

Question #3 Oct 29-Nov 12 What do you think the Bennington Police Department could do to improve life and safety?
They are good
I think they are a great punch of people. I think they are fair and treat you with respect. They should be treated better.
Give both POC & white citizens confidence that BPD policies will be followed so they feel safe.
Find drug dealers, encourage education, rehab, train in dealing with mental health issues, be friendly, get to know folks. Police department does very good, could be better.
Work with mental health, substance abuse, professionals in collaborative approach; work with citizen group on going & oversight too.
Illegible word ...review oversight of BPD policies as they are applied in community interactions.
Invite the public to meet with the police to discuss how the police handle different kinds of problems.
I would love to see a good citizen advisory group that could provide fair and responsible oversight with enough info and power to be effective.
Check on people more often.
Stay in touch with you own humanity.
Help pick up trash at Walmart - not Walmart's property. Study Plato and other ethics, get a spiritual education and apply it, the light to a dark room, ignore cynicism as taught at the police academy/DA's office.
Police do a great job with our schools, more outreach to schools, senior groups and community groups
Try not to pull over POC residents at a massively disproportionate rate compared to white residents. Also keep your hands off your weapon unless you actually need them.
Stop putting the burden of education on the groups you terrorize.
Defund yourselves.
Police first to respond to battered women. They also support Breast Cancer notice the pink police cars
Town people need to encourage law enforcement officers.
Cops should donate more of their free time to the community. They should coach youth sports teams so they can get to know the people of Bennington on a more personal level.
Except for the chief, the cops I have met have been crusty and snippy. They need to have more socialization skills and be a part of the community not a goon squad.
Please create a citizen's police review committee that has full access to information and the authority to obtain it when reviewing a complaint.
The Select Board needs to return to public meetings at the fire house. Bennington citizens are being denied the right to comment on PD policies. We all should have a say in life and safety in Bennington.

The report in the Banner of the police patrol when the Black Lives Matter mural was painted gave many of us (whom I talked to) great assurance that the police were perceptive & thoughtful and acting carefully (as well as lawfully). I hope this kind of reporting can continue. It makes me feel safer and happier.

Accountability & transparency for and of its interactions with individuals in the community

Is there any compassion left if a police officer hands out a speeding ticket instead of a warning on a stretch of approx. 150 ft. on top of Bank St. in Old Bennington on my 78th birthday. He even asked me whether I had ever gotten a ticket. This was worse than the corona virus to me.

Community Oversight

Having a Civilian Oversight Board

Paraphrased - See full comment on town website. Be non-discriminatory. Don't antagonize an individual. Don't create legal situations by stealing personal items from vehicle. Don't make assumptions. Listen!! Don't allow major town drug dealers back on the street just to catch "bigger fish".

Institute a police oversight board at the same time as the new policies so these are not just paper but woven into the ways the department educates & functions. Don't wait for the state to do some kind of regional system. Make the teamwork of citizens & police one from the start.

Police should work with a local citizens committee to establish good communication with and accountability to the community.

The department needs to be aware of the resources in the community and hook up the needy with those resources. Make the call-take the person to the agency/call the agency with the referral.

Firm but fair

I would like good service.

Work with a citizen oversight committee as a bridge between community and members of the BPD.

Welcome a way citizens can express their problems with the BPD without fear of being targeted

They are doing great. Back the Blue!

Full comment text from St. Peters discussion board Nov. 11, 2020

- 1) Be non-discriminatory
- 2) Don't antagonize an individual by legally lying or twisting a phrase or answer.
- 3) Don't create legal situations by stealing personal items from vehicle (done by Bennington Sheriff officer)
- 4) Don't make assumptions and incorrectly charge or hold a person based on person's history
- 5) Listen!! Don't charge someone with FALSE INFO to officer because you misheard and can't take 2 seconds to realize there are 31 days in Feb when individual stated Feb 21 and instead of asking for it to be repeated, press charges.
- 6) Don't allow major town drug dealers back on the street just to catch "bigger fish". More damage than good is done.