

Town of Chester Police Department

ANNUAL REPORT



2015



PREPARED BY

Chief Daniel J. Doellinger, FBINA

Town of Chester Town Board

Supervisor Alexander Jamieson

Councilman Claude Brischoux

Councilman H. Jerry Murray

Councilwoman Cynthia Smith

Councilman Robert Valentine

MISSION STATEMENT

TOWN OF CHESTER POLICE DEPARTMENT

The principal mission of the Town of Chester Police Department is to preserve the rights of citizens and reduce fear in the community through the prevention of crime, protection of persons, property, and the maintenance of order in public places; and to anticipate and respond to events that threaten public order and the protection of life and property.

It is essential all members remember that in the execution of their duties they act not for themselves but for the good of the public. They shall respect and protect the rights of individuals and perform their services with honesty, zeal, courage, discretion, fidelity, and sound judgment.

Police officers must seek and preserve public confidence by demonstrating impartial service to law, and by offering service and trust to all members of the public.

It is the expressed policy of this department that police officers will use force only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient to obtain public cooperation to an extent necessary to secure observance of law or to restore order, and to use only the minimum degree of physical force which is necessary upon any particular occasion for achieving a police objective.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF

I am proud to offer this report detailing our activity during the calendar year of 2015. I hope you find it both interesting and beneficial. My staff and I regularly review the way we deploy our resources in an effort to increase our ability to respond to the needs of the community and to maximize the resources. The department stays aware of current technological advances and strives to provide the most up-to-date information and equipment for our staff. We are always exploring innovative ways to work with individuals, organizations and businesses to make our community an even better place to live and work.

The Town of Chester Police Department uses “Community Commitment” as our motto. The motto is visible daily to the officers as a reminder that their primary responsibility is to the community that they serve. We recognize that the department alone cannot make the town a safe place for our residents and visitors. In order to accomplish our goals, we need to work together with our residents and business owners and employees.

We also recognize that the best technology and equipment are only as good as the men and women who use them. Quality employees are critical to our mission. The department continues to seek and recruit quality personnel, while striving to be on the cutting edge of law enforcement technology and to operate within a budget created during tough economic times. Remaining current with state of the art technology and changing trends within the law enforcement community keeps our officers and staff enthusiastic about their chosen profession, while increasing their productivity and drive to serve the community.

I have been serving the Town of Chester as police chief since 2008 and take the responsibility and trust that you have placed in me as your chief very seriously. My efforts are focused on providing the highest caliber of police services possible while remaining fiscally responsible to the taxpayers. The men and women of the Town of Chester Police Department will continue to serve our residents, business owners and visitors in a professional and caring manner.

PERSONNEL

The Town of Chester Police Department was created by Town Board resolution on July 22, 1975. The resolution included the appointment of all current town constables as police officers, with the Chief Constable becoming the Chief of Police. The police department served the community with part-time police officers until 1991, when the first full-time police officer (Officer Teresa Dobbertin) was hired. The first full-time police chief (Chief Dennis Nolan) was hired in 1992. The first full-time detective was promoted in 2000 (Det. Sal Ardisi) and the first full-time sergeant was promoted in 2001 (Sgt. Dan Doellinger). The department provided coverage to the town for sixteen hours a day, supplemented by the New York State Police overnight, until January of 2007 when round-the-clock coverage began. The year 2015 marked our ninth continuous year of providing 24 hours a day service to the community.

In 2015, the department was staffed with fourteen (14) full-time police officers, five (5) part-time police officers and two (2) part-time clerical staff. The roster as of December 31, 2015 is below.

Chief of Police	Chief Daniel J. Doellinger	
Supervisors	Sgt. Norman Vitale Sgt. Richard Eckert Sgt. David Slowik	
Investigative Division	Detective Janice Oppmann	
Patrol Division (full-time)	Detective Robert Ferrara Officer Curt Natalizio Officer Lee Weinstein Officer Lee Slaughter Officer Christopher D'Agnese	Officer Richard Perez Officer Robert Bird Officer Deana Santosky-Wright Officer Robert Stack
Patrol Division (part-time)	Officer John Maglione	Officer Joshua Dugan
Court Officers (part-time)	Officer James Abrahamsen	Officer Kenneth Rosengrant
Police Clerks (part-time)	Clerk Simone Klopf	Clerk Desiree Petraro

PERSONNEL CHANGES IN 2015

- Officer John McMahon retired on March 17, 2015 after providing almost nine years of part-time service to the Town of Chester. He had previously retired in 1993 from the NYS Department of Corrections.

