

Town of Mocksville

Assessment of the Mocksville Police Department

October 1, 2019



Summary of Work

- Consultants invested in excess of **130** hours in this assessment
- Conducted interviews of **35** persons including all available full-time employees, part-time employees, former employees, and several community partners
- Contacted all municipalities in NC with populations between **5,000 and 7,000** to conduct a staffing analysis
- Evaluated in excess of **300** pages of MPD and Town of Mocksville policy and procedures

Summary of Work

- Obtained and reviewed all Separation Reports from the NC Criminal Justice Standards Division for employees that have separated from the Mocksville Police Department in the past two years
- Reviewed available documented exit interviews for separating employees
- Reviewed Calls for Service information and Crime Statistics for the past two years
- A comprehensive report will be submitted to the Town Manager

Summary of Work

- Studied current organizational chart and staffing roster for the MPD
- Assessed the current shift structure and work schedule for departmental sworn personnel

Employee Morale and Concerns

- All participants were provided the following assurance:
 - **“Please understand that this is a confidential interview and you are free to make any comments that you feel are important for the betterment of the Mocksville PD. While we will address your concerns in the final report, no comments will be attributed to you individually.”**
- There was a fear of retaliation expressed by many of the employees, but after being provided the above assurance staff members were generally open and forthcoming
- Some were skeptical that true organization change would result from the assessment process, but change is desired by most of the members of the police department

Employee Morale and Concerns

- Most of the problems identified in the Mocksville PD were created prior to Chief Pat Reagan's appointment
- There is a clear division in the department
- There are some communication deficiencies in the MPD exacerbated by certain supervisors and commanders
- A lack of transparency exists, especially in the area of departmental policies and organizational changes

Employee Morale and Concerns

- Some commanders have competency challenges and suffer from a lack of past professional development opportunities
- Because of these competency challenges or a poor work ethic, or both, some employees have too few duties while others have too many
- There appears to be a group of employees who are actively undermining the current police administration
- Several employees are seeking other job opportunities
- The culture within the MPD was described by many as lacking cohesiveness

Staffing Analysis – Sworn Personnel

- Mocksville PD has **4.15** sworn personnel per 1,000 residents
- The study group had **2.16** to **4.22** sworn personnel per 1,000 residents
- At this point it appears that Mocksville has numerically sufficient sworn staff to effectively police the community
 - However, the number of commanders in the MPD assigned to administrative functions makes fewer officers available to provide services to the community and respond to calls for service
- The number of positions assigned to criminal investigations (**3**) appears sufficient compared to similarly-sized communities

Staffing Analysis – Command Staff

- The percentage range of command staff sworn personnel was **6.25%** to **31.82%** in the study group with Mocksville being at **31.82%** command officers
- The average sworn command staff in the study group (excluding Mocksville) was **10.40%**
- The numbers of personnel assigned to command level positions in the Mocksville PD is excessive
- Mocksville has **seven (7)** allotted sworn positions at the command staff level and the average for the study group was **1.92** commanders

Staffing Analysis - Recommendations

- There are currently **two** vacant command staff positions in the Mocksville PD – Assistant Chief of Police and Captain
- It is recommended that these **two** vacant command level positions not be filled but instead be reallocated as patrol officer positions
- As attrition occurs in the command ranks, continue to reallocate those positions to non-command ranks in the Mocksville Police Department until the desired organization structure is achieved

Staffing Analysis - Recommendations

- There is a weakness in effective supervision at the patrol shift level especially during the evening and nighttime hours
- Senior officers serve as supervisors and are not adequately trained for the responsibilities
- Reassign the two existing Captains and retain the two existing Lieutenants as shift managers who work the same shift as the officers on their assigned squads
- All sworn personnel except for criminal investigators should wear full duty uniforms and be prepared to respond to calls for service or critical incidents

Staffing Analysis - Recommendations

- Conduct a formal assessment of tasks and responsibilities in a retreat format with the Chief, Majors, Captains & Lieutenants and assign tasks and responsibilities based on departmental needs and employee strengths
- See current and proposed Organizational Charts

Policy Analysis

- Specific departmental policy recommendations will be provided to the Town Manager and Chief of Police
- Concerns about the high-liability policies related to use of force, emergency vehicle operations, and police pursuits were identified
- The Town of Mocksville should immediately undertake a study of policies deemed high-liability (Use of Force, Vehicular Pursuits, and Emergency Vehicle Operations) in terms of sworn officer (full and part-time) access to policies, knowledge of policies, and competency in policy application

Policy Analysis

- Department policies and procedures are not immediately accessible to MPD personnel and are not updated on a routine basis
- Sworn personnel need electronic access to departmental policies using the Lexipol system (or a user-friendly system that makes the access available 24/7)
- A complete inventory of the departmental evidence room should be completed as soon as possible – and periodic inventories thereafter

Employee Hiring Issues

- Some officers hired by the Mocksville Police Department left other departments under less than favorable conditions
- It is crucial to conduct thorough background investigations on all potential hires, but this is extremely critical for officers that have separated from other law enforcement agencies:
 - ✓ Contact with former supervisors and CEOs is vital for reference checks
 - ✓ Review personnel and internal affairs files from former agencies
 - ✓ Review of files maintained by the NC Criminal Justice Standards Division

Citizen Complaints and Employee Discipline

- Eight (**8**) complaints were received in 2018
- Nine (**9**) complaints have been received in 2019 (as of September 12, 2019)
- We could not discern complaints from residents v. those internally generated
- The department has a history of issuing relatively minor discipline for administrative infractions
- Interviews with department personnel revealed many anecdotal reports of inconsistent disciplinary actions

Citizen Complaints and Employee Discipline

- Recommendations:
 - The department categorize complaints as internally or externally generated for tracking purposes
 - The department should issue an annual report to the community outlining the number, type and status of all citizen complaints against members of the Mocksville PD
 - The Mocksville PD website should contain a section that allows members of the public to file complaints online
 - Complaints – regardless of form should be accepted – even anonymous

Citizen Complaints and Employee Discipline

- Recommendations:
 - More clarity should be instituted regarding emergency relief from duty for employees
 - Complaints that could be criminal in nature should be investigated by outside agencies
 - There are two alleged issues that should be referred to outside entities for review immediately

Citizen Complaints and Employee Discipline

- Recommendations:
 - Employee administrative rights (Garrity Warnings) should be addressed in policy
 - The Personnel Complaints policy should include a section on Special Examinations (e.g., drug/alcohol/truth verification) and guidelines for who can order and when such examinations may be administered
 - The MPD personnel policy should mirror the Town of Mocksville Personnel Policy to avoid conflicts

Staff Development

- The command staff does not operate efficiently and lacks cohesiveness
- Assess the strengths of the Chief, Majors, Captains, and Lieutenants using the EQi (emotional intelligence) assessment and provide feedback on the EQi in a coaching format
- Develop a merit-based promotional process that is competency based and includes an emotional intelligence assessment

Other Recommendations

- The Mocksville PD website lacks detail and should be revamped to include important information for stakeholders both internally and externally (the community)