



## **Request for Proposals • Scope of Work Bennington Police Department Assessment**

**Issue date:** 06 May 2019

**Response date:** 14 June 2019

### **1.0 Background**

Bennington, population 15,431 (US Census, 2014), is a town in Bennington County, Vermont. Chartered in 1749, Bennington is the first town chartered in the state. The Town is the most populous in southern Vermont. The Town is governed by a seven-member selectboard elected by eligible citizens. The Select Board, as the legislative branch of town government, hires and supervises a Town Manager.

According to the US Census Bureau, whites account for 95.9% of the population or 14,798 individuals; residents of two or more races, 1.3% or 201 individuals; Black/African American, 1.2% or 185 individuals; and Asian, 0.8% or 123 individuals. Latinos of any race were 1.7% or 262 individuals.

The Bennington Police Department and its 26 sworn officers protect the town including the villages of Old Bennington and North Bennington. The Bennington County Sheriff's Department provides prisoner transport, traffic control, and court security. A Drug Taskforce for the county operated by Vermont State Police also serves the town.

In 2018 Bennington drew national and international attention when State Representative Kiah Morris, an African-American woman, did not seek re-election after two years of online trolling and threats by white supremacists. In January 2019 the Vermont Attorney General convened a press conference to announce that while Rep. Morris was the victim of racial harassment he had insufficient evidence to criminally charge Rep. Morris's tormentors. Some community members, particularly residents of color, were disappointed in the decision and blamed the Bennington Police Department with indifference and dereliction of

duty to protect former Rep. Morris as well as other residents of color in Bennington.

Print and broadcast investigative journalists reported that court records revealed that the Bennington Police Department knew in October 2018 about racially charged comments and illegal high-capacity magazine purchases by one of the white supremacist, had investigated them and found them legal. The Attorney General asserts that his office did not learn of this information until January 2019 when a second high capacity magazine purchase was made in New Hampshire and called for a third party assessment of the Bennington Police Department.

In a February 11<sup>th</sup> 2019 television interview (WCAX) Vermont Attorney General T.J. Donovan stated, "It's my opinion that an outside law enforcement expert is needed to review Bennington Police Department's policies and procedures to ensure that best practicing in policing is followed." The Vermont ACLU and the Vermont NAACP echoed the call for a third-party assessment with an additional emphasis on systemic racial bias.

## **2.0 Objective/Purpose of the Scope of Work**

The Town of Bennington seeks a vendor to:

1. Conduct an audit of the Bennington Police Department
  - a. Compare and contrast department operational policies and practices against best practices (cite and justify the source of best practices utilized)
  - b. Determine to what extent, if any, systemic racial bias manifests itself in department policies and practices
  - c. Recommend changes to department policies and practices to mitigate the effects of systemic racial bias, if any
2. Develop an action plan to measure managerial accountability (indicators and goals)
  - a. Identify systemic and process areas for sustainable and measurable improvement, eg: increase recruitment and retention of diverse qualified candidates, fair and impartial policing, community engagement, increase in positive feedback from residents of color and other marginalized residents, clear and consistent implementation of policies.

### **3.0 Deliverables**

1. Assessment report comparing/constrasting policies and practices with best practices including recommendations to improve policies and practices to meet or exceed best practices
2. Baseline assessment on marginalized community-police relations
3. Recommendations to improve marginalized community-police relations

#### 4.0 Bid Proposal Format

Bids shall be no longer than twenty pages in length, single-spaced and use not less than 12pt font. Pages must be numbered. Bids should be comprehensive, yet concise and include:

1. A brief description of the organization which includes its history, philosophy, organizational structure and size, and qualifications to execute the scope of work.
2. Technical proposal (how the bidder intends to meet the objectives, standards for best practices, etc).
3. Level of effort (estimated number of days, sequencing of activities).
4. Brief biographies of consulting team personnel.
5. Proposed budget.

#### 5.0 Bid Evaluation Criteria

Rubic	Points
Organizational Experience	30
Technical Proposal	25
Level of Effort	10
Personnel	15
Budget	20

#### 6.0 Delivery of Bid

Via snail mail:

Robert E. Woolmington, Esq.  
Woolmington, Campbell, Bent & Stasny, P.C.  
P.O. Box 2748  
4900 Main Street  
Manchester Center, VT 05255

Electronic submissions should be sent to: [police-rfp@greenmtlaw.com](mailto:police-rfp@greenmtlaw.com)

#### 7.0 Questions concerning Bid

If you have any questions concerning this bid please submit them via email to

Curtiss Reed, Jr. at [police-rfp@greenmtlaw.com](mailto:police-rfp@greenmtlaw.com).

**8.0 Response date**

Bids should be received by 23h59 on 14 June 2019