STAFFING AND SCHEDULING

In 2015, members of the department provided over 31,000 hours of service to the town or an average of 85.75 man-hours per day. We maintained the contractual staffing level of at least two officers assigned to patrol at all times. Part-time police officers were used to maintain the minimum patrol staffing for 1,642 of those hours, or about 6% of the time. In 2015, full-time police officers were paid for 1,384 hours of overtime to maintain the minimum staffing level. When compared to the previous year, part-time officers were used 1,085 fewer hours and full-time officers were paid 346 fewer hours of overtime to meet minimum staffing requirements. This represents a 32% decrease in shift coverage needs from 2014. This change can likely be attributed to the complete roster of full-time officers that existed for the entire calendar year, as well as only 80 total hours of manpower loss due to on-the-job injuries in 2015 (GML 207c leave).

There were 2,486 hours of overtime paid overall in 2015. A breakdown of the overtime categories totaling more than ten annual hours is below. About 13% of the overtime was reimbursed from an outside source. Stop DWI patrol costs were reimbursed by a grant administered through the county. The Police Traffic Services Grant was awarded to our agency by the state for reimbursement of overtime costs for specialized traffic enforcement details.

Shift Coverage	1447.75	Commercial Vehicle Enforcement	57.75
Stop DWI Patrols	253.25	Sugar Loaf Festival Details	55
Training/Firearms Qualifications	199.5	Court Officer Coverage	47.5
Late Calls and Arrests	99	Fireworks Detail	42.25
Investigations	79.75	Additional Halloween Patrols	16
Court/Hearings	60.5	Special Detail with SP & VCPD (PL§230.04)	13
Police Traffic Services Grant	60.5	HS Game Details	10.5

BUDGET

The 2015 budget allowed \$1,673,419 for expenditures and estimated \$14,100 for revenue. Our actual expenditures were \$1,639,024 and our actual revenue was \$49,656. This represents a savings of \$69,951, or 4.2%.

PERSONNEL	1,486,964	SALE OF REPORTS	685
VEHICLE PURCHASES	40,469	STOP DWI GRANT	19,159
GENERAL EXPENSES	111,591	ALARM FINES	3,150
		POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES GRANT	4,500
		DONATION	1,000
		SALE OF OLD POLICE VEHICLES	4,946
		CHILD SAFETY SEAT GRANT	800
		BYRNE MEMORIAL GRANT	12,200
		BULLETPROOF VEST GRANT	3,216
ACTUAL EXPENSES	\$1,639,024	ACTUAL REVENUE	\$49,656
BUDGET	\$1,673,419	BUDGETED REVENUE	\$14,100
	-\$34,395		-\$35,556
		DIFFERENCE	-\$69,951

PATROL ACTIVITY

In 2015, town police officers initiated or responded to almost 3,500 calls for service, including over 200 motor vehicle accidents. The top twelve types of calls that we responded to are listed below.

Medical calls	290	Suspicious Activity (persons, vehicles or conditions)	288
Commercial and residential alarms	260	Motor vehicle crashes	212
Assist other agencies	196	Animal complaints	176
Fires, fire alarms, and assist the fire department	144	Reckless drivers and traffic complaints	99
Disabled vehicles and vehicles off the roadway	88	911 hang-ups and misdials	71
Domestic disputes, verbal disputes, disturbances and family court matters	69	Vehicle lockouts	67

We responded to 212 motor vehicle crashes. Fifty-nine (59) of those crashes involved deer, one hundred thirty (130) were property damage crashes only and twenty-two (22) of those crashes involved personal injury. We also responded to a one-car single fatality crash involving a utility pole.

Officers also completed 462 house checks and 12,059 business checks in 2015.

In 2015, the department conducted over 3,800 traffic stops and issued 2,579 uniform traffic tickets. The number of tickets issued represents an 18% increase from the 2,182 tickets issued in 2014. It also represents a 11.5% increase above the average of prior five years. Some of this increase can be attributed to the return of an award from the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee traffic safety grant for additional aggressive driving and seatbelt patrols. We did not receive this award in 2014, when we issued less tickets than the previous three years. The increase can also be attributed to having all full-time positions filled, which usually results in more self-initiated activity from the patrol officers.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SAFETY

There has been an increase in commercial vehicle traffic in the town as the industrial park continues to grow. In 2015, we worked with commercial vehicle inspectors from the NYS Department of Transportation to complete seven commercial vehicle inspection checkpoints throughout the year. As a result, seventy-one trucks were inspected and twenty-six were taken out of service for major safety violations.

ARREST ACTIVITY

There were 311 arrests made by the department in 2015. This represents a 29% increase from the 241 arrests made in 2014. One hundred sixty-seven (167) of the arrests were for violations of the Vehicle and Traffic Law and one hundred forty-four (144) of the arrests were for violations of other laws. Seventeen (17) of the arrests were for felonies including ten (10) criminal mischiefs and three (3) grand larcenies. There were also twenty-nine (29) arrests for Penal Law misdemeanors, with Criminal Mischief, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance, Forgery/Falsification offenses, Bail Jumping, and Weapons Possession being the most common offenses charged. Twenty-seven (27) people were charged with the violation of Unlawful Possession of Marihuana and four (4) people were charged with the violations of the Alcoholic Beverage Control law. Eighty-three (83) people were arrested on outstanding warrants. Fifteen (15) people were charged with Driving While Intoxicated or Driving While Ability Impaired by Drugs.

SPECIAL PATROLS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Officers were assigned to numerous special patrols and details throughout the year. Officers patrolled on foot during the spring and fall festivals in Sugar Loaf. Foot patrols were also utilized during several events sponsored by the town Parks and Recreation department including the annual fireworks festival, outdoor movie nights in the park, kite festival and the Halloween parade and party. Bicycle patrols were utilized during events on the Heritage Trail and the fireworks display. Officers assisted with traffic control for several events that passed through town including several bicycle tours, motorcycle charity rides and a marathon. Chief Doellinger sat on the planning committee for town's second annual Touch-A-Truck event in September. An officer and equipment were assigned to the event. Officers also assisted with traffic control during the town's annual Clean Sweep event in April and during the Sugar Loaf holiday celebration. We also provided a bike patrol unit to assist with the Dudgeon Memorial 7K Run/Walk in May.

We continued to participate in the Tactical Response Unit led by the Woodbury Police under a joint agreement with the Towns of Woodbury, Warwick and Tuxedo and the Villages of Harriman and Goshen.

We continued to assign two part-time police officers to perform court security in the Town of Chester Justice Court. The officers conduct security checks for weapons and contraband for anyone entering the courtroom when court is in session, as well as maintaining order in the courtroom.

CHESTER UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Chester Union Free School District consists of two schools, Chester Elementary and Chester Academy, both located in the town. During 2015, the department worked closely with the district on both safety and security issues, as well as outreach activities with the students. Daily foot patrols were conducted inside the buildings when students were present.

The department sponsored the annual Officer Phil safety demonstration at the elementary school in January and November.

Officer Natalizio maintained a close relationship with high school staff throughout the year. He was a guest lecturer in a sociology class discussing criminology, current responses to modern crime and a breakdown of the state laws. He also attended several health classes with a representative from the Orange County Traffic Safety Division to discuss safe driving techniques. In May, Officer Natalizio planned and participated in several events geared to student safety at their annual prom. The annual mock DWI crash demonstration was held for the students in front of the school. The "Not One More" presentation was held for students in the auditorium and Officer Natalizio demonstrated the Fatal Vision goggles during several lunch periods.

Officers also assisted with traffic control and security for multiple school events in 2015, including the first day of school, graduation, field day, the annual Halloween parade and the all-night graduation party. We also assisted with security at several basketball games at the Chester Academy and at several football games held in the Chester Commons town park. A district-wide lockdown drill was also conducted with school administrative staff.

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

The department continued their commitment to the safety of young children while riding as passengers in motor vehicles. Two certified Child Passenger Safety Seat Technicians were on staff and available throughout the year to assist with seat checks and new installations. The technicians, Officer Weinstein and Officer Bird, also participated in several multi-agency checkpoints during the year. Child seats were obtained through a grant and remain available at the police department to replace outdated or damaged seats or for new installations to parents who can't afford to purchase their own.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Involvement with our community groups is also a priority.

- Officer Perez maintained contact with our local senior citizen group throughout the year by attending meetings monthly. Our outreach programs including VIN etching and refrigerator cards were reviewed with the group and he also passed along information about current scams targeting the older population and other security and safety tips.
- Officer Natalizio maintained contact with our local scout leaders, conducted a tour of the police station and attended two Cub Scout summer day camps held in the town park. Officer Natalizio and Officer Perez assisted with a Bike Rodeo for the Cub Scouts in August.
- Officer Bird maintained contact with the Bruderhof's Bellvale Community. He attended events at the community and reviewed security in their school.
- The PBA volunteered their time to complete two events for the children in our community and surrounding communities. A free community Easter Egg Hunt was held in the spring and the PBA participated in the Marine Corps League's Toys for Tots drive in December by placing donation boxes and collecting toys from them, as well as delivering them to the train when it stopped in Sugar Loaf.
- Officer Santosky-Wright maintained contact with the Sugar Loaf Chamber of Commerce and assisted them with planning several events, including the Spring and Fall Festivals and the December Holiday Celebration.
- Chief Doellinger also represented the department and the town at many events during the year. He participated as a reader at the Orange County Crime Victims Vigil in April and participated in the Orange County Law Officers' Memorial Service in May. He attended the Chester Academy graduation in June. He was also a guest speaker at a Chester Kiwanis Club meeting in December. He attended several events throughout the year at the Bruderhof community.

1st ANNUAL COMMUNITY DAY AND 40th ANNIVERSARY EVENT

On June 20th, the department held our 1st Annual Emergency Responders Community Day at the Chester Commons Park. The event, which was organized by Sgt. Eckert and Officer Natalizio, brought together over a dozen agencies that are involved in serving and protecting the town. Local, county and state agencies all participated. The event was also used to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the formation of the police department on July 22, 1975. Documents and other items from the early years of the department were on display and certificates were presented from citizens and local government bodies commemorating and recognizing our service.

ALL-TERRAIN UTILITY VEHICLE

Funding was obtained in 2015 to purchase a UTV (all-terrain vehicle) for the department. A 2015 Honda Pioneer four-seat side-by-side vehicle was purchased after participating in the sealed bid process. We took delivery in October and immediately placed it into service for use at the annual Fall Festival in Sugar Loaf. A grant of \$9,700 was obtained through the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program with assistance from NYS Assemblyman James Skoufis to offset most of the purchase price. The vehicle will be used to patrol and move personnel at various crowd gathering events throughout the town. It will also allow us easier access to many of the wooded areas in the town in response to hunting, ATV or other complaints and in reaching injured or lost people in these areas. We are grateful to Assemblyman Skoufis for his assistance with securing the grant award.

TRAINING

The department recognizes that law enforcement is a constantly evolving profession that requires ongoing education efforts to keep our supervisors and officers up to date on the most current topics and legal decisions. We are fortunate to be located in a zone within the state where training is readily available and usually offered for free. The Police Chiefs Association of Orange County runs our local police academy and strives to offer a comprehensive group of in-service training courses, outside of the basic police academy course. Although the academy is our primary source of training, we also have many other nearby affordable options available as well. Officers completed over 1400 hours of training in 2015. Sgt. Vitale served as the training coordinator.

In 2015, Town of Chester police officers completed over 895 hours of training schools, courses, conferences and seminars. The training included the following courses:

Advanced Crash Management Course	DWI Crash Courtroom Testimony	Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Investigation
Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement Course	FBINAA Rockland County Training Seminar	Risk Management Seminar
Below 100 Course	FBINAA Westchester County Training Seminar	SafeTNet Application Training
Breath Analysis Operator Course	Improvised Explosives Familiarization Training	Search Warrant Training
TriTech CAD User Course	Initial Patrol Response to Active Shooters	Standardized Field Sobriety Testing Course
Carbine Operator Course	Intermediate Crash Management Course	Management of Stroke Victims Training
Child Passenger Safety Technician Update	Interviewing the Victims of Sexual Assault Training	NY Tactical Officers Association Annual Training Conference
Child Passenger Safety Seat Technician Instructor Course	Instructor Development Course	TASER Instructor Recertification
Contemporary Legal Issues for Police Administrators	Land Navigation Course	Team Tactics for Patrol Response to Active Shooters
Crisis Intervention Training	Mid-Hudson Stop DWI Annual Conference	Technical Crash Management
Domestic Violence and It's Link to Animal Cruelty Seminar	Missing and Abducted Children Seminar	NYS Traffic Safety Conference
Drug Investigations Management	NYSACOP Annual Training Conference	Woodland Tactics and Operations

The department also offered twelve monthly in-service training courses in 2015, as well as a spring and fall firearms qualification session for each officer. The training amounted to over 545 man hours of training department-wide. The department in-service training covered the following topics:

Civilian Response to Active Shooters	Infectious Diseases and Bloodborne Pathogens	Responding to Natural Gas Emergencies
Active Shooter Response	Law Enforcement Survival Kits	Sexual Harassment Awareness
Defensive Driving Course	Motor Vehicle Stops	Tactical Room Entry & Breaching
Detecting Intoxicated Drivers	Naloxone Use	Use of Force/Article 35
Emergency Tourniquet Use	Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs	Use of Spike Strips
Handling Animal Complaints	Responding to Chemical Suicides	UTV Operator Course
Hazardous Materials Response	Responding to Domestic Violence	Workplace Violence

DEPARTMENT AWARDS FOR NOTABLE CASES

EXCEPTIONAL POLICE DUTY

On December 16, 2014, **Officers Robert Bird, Christopher D’Agnese and Lee Weinstein** were dispatched to a burglary in progress at the carriage house of a vacant residence on Route 94. A pickup truck fled the scene before their arrival but the reporting neighbor gave a vehicle description. With the assistance of Blooming Grove Police, the vehicle was stopped in their town. The occupants were identified and found to be in possession of several cast iron radiators that appeared to have been stolen from the carriage house. The property and crime scene were secured and **Detective Janice Oppmann** was requested to the scene for crime scene processing. During subsequent investigative follow-ups by Detective Oppmann, it was learned that the main residence had also been burglarized. Evidence was recovered on the third floor of the residence linking the driver of the pickup truck to the scene. As a result of the investigation, the driver was charged with burglary and possession of stolen property, the passenger was charged with possession of stolen property and the driver’s mother was charged with making a false written statement as an attempt to interfere with the investigation.

In June 2015, **Detective Robert Ferrara** took a larceny report for cash stolen from a pocketbook at the Chester Elementary School. During the next two weeks, he conducted an investigation that led to the arrest of a custodial employee for three counts of petit larceny and for criminal possession of a controlled substance. Several cases were closed by the investigation and restitution was granted to the victims.

On October 22, 2015, **Officer Robert Bird** was dispatched to a report of a parked vehicle in a condominium complex that had just had a rear window shot at and broken. He remembered a blotter entry from the day before of a black two-door vehicle with a rifle sticking out of the rear window while driving through the town. He aggressively canvassed the area and located a vehicle matching the description driving in the area. The vehicle was stopped and further investigation led to the arrest of the occupants for several instances of damage to the windows of parked cars that had occurred that same day, as well arrests by the State Police to close several other incidents from the previous week in the Town of Monroe and Village of Kiryas Joel. The case involving two 18-year-old defendants is still pending in the County Court system.

LIFESAVING AWARD

On March 11, 2015 at about 3:45AM, **Officer Christopher D’Agnese** was dispatched to a report of a 50-year-old male with severe chest pain at a private residence. Upon arrival, he located the unresponsive victim and was unable to detect any breathing or pulse. He applied the AED and was able to deliver a successful shock to the victim. He then began CPR until the arrival of ambulance personnel. The victim was transported to the hospital and is still alive today.

HONORABLE MENTION

In July and August of 2015, **Detective Janice Oppmann** worked with detectives from other agencies to coordinate the execution of a search warrant in the town. The search warrant was executed by officers from our department, the Village of Chester PD, New York State Police Community Narcotics Enforcement Team, the DEA and the joint Tactical Response Unit. It resulted in the seizure of over 200 live marihuana plants and over 14 pounds of dried marihuana, all valued at over \$100,000. The male homeowner was charged with criminal possession of marihuana in the first degree. This was the largest marihuana seizure in department history.

CONCLUSION

I hope that you have found this report informational, interesting and beneficial. As we strive to offer the best possible services that we can, your comments and suggestions are always welcome. My contact information and the department's anonymous tip line are included below. We look forward to working with you to improve our services.

Chief Daniel J. Doellinger
Town of Chester Police Department
1786 Kings Highway
Chester, NY 10918
ddoellinger@thetownofchester.org

ANONYMOUS TIP LINE

(845) 469-7000 ext. 370

24 HOUR DISPATCH

(845) 469-9311

TOWN OF CHESTER ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

(845) 469-7000 ext. 1

Please use **911** to report any emergencies!