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 \$1,000 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 2022 the department hired three (3) new officers under the hiring incentive program, it is difficult to say if the hiring incentives played a role in the candidate's interest in the Keene Police Department. Only one of the three officers hired was a certified police officer. I have had six (6) certified officers express enough interest in our department to start the hiring process. However 2 of those certified officers never ended up applying to our agency. 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. This has met with mixed results, which can be seen below in section IV.

IV. 2021 Sworn Officer Hiring Processes:

During CY 2022, the Department conducted **five** hiring processes. One hiring processes was an in-house processes. Three processes were mixed hiring processes. The department had one certified/individual hiring process.

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** are 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. Those who take our in-house test must score a 75% 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.

The **first** hiring process was held on April 26, 2022, a mixed hiring process based on self-initiated interest and the GBCC written examination. We invited fifty-seven (57) candidates. From that, we received:

- 5 candidates stated they would attend
- 5 candidates showed for the process

Five of the candidates passed the written exam and scored a 75% or higher on the test. No candidates showed from the GBCC test. Later that day the five candidates that passed the written test were invited for a PFT. All the candidates showed for the PFT testing process. Three of the five candidates failed the required testing.

This brings the total number of invitees to Fifty-seven (57), six (6) females and fifty-one (51) males. Out of the fifty-seven (57) total invitations only two (2) candidates moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

On April 27, 2022 oral boards were conducted as scheduled. Both candidates were recommended by the oral board. None of the candidates passed the background phase and were released from this process.

Our **second** hiring process was held on August 1, 2022, a mixed hiring process based on self-initiated interest and the GBCC written examination. Thirty-seven (37), invitations were sent out. From that, we received:

- 3 candidates who stated they would attend
- 3 candidates showed for the process

Two of the three candidates passed the written exam. Again none of the candidates from GBCC showed up for the process. Later in the day both candidates showed up for the PFT and only one of the candidates passed the PFT.

This brings the total number of invitees to thirty-seven (37), three (3) females and thirty-four (34) males. Out of the thirty-seven (37), total invitations only one (1) moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

On August 2, 2022 oral boards were conducted as scheduled. The one candidate fully participated in the oral board. This candidate was recommended by the oral board. This the candidate did not pass the background phase and was released from this process.

Our **third** hiring process was held on September 26, 2022, as an in-house hiring process. We invited twelve (12) candidates. From that, we received:

- 5 candidates stated they would attend
- 4 candidates showed for the process

Three of the four candidates failed the written exam. They were unable to score a 75% or higher on the test. Later that day the one candidate that passed the written test was invited for a PFT. This candidate failed the PFT.

This brings the total number of invitees to twelve (12), one (1) female and eleven (11) males. Out of the twelve total invitations no one moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

Our **fourth** hiring process was held on December 12, 2022, a mixed hiring process based on self-initiated interest. Thirty (30) invitations were sent out. From that, we received:

- 3 candidates stated they would attend
- 1 candidate attended the process

The candidate that attended was a certified police officer from the state of Pennsylvania.

This brings the total number of invitees to Thirty (30), seven (7) females and twenty-three (23) males. Out of the Thirty (30), total invitations one moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

Oral boards were conducted as scheduled. The one certified candidate participated in the oral boards and was recommended by the oral board. At the time of this writing, this candidate is still in our background phase of the hiring process.

Our **fifth** hiring process was given to four (4) individual candidates held throughout the calendar year. Three (3) candidates were out of state certified officers. The remaining candidate was non-certified, but was about to finish with the US Military. His hiring process started during one of his military leaves. These candidates consisted of one female and three males. All of the out of state certified candidates passed both their PFT and oral boards.

However, the department hired only **one** of the out of state certified candidates. One of the other candidates became employed with another police department and the other candidate did not pass our background.

The non-certified candidate never showed for his testing dates due to an emergency temporary assignment for the military. This candidate will be invited back, once that assignment is over.

V. Overall Sworn Hiring Statistics for 2022:

Invited candidates, Male:	122
Invited candidates, Female:	18
Total	140
Invited candidates that actually showed up:	16 (11.4% of total invitees)
Passed PFT:	7 (43.7% of those that showed up)
Passed oral board:	5 (71.4% of those who passed PFT)
Passed background investigation:	1 (20% of those who passed oral board)
Hired	1 (20% of those who passed oral board; 14.2% of those who passed the PFT; .71% of all those invited)

There was a slight decrease in the number of candidates invited in CY 22 from the previous calendar year. The difference in the number of invited candidates from CY 21 (168) to CY 22 (140) is -28 or down 16.6%. This decrease in candidates is discouraging, but is relatively the same number of candidates invited back in CY 20 (138).

VI. Civilian Position Hiring Processes

In CY 2022 the department ran four hiring processes for our two (2) open full-time Dispatcher positions. Our hiring processes were held in January, May, August and November. The department hired one dispatcher from the January hiring process. The dispatcher we hired resigned late into her field training program. The department then hired another dispatcher from the August hiring process. The dispatcher we hired successfully completed our field training program and is now working a shift. We hired a third dispatcher. This candidate is from our November hiring process. She is scheduled to start employment before the New Year. When this candidate starts employment, the department will have filled all open dispatcher positions for the first time since late CY 2018.

The department also had two (2) hiring processes for our new part time Animal Control Officer position. None of the candidates worked out during the hiring process held in May. The department successfully hired a candidate for that position, when we held another hiring process in September.

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 advertisement, the use of 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.

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.

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 portion 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 is 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.