

**Village of Hastings-on-Hudson**

# **POLICE REFORM AND REINVENTION COLLABORATIVE PLAN**

**Ratified by the Board of Trustees  
March 30, 2021**



This document was created through a collaborative effort involving the Hastings-on-Hudson community, the Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department, Elected Officials, Administrative Staff, the Legal Aid Society, the District Attorney's Office, and dedicated members of the Hastings-on-Hudson Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Task Force. Special thanks to:

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## INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Governor Cuomo's Executive Order No. 203 which states "beginning on May 25, 2020, following the police-involved death of George Floyd in Minnesota, protests have taken place daily throughout the nation and in communities across New York State in response to police-involved deaths and racially-biased law enforcement to demand change, action, and accountability," all New York State (NYS) municipalities are required "to develop a plan to improve deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color."

The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson embarked on this effort by gathering stakeholders. A diverse group was formed into a Task Force which undertook a fact based, honest dialogue about the public safety needs in Hastings-on-Hudson, in order to foster trust and fairness in police and community relations that facilitates law enforcement's success to protect the community.

The Task Force was charged with

- Reviewing the existing practices, procedures, and policies of the Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department (HPD).
- Reviewing the needs of the community served by the HPD.
- Involving the community in discussion.
- Preparing this Final Policing Reform Plan for public comment.
- Obtaining input from the community and including it in this Report.
- Presenting the plan to the Board of Trustees for adoption or ratification.
- Certifying adoption of the plan to the State Budget Director by April 1, 2021.

From October 2020 through January 2021, the Task Force met to educate itself about HPD policies, procedures, activity, training, equipment and public relations. The Task Force actively sought input from the community through multiple avenues to obtain thoughts, impressions, and concerns regarding policing in Hastings. The Task Force created four sub-committees charged with focusing on subject areas identified by the community as most relevant to policing in Hastings-on-Hudson. The subject areas included Youth, Community Policing, Training and Equipment and Technology. Each subcommittee gathered information on current policies, procedures and practices, obtained further public input and developed a set of recommendations intended to enhance police-community relationships that facilitates law enforcement's success in protecting and supporting the public in Hastings-on-Hudson. A draft plan was prepared and circulated to the public. Additional public comments were received, considered, and incorporated in this document. This Plan is the result of collaboration among the Police Reform and Reinvention Task Force members, the public and the Board of Trustees. It was ratified by the Village Board of Trustees on March 30th, 2021.

The task of uncovering evidence of racial bias in the Hastings Police Department was fully understood by the Task Force. The Task Force accepted the challenges presented by the national discussion while considering them in the Hastings-on-Hudson context. Members of the Task

Force were clear that the Country is divided, and our Village is not immune. As a result of this process, the overall sentiment was that in our small community, building trust between members of the public and our police is the most appropriate approach, examples of what that might include are presented in the report. The Task Force also stressed the importance of continuing implementation of diverse hiring practices and offering a broad array of trainings focused on de-escalation, implicit bias and mental health. The Task Force recommended continued casual community interactions, prevention of militarization of the police force and partnering with the State and County to assist small police forces with accessing additional services they might need. The Task Force strongly believes that the State, which mandated this process, must do its own part to eliminate systemic racism at the highest levels. The State must investigate and reform laws and practices that perpetuate racial bias in policing which it is the obligation of all police officers to enforce A Resolution by the Hastings on Hudson Board of Trustees on this topic will be forthcoming.

## **HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON POLICE DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW**

The Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department (HPD or Department) facilities are located within the Village Municipal Building at 7 Maple Avenue in Hastings. The Department is a full-time agency comprised currently of 21 officers, who respond to approximately 5,500 calls a year. The HPD is responsible for the preservation of the peace, protection of life and property, enforcement of all laws, arrest of those who violate the law, and prevention and detection of crime. The Department also assists the local fire patrol and the local schools and various municipal departments.

HPD is governed by the Board of Trustees and has a three-member Police Commission, appointed by the Board of Trustees pursuant to Village Law Section 3-308. The Police Commission acts as a liaison among HPD, the Board of Trustees and the public. The Commission meets with the Police Chief regularly and is included in the recruitment and hiring of new officers.

Departmental operations are under the command of the Police Chief. Other ranks in descending order include one Lieutenant, four Sergeants, one Detective Sergeant, one Detective, and currently thirteen Patrol Officers. A Youth Officer, appointed by the Chief of Police from among the officers, handles most juvenile cases.

The HPD has grown in diversity in recent years. Currently 19% (4 officers) of the HPD self-identify as women and 19% (4 officers) self-identify as minorities. The July 1, 2019 data from the US Census Bureau describes the demographics of the village as follows: “White alone” 86.8%; “Hispanic or Latino” 6.6%; “Asian alone” 5.2%; “Black or African American alone” 2.9%; and further notes “White alone, not Hispanic or Latino” 81.7%.

The data gathered and public comment received in developing this plan makes clear that the HPD provides a broad range of services to our community. This of course includes addressing crime in the Hastings community and patrolling, but also involves many other types of service calls, as well as school and public safety services.

In 2019, officers from the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department responded to 5,667 calls for service. The following list lays out the type of calls from most to least common: 431 ambulance/aided calls; 313 burglar alarms; 210 fire alarms; 249 suspicious person/vehicle/activity calls; 201 automobile accidents; 126 animal complaints; 104 noise complaints; and 101 wellness checks.

In addition, in 2019 there were 135 arrests made. The arrests fall into three categories: Department of Motor Vehicle Arrests (DMV), Penal Law Arrests, and Graham School Arrests. At the time these statistics are drawn up, the Graham School was a highly effective residential program for youth who had experienced trauma or were in foster care programs. Almost all of the residents of the Graham School were non-white. In 2020, Graham closed its residential program and became a day school.

Out of the 135 arrests made, 69 were DMV arrests; all misdemeanors were of people over 18 years of age with varying race/ethnicity. There were 39 penal law arrests; of these 87% were

misdemeanors or violations and the remainder were felonies; 82% were of people over 18 years of age of varying race/ethnicity. There were 27 Graham School arrests; 74% were misdemeanors or violations and the remainder were felonies; 26% were of people over 18 years of age and all were non-white (corresponding to the ethnicity and race of the majority of residents at Graham). See Appendix B for more detailed statistics regarding ethnicity.

In 2019, the HPD also issued 580 Traffic Citations. Citation types include equipment violations, stop sign violations, red light violations and other aggressive driving violations.

The Department also provides school security details, fire alarm and lockdown drills, school crossing guard services, High School (HS) Senior internships and scholarships, a PAL officer in the HS and career day guidance in the Middle School, as well as other outreach efforts to youth in the community.

The HPD regularly conducts traffic details, assists with traffic engineering studies conducted by the Village, provides daily parking enforcement, and provides public safety at parades, festivals, downtown business events, marches, rallies, and all forms of public gatherings. The Department also hosts a myriad of community policing events designed to promote community-police relations.

In January 2020, the HPD began the process of obtaining accreditation from New York State. Part of the accreditation process involves review, update, and training on HPD equipment, technology, and policies.

# PROCESS

## **Task Force**

In September of 2020, the Village began the process of soliciting volunteers to serve on the Police Reform and Reinvention Collaboration Task Force. Village officials engaged in a Village-wide effort to seek residents interested in serving on the Task Force. Over 50 people expressed interest and a diverse group of 25 were invited to become members of the Task Force. All applicants who expressed interest were encouraged to remain part of the process and participate in the process by sharing their thoughts, ideas, and concerns.

In forming the Task Force, Village officials included people identified as essential in the NYS Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Resources and Guide for Public Officials and Citizens (“NYS Guide”) promulgated by the State in August 2020 such as:

- Membership and leadership of the local police force
- Members of the community, with emphasis on areas with high numbers of police and community interactions
- Interested non-profit and faith-based community groups
- The local office of the District Attorney
- The local public defender’ office
- Local elected officials

In addition, as recommended in the NYS Guide and to the extent possible and relevant to Hastings, effort was made to include persons associated with the following:

- Residents who have had interactions with the police
- Residents who have been incarcerated
- Local police unions
- Local education officials and educators
- Local neighborhood, homeless, and housing advocates
- LGBTQIA+ leaders and advocates
- Local health department and healthcare leaders and advocates
- Mental health professionals
- Business leaders
- Transportation and transit officials
- Legal and academic experts

By early October, the Task Force was formed. A [webpage](#) for the Task Force was created on the Village website. The webpage houses all meeting agendas, minutes, documents, and videos for the public to view.

## **Meetings**

The Task Force held a series of meetings that were open to the public on the following dates:

- October 14, 2020.
- October 28, 2020.
- November 12, 2020.
- December 2, 2020.

- January 2, 2021.
- January 27, 2021.
- February 10, 2021.

Wide ranging discussions occurred at the meetings. For example, the group compared budget metrics across Westchester County for local police departments. The HPD was ranked in the lowest quartile of Westchester County police departments in terms of the size of its police operating budget, and police operating expenses per resident. Additional topics included police policies and procedures, the NYS accreditation process and the role of the PBA. The group also discussed logistical and administrative issues such as the format and topics for the public fora, creating opportunities for input from the public, administering a survey, the timing for a survey and topics identified during the fora as most relevant in Hastings-on-Hudson.

The Task Force unanimously voted to recommend Power DMS software to the Board of Trustees for immediate implementation as a tool to speed up the HPD accreditation process and provide accountability and transparency for HPD training and policies. The Board of Trustees authorized purchase of the software on December 15, 2020 and currently the HPD is being trained in its application and use.

### **Public Participation**

Public engagement during the development of the draft plan was encouraged throughout the process. To promote engagement and accessibility, public comment was available in several ways including means that preserved the anonymity of respondents:

- Regular mail
- Anonymous drop box submission at Village Hall, the James Harmon Community Center, and the Hastings Public Library
- Email to [policereform@hastingsgov.org](mailto:policereform@hastingsgov.org)
- Anonymous webform through the Police Reform and Reinvention Task Force webpage and
- Verbally at the two public fora.

The task force conducted 2 public fora on:

- November 5, 2020.
- December 21, 2020.

The fora were widely advertised through Village wide emails, social media, posters, a prominently placed LED board; the Mayor's Message; School email; outreach to P-CoC and RISE (community race and inclusion groups) and the local newspaper.

The first forum was designed as a listening event to allow speakers to express their opinions on the topics and ideas that the Task Force might focus upon. Both in-person and anonymous participation was encouraged, and opportunities were provided for both online and off-line comment.

Once the topics most relevant to Hastings-on-Hudson were identified, four subcommittees were established to research and collect data on these topics including Equipment & Technology, Training, Community Policing, and Youth.

The second forum drilled down into the specific topics enumerated above in greater detail. The research undertaken by the subcommittees, the data they collected and the recommendations they made are more thoroughly discussed below. Several of the recommendations were made by more than one committee and are repeated so the source of the recommendation is evident.

Comments received during this phase included appreciation for the HPD and officer's responsiveness and availability to Hastings' residents; questions about first amendment related procedures and technology; anti-bias training; mental health support; restorative justice and topics raised by Hastings students. The comments can be read [here](#).

After the Draft Plan was released to the public, a second comment period on the Draft Plan occurred. Opportunities similar to those listed above were provided for comment. The public commented in writing (with both anonymous and signed messages), and verbally at a Board of Trustees meeting on March 16, 2021. Comments generally fell into three categories: complete support for the Plan as drafted with appreciation of the Hastings Police Department; general acceptance of the Plan with specific suggestions for improvements or requests for more data; and dissatisfaction with the Plan as drafted with some respondents urging the Board of Trustees to reject it wholesale. The comments can be read [here](#).

More specifically the comments included suggestions that the Plan should more explicitly address racism and the historical events leading to the need for the plan. There were requests for the inclusion of statistics regarding minority arrests and for more gender-neutral language. Some respondents expressed a desire for more data regarding training and the effectiveness of training, the public complaint process, and the Police Benevolent Association (PBA) contract. Some respondents expressed a desire to incorporate mental health professionals during mental health crisis events. There were also conflicting opinions about the value of police presence in schools and of funding of police equipment (in particular of weapons and of a K-9 unit). These and other comments are incorporated and/or addressed herein.

# THE SUBCOMMITTEES

## Equipment & Technology

### **Summary:**

The Equipment & Technology subcommittee was tasked with understanding the type and use of equipment and technology used by the HPD. With this information, the subcommittee made recommendations regarding the equipment necessary for the execution of police work as well as the safety and best interests of the community.

The Police Chief provided the subcommittee with a list of equipment and current technologies being used by the Department. The subcommittee compared the resources available to the HPD to equipment used in nearby village police departments. The Chief informed the committee that each piece of equipment available to an officer also has a policy that governs its appropriate use. These policies were also reviewed by the subcommittee.

### **Research and Data:**

- HPD equipment is comparable to equipment available in neighboring communities in quantity and quality.
- HPD is in the process of modernizing its vehicle fleet with green fleet technologies such as electric vehicles.
- HPD does not use Bola Wraps, Bean Bag Rounds, Plastic/Rubber/Foam Bullets/Impact Rounds, Pepper Balls, or Net Guns for individual engagement or non-lethal engagement. The HPD does use conducted energy weapons (tasers) and pepper spray.
- HPD lethal weapons include sidearms, patrol rifles and shotguns.
- HPD does not use tear gas, flash grenades, malodorant, military gear, or reinforced armored vehicles for crowd control. The HPD does use batons and shields.
- HPD has a civil unrest plan.
- HPD does not use wiretap technology, drones, internet surveillance, covert video recording or body cameras for surveillance. The HPD does use in-car GPS trackers, in-car cameras and voice recording technology on the in-car camera, HPD desk phone and HPD radios.
- HPD has a De-escalation Policy and Use of Force Policy applicable to both non-lethal and lethal weapons.
- HPD does not have in-house social workers and mental health professionals that respond to calls. Note: The Village has an Inter Municipal Agreement with the County to use the County Crisis Team if necessary and unlike some neighboring communities, the Village has on staff a Director of Narcotic Guidance who is a trained Social Worker, a Youth Advocate with a degree in Psychology and a Senior Services Coordinator.
- HPD is currently building an internal Crisis Intervention Team. Two officers are scheduled to attend Crisis Intervention Training at the Police Academy.
- HPD has formed a partnership with Westchester County Department of Community of Mental Health (WCDCMH). An officer has been appointed as a liaison to WCDCMH. WCDCMH will be notified and will follow up with patients on the types of calls noted below to ensure proper treatment is being administered:
  - Mental Hygiene Law (Form) 9.41
  - Substance abuse/overdose calls

- Acute calls for persons in crisis (those not covered under Mental Hygiene 9.41)
- Suicide / Attempted Suicide Calls
- St. Vincent’s Crisis Prevention and Response Team is available to HPD for after hours.

**Recommendations:**

- A range of recommendations were made regarding replacement or purchase of equipment.
- The Board of Trustees will continue to make operational and capital budget decisions regarding equipment in the best interest of the Village and the safety of the officers and public.
- The HPD will continue to conduct annual inventory reviews of HPD equipment and technologies so as to identify new equipment that needs to be purchased or equipment that needs to be upgraded.
- The Board of Trustees should ensure a thorough review of equipment and technology purchases by the HPD and will make informed decisions based on: nature, purpose and use of the equipment. The Board will gather applicable data to back its decisions. The Board of Trustees will be the final authority on these decisions. *Note: This is already the practice for all village operational and capital budget items for all departments.*
- Where possible without compromise to safety, provide public access to HPD policies.
- The Board of Trustees will review the complaint process and make a decision on a fair and transparent system.
- Encourage the County and/or the State to develop a shared service for mental health crisis response that provides round the clock ability to respond in crises involving mental health with continued use of the Westchester Crisis Team (currently available 9am – 9pm, Mon – Fri).
- HPD is currently building an internal Crisis Intervention Team. Two officers are scheduled to attend Crisis Intervention Training at the Police Academy.
- HPD has formed a partnership with Westchester County Department of Community of Mental Health (WCDCMH). An officer has been appointed as a liaison to WCDCMH. WCDCMH will be notified and will follow up with patients on the types of calls noted below to ensure proper treatment is being administered:
  - Mental Hygiene Law (Form) 9.41
  - Substance abuse/overdose calls
  - Acute calls for persons in crisis (those not covered under Mental Hygiene 9.41)
  - Suicide / Attempted Suicide Calls
- St. Vincent’s Crisis Prevention and Response Team is available to HPD for after hours.
- Partner with Westchester County and neighboring Villages and Towns on shared services such as records management.

**Training**

**Summary:**

The Training subcommittee was tasked with understanding the HPD’s efforts to ensure appropriate and valuable law enforcement personnel training; to understand relevant concerns and priorities of the community served by the HPD; to summarize and convey back to the community what the subcommittee learned; and to provide recommendations on law enforcement training as it pertains to the HPD.

The Police Chief provided the subcommittee with a list of all the trainings that the Department currently offers and the subcommittee reviewed the list. See Appendix C. Many trainings are mandatory and are offered through the County. The Chief also compiled a list of additional training possibilities that could be beneficial to the HPD.

### **Research and Data:**

- Data was compiled from several sources including the HPD and other available sources regarding law enforcement training.
- HPD has extensive training opportunities that have been made available to police officers.
- The leadership of the Village and the Police Department believes in and makes training available to officers, and the participation of senior members of the HPD in training underscores the Village's commitment to continuing education and in-service training.
- HPD receives mandatory training annually through Westchester County.
- HPD has two certified De-escalation Training instructors who will provide De-escalation Training to all officers.
- HPD has a certified instructor in Procedural Justice who will provide training in Procedural Justice to all officers. The first class is scheduled for March 30, 2021.
- HPD has an officer scheduled to attend Juvenile Officer Training and upon completion the Department will have two certified Juvenile Officers.
- One officer has attended Crisis Intervention training, with two additional officers signed up to participate in Spring 2021.
- Several officers are certified police motorcycle operators as well as bicycle and marine unit operators.
- Members of the Detective Division have attended the Criminal Investigators Course (CIC) and Crime Scene Management Course.
- The Village has annual training in sexual and workplace harassment prevention, discrimination, and implicit bias for all employees.
- The Village has a robust Diversity Policy for which all employees including the HPD have received training.
- Eleven HPD Patrol officers participated in a one hour virtual training related to the George Floyd incident that took place in Minnesota in 2020 and all Village employees (including officers) receive one half hour of Implicit Bias training annually through the Villages Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- The Training sub-committee saw nothing to indicate bias-based HPD stops during its review.
- HPD leadership remains committed to providing additional and extensive implicit bias training and other appropriate trainings in topics such as Procedural Justice and De-escalation for members of the Department.
- After extensive investigation, the Training Subcommittee recommended the purchase of "Power DMS". Power DMS is software that tracks compliance with training requirements and facilitates dissemination of new or amended police policies. The Task Force in turn unanimously recommended the purchase to the Board of Trustees for use by the HPD. The Board of Trustees approved the acquisition of the software in December 2020.

- The Village of Hastings-on-Hudson provides all employees with an Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which can be utilized in addition to wellness counseling by the "[Westchester BLUE Foundation](#)."
- During the pandemic, the HPD has used virtual training in various police related topics that includes video instruction and quizzes which can be completed during regular shifts avoiding overtime and providing the necessary social distancing.

### **Recommendations:**

- Purchase Power DMS Software to track compliance with training requirements, disseminate policies, and expedite the re-accreditation process (*done*).
- Recertify and maintain New York State Accreditation (*in process*).
- Conduct annual bias and self-awareness training for all officers (*in process*).
- Appoint a dedicated "Training Officer" position within the department.
- Maximize use of virtual training opportunities.
- Require all officers engage in cross-discipline leadership training programs.
- Require mandatory attendance at crisis intervention training for all officers.
- Investigate opportunities for police officers to decompress and encourage taking advantage of existing programs such as the Village Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and the Westchester BLUE Foundation Inc. services.
- Review, increase, and or re-allocate training budget if necessary.
- Encourage continued use of virtual training opportunities for officers.
- Encourage reading of material and texts that provide information on the history of race in America.
- Explore shared service opportunities for training with other municipalities.
- Invite volunteers in the mental health and drug addiction fields to lead small group discussions with officers to understand better these types of behaviors *vis-a-vis* criminal conduct and consider training programs for the same.
- Civilian Police Commissioners may reach out to local community race and inclusion groups, to better to understand any concerns regarding the HPD.

### **Community Policing**

#### **Summary:**

The purpose of the Community Policing subcommittee is to understand how our Village currently approaches community policing, both with regard to how the Hastings Police Department interacts with and supports community members and how community members interact with and support the Department. To do this, the subcommittee explored ways to elevate and expand the practices already in place and recommend additional strategies for productive community engagement. Section II, subsection 1 of the NYS Guide at page 22 addresses Procedural Justice and Community Policing. Within this subsection, the report states, "The premise of community policing is that community participation and assistance are crucial for maintaining public safety and building a police force responsive to the public." The subcommittee endorsed that premise and encouraged the HPD to continue to develop new ways to engage with the community.

#### **Research and Data:**

- HPD has existing policies and procedures to guide its community policing approach in the Village.
- HPD has a training curriculum covering topics related to community policing, including de-escalation, crisis intervention, and restorative justice.
- HPD currently operates numerous programs that actively promote community participation across a variety of constituencies, including:
  - Breakfast with Santa where the PBA invites the community to a free breakfast and Santa (HPD Chief) gives out candy and small gifts to the children.
  - Career Day at the Middle School (5th – 8th grade) where officers share their experiences of life as a police officer.
  - Police Adolescent Liaison (PAL) Office at the High School (9th – 12th grade) where plainclothes officers speak with students who seek them out (office provides a non-confrontational setting). *Note: officers do not patrol the school.*
  - PAL programs include a Badminton Tournament (held March 20-21, 2021), softball games and a Bicycle Rodeo (currently in the planning stages), other planned activities include the HUDDLE Program where HHS students and HPD officers will discuss topics surrounding community/student/police relations.
  - Police internship program for high school seniors & PBA scholarship for Criminal Justice Studies (12th grade).
  - Coffee with a Cop / Pizza with a Cop (aimed at the general public) which provides an informal opportunity to speak with a police officer.
  - Hastings PD Social Media presence (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) to keep the public informed of safety-related issues, department programs, and weather/traffic alerts (aimed at the general public).
  - Vacation checks where the department will monitor empty homes when residents request it (aimed at the general public).
  - Crime surveys where at the occupant's request, officers will conduct a physical survey of residences and businesses to help target-harden these locations and make them less susceptible to crime (aimed at the general public).
  - SALT program (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) where members of the HPD check on seniors in the village. *Note: The Parks and Recreation Department also has a robust Senior Outreach program and an “Are You OK” program to which resident can request inclusion.*
  - The Departments meet with each business owner in the downtown and updates emergency contacts for each business.
- HPD has an online presence and publishes information on existing programs and on important public safety topics (e.g. road closures, preventing identity theft and keeping car doors locked etc).

**Recommendations:**

- Village may hold a staff appreciation event, and include the police department .
- HPD may visit houses of worship and businesses to connect with residents (*ongoing practice*).
- HPD may conduct community meetings, organized by geography, throughout the Village or attend and provide information at community events to promote enhanced dialogue.

- HPD may engage in youth outreach in conjunction with the School District to increase exposure and comfort among young Village residents (i.e. PAL and trust building exercises) (*ongoing practice*).
- Create age-appropriate interactions with the Hastings Police Department to build trust, decrease fear and increase human connection; suggestions include:
  - School assemblies in the Elementary School to increase exposure and comfort among the youngest Village residents (e.g. Meet a Dog Program, Touch a Truck Program, etc.).
  - Extend PAL to the Middle School.
  - Create HPD Youth Advisory Council.
  - Create Youth Police Initiative (where at-risk young people participate in trust-building exercises with officers).
  - Summer Police Camp.
  - HPD tent at community events so that residents can engage with officers and learn more about community/policing programs.
- HPD will work in concert with the Village technology team, to develop the Department's online presence with a focus on:
  - Providing the public access to relevant HPD policies, particularly those focused on community policing and community engagement.
  - Creating an easily accessible online form to facilitate direct communication between the HPD and the community with a specific focus on enabling the public's submission of questions, complaints, compliments, and similar correspondence.
  - Publishing and distributing information on the existing community engagement programs (see above) to increase community participation.
- Establish a three-officer Community Relations Committee within the Department to work with the Chief of Police and the Civilian Police Commissioners who together will be responsible for coordination, development, evaluation and maintenance of community relations and update the current Community Engagement Policy to reflect this change.
- Create HPD database with alert capabilities, so that responding officers are aware of an individual's special circumstances (physical, mental, etc.) prior to the start of a direct engagement.
- Several recommendations were made for initiatives that are already HPD practices. These recommendations were not suggested or discovered in the research phase; however, updates were provided during the process and they are included above.

## **Youth**

### **Summary of Task:**

The purpose of the Youth subcommittee was to solicit feedback from young members of the Hastings community, with the goal of ensuring strong relationships between youth and the Hastings Police Departments and furthering open communication. The subcommittee organized,

and students were encouraged to volunteer for, three discussion groups among students at Hastings High School and Farragut Middle School where students discussed topics related to police reform and their thoughts about the HPD.

In the discussion groups with students, the youth were prompted to answer the following questions: What do you (youth) think about the police? What do you think the police think about teens? Does your race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, religion, and culture influence how you feel about the police and explain what you mean? Have you witnessed a confrontation with the police or experienced one yourself? What (if anything) do you think the police could do to improve their relationship with youth in the community? If you could give one message to the Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department, what would it be?

### **Research and Data:**

- In response to the questions posed, the students shared a combination of positive, negative, and neutral opinions about the HPD.
- Youth were encouraged to express individual thoughts, not necessarily a consensus.
- The subcommittee noted that parental influence played a large role in youth perception of, reaction to, and interaction with the police. Youth shared that their parents' experiences with police officers, both within Hastings and outside of Hastings, have informed how their parents have guided them to behave with police.
- Youth are paying attention to the broad conversation going on in our nation and want to be a part of positive change on a large scale to build up trust.
- Youth would like to be given the benefit of the doubt.
- There were comments that teens believe their youth, color and gender identity can play a role in their interactions with police.
- Students of color shared that they feel that they may be singled out by police when they are in a mixed group.
- Youth who are not cisgender relayed that authority figures in general may talk down to them.
- Interactions with female police officers in Hastings have been more positive and open.
- Youth thought that certain parts of the Village seem to attract a larger police presence particularly Warburton Avenue and Washington Avenue, where officers are perceived to write tickets for minor offenses, such as parking infractions.
- The Village has for many years supported a Youth Advocate program which under the general direction of the Youth Council coordinates youth activities within the Village in cooperation with community organizations such as Family to Family, the School District and the Parks & Recreation Department. The program is staffed by a Director, a Youth Advocate, and part time staff. The program is designed to provide a safe space for youth to recreate and communicate. In 2015, the Youth Advocate Program created The Way (Working Alliance for Youth ) Coalition and in 2018 this group received a five year Federal grant to prevent and reduce youth substance abuse by emphasizing local solutions for local problems. The Coalition is comprised of diverse community members who organize to meet the prevention needs of youth and family in the community. The Coalition undertakes a bi-annual survey on drug and alcohol use in the schools. <https://hastingscoalition.com/index.php/2020/03/05/hastings-community-survey-2019/>

**Recommendations:**

The subcommittee reported that the majority of their recommendations came directly from the youth that participated in the discussion groups and included the following:

- Generally, the students advocated for greater communication between themselves and police officers, either via assemblies or on a more daily basis and noted that conversations with students of color would be particularly helpful. Students also discussed the benefits of knowing officers personally and being able to reach out to a specific officer when there is a problem they would like to discuss.
- The School should consider partnering with the HPD to find ways for non-confrontational engagement between the HPD and the youth. It will be incumbent upon the School District and the HPD to determine which ideas are desirable and practical.
- Consider assemblies (e.g. “Meet a Dog Program”, “Touch a Truck” etc.) at the Elementary School to increase exposure and comfort among the youngest Village residents.
- Extend PAL to the Middle School
- Allow officers to dress down when they visit the schools. Wear a special shirt with the district’s yellow jacket mascot (*currently done*).
- Expand the PAL Officer presence to other locations at Hastings High School such as the cafeteria and scheduled classroom visits.
- Establish weekly "Lunch with an Officer" opportunities at each school.
- Create a program at Hillside and a Junior Officer League for Farragut Middle School.
- Meet monthly at each school (Hillside, Farragut, and Hastings High) with the Principal and Assistant Principal to walk around the school for 30 minutes together to say hello to children and adults and learn more about each school.
- Create a canine program. During monthly school visits, the officer assigned to each school could walk the building with the canine to say hello to children and adults. Suggestions include a border collie, lab, or beagle.
- Hold an annual meeting between representatives from HPD, student leadership, district leadership, and PTA where all parties could raise any concerns on safety or policing of youth.
- HPD should explore additional ways that the HPD can build trust with the youth.
- HPD should increase the amount of time officers are out of their cars and a visible presence in downtown areas.

Most recommendations in the report did not provoke comments from the public but certain recommendations received considerable scrutiny and residents expressed conflicting opinions about them. One of the major areas to receive comments was the section related to youth police relations, where youth expressed a desire for greater interaction with the police so as to promote trust, while some parents advocated for no police presence in the schools. The Board of Education (BoE) makes policy decisions related to schools and any decisions related to less or more police presence in the schools will be made in coordination with the BoE.

## **CONTINUING ACTIONS**

### **Assessing Outcomes**

The Board of Trustees of the Village and the HPD will assess the effectiveness of this process and the implementation of any recommendations by doing the following:

- Regular monitoring and progress reports will be compiled by the HPD and will be presented to the Board of Trustees.
- Continuous assessment will be carried out at the departmental level through the Police Chief's use of Power DMS software, as well as conversations with the officers.
- Continuous assessment will also be done through monitoring the "Contact Us" page on the website for public comments and concerns, as well as through direct contact with the HPD.
- A survey may be implemented to monitor progress.
- The Board of Trustees and HPD will discuss suggestions on how to measure the impact and effectiveness of training programs in terms of outcomes (changes in behavior) and not just outputs (numbers of person being trained).
- The Village will advocate at higher levels of Government for access to mental health professionals 24/7 to assist the HPD in instances where mental health is involved.
- The Village will advocate at higher levels of government to address mandates in the Civil Service Law which limit the availability of candidates for police positions.
- The Village will continue to support enhancements to the Youth Advocate Program, the Way Coalition and the Village Food Pantry, and look for additional approaches to address disparities in economic circumstance that may sometimes lead to disenfranchisement.

### **Identifying Adjustments**

Through the Assessing Outcomes process described above, HPD and the Board of Trustees will identify areas in which modification may be needed. Any adjustments would be at the discretion of the Police Chief and the Board of Trustees.

## CONCLUSION

The Board of Trustees, Village Management, the Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative and the Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department is acutely aware that recent and past US history includes too many incidents involving the police that have resulted in the deaths of unarmed civilians, predominantly Blacks and African-Americans. This condition is ongoing and urgently needs to be rectified and has undermined the public's confidence and trust in our system of law enforcement and criminal justice. Our belief as we conclude this investigