

Police Department Request Priority #1 – Three Additional Full-Time Officers

General Information

Funding Package Name *	(3) Full-time Police Officers	71
Department *	Police	v
Description *	(3) Full-time Police Officers	221
Justification Type	Service Expansion X Public Safety Enhancements X Population Growth X Education and Youth Programs X Community Enhancement X	
Justification Details	According to the State and National Average of Police Officers, the Middleton Police Department (MPD) has 64% the officers per capita as the state average, 68% the officers per capita as the national average, and 80% the officers per capita as similarly sized cities across the country. To match state, national, and peer department sizes MPD should have between 20 and 25 total full-time officers. These additional police officers would place the MPD at 20 full-time officers.	

Expenses 1 ^

Identify each expense item by selecting accounts by Account ID or name from the dropdown. You can also manually add itemizations if needed.

FY2026				
Expense Items	Account ID	Quantity	Unit Cost	Value
SALARIES & WAGES	0010-2-210-0-1-00-00...			\$278,754.00
SALARIES & WAGES Itemization	0010-2-210-0-1-00-00...	3	\$92,918.00	\$278,754.00
Totals Expenses				\$278,754.00

REQUEST 1 –(3) New Full-time Police Officers

Cost: \$75,368 per officer

Shift differential: \$6,750 per officer

Education incentive: \$9,000 per officer

Clothing and Cleaning: \$1,800 per officer

Total: \$92,918 per officer (3 = \$278,754)

Justification

Middleton Police Department currently employs seventeen (17) full-time police officers to include the Chief and Captain positions and five (5) reserve officers.

The new Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission is charged with creating a mandatory certification process for police officers, as well as processes for decertification, suspension of certification, and retraining in the event of certain misconduct. Police officers now must be recertified every three years and training standards have been increased for ALL peace officers to include reserve police officers. With this change, we will no longer have the ability to hire reserve officers and send them to the reserve intermittent (RI) police academy for certification, as these RI are no longer available. Current reserve officers are required to go to a "bridge academy" to retain their police powers or they will no longer be certified. This has resulted in the resignation of many reserve police officers throughout the Commonwealth, including the Middleton Police. This has also severely limited the recruitment of future reserve police officers as one now must attend the Municipal Police Training Council (MPTC) full-time police academy in order to work as a reserve officer.

This change will alter the reserve police officer program throughout the Commonwealth and here in Middleton. Going forward, we will be looking to become a full-time police department. With the phasing out of the reserve police officers over the next few years, I will be asking for (3) three additional full-time police officers to offset the loss of the five (5) reserve officers and the anticipated growth of the Town of Middleton over the next few years.

In the past, the Middleton Police relied on reserve officers to augment the department to increase coverage and reduce overtime expenses. We must now look at the reality of reserve officers becoming no longer viable as an option to augment the police department and move towards a full-time police department. As reserve officers retire, accept full-time positions in other agencies, or resign we must be prepared to either increase the overtime budget substantially or add additional full-time police officers to fill that void. Adding three new full-time positions will reduce overtime, while providing adequate staffing levels for patrol shifts and specialized units to increase proactivity and public safety. With applications for police officers' positions being considerably down nationwide and the new training criteria of the MPTC and POST, this request is being made to keep staffing adequate for future growth and to avoid jeopardizing public safety in the future.

Middleton, in comparison to comparable communities, have fewer police officers than those with similar populations. The following are a few examples:

Community	Population	Geographic Area	Police F/T	Police P/T
Middleton	10,000	13.45 sq. mi.	17	6
North Reading	15,554	13.16 sq. mi.	27	0
Littleton	10,141	16.52 sq. mi.	19	3
Boxford	8,203	23.56 sq. mi.	11	11
Ipswich	13,785	32.11 sq. mi.	31	15
Lynnfield	13,000	9.86 sq. mi.	32	0
Tyngsborough	12,442	18.1 sq. mi.	25	0
Norfolk	11,550	14.9 sq. mi.	21	7

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Essential Duties of Police Officers

Police Officers performs a variety of duties in the enforcement of laws and the prevention of crimes; to control traffic flow and enforce state and local traffic regulations; to perform investigation activities; and to perform a variety of technical and administrative tasks in support of the police department.

Of the three (3) police officer positions being requested, I am expecting to utilize (2) of them in the following roles:

School Resource Officer (SRO)

Justification

One of the full-time police officer positions will fill the role of School Resource Officer (SRO) for Masco, Fuller-Meadow, and Howe-Manning schools. Currently our SRO is a part-time position assigned in partnership with Boxford and Topsfield Police to provide SRO services to Masco. This new position will be a full-time SRO covering Masco as well as Fuller-Meadow, and Howe-Manning schools.

Essential Duties

School resource officers are police officers who work in elementary, middle and high schools. They are responsible for working with school administrators, security staff and faculty on developing comprehensive safety plans to ensure schools are safe places for students to learn. SRO are certified in Massachusetts and will have specific training in active shooter response.

School patrols: A resource officer's job description also includes patrolling school grounds, ensuring safety, looking for broken fencing, unlocked doors or gates, viewing video and closed-circuit TV security monitors and watching for strangers or suspicious activity in or around campus. Conducts regular inspections of all areas of buildings and sites, for the purpose of identifying deficiencies or necessary improvements.

Law enforcement education: School resource officers may give assembly presentations on subjects including school safety, the dangers of drug abuse and bullying, and online safety tips. SRO duties may also include being called upon to educate teachers and staff about various safety precautions and dangers. It's also in a resource officer's job description to help protect against theft and property damage, assist in medical emergencies and reduce the incidence of 911 calls from schools to emergency personnel.

Detention and arrests: If a student is caught breaking the law - drinking or using drugs, bringing a weapon to school or making threats, part of a resource officer's job description may be to detain or arrest the offender. Lesser infractions may be remanded to the principal or vice principal for punishment such as detention or suspension.

Traffic Enforcement/Accident Investigation Officer

Justification

One of the major complaints received by the Middleton Police Department is speeding and red-light violations and a major number of resources are spent on traffic accidents. The goal of the Traffic Officer would be to serve the community by enforcing the motor vehicle traffic laws of the Commonwealth as well as reducing the number and severity of accidents in the town. The enforcement program would be a direct response to community complaints regarding speeding and other violations. The ultimate goal is to foster greater traffic safety for motorist, bicyclist and pedestrians.

Essential Duties

The traffic officer will participate in a variety of specialized trainings in order to professionally conduct their assignment. Some of the specialized training will include radar/lidar operation, accident investigation, accident reconstruction, commercial vehicle enforcement and car seat installation.

Having a police officer assigned solely to traffic enforcement would address community complaints without putting extra strain on patrol, while allowing for a more targeted response to these issues.

Conduct traffic accident investigations and/or reconstruction for major accidents involving death and/or serious bodily injuries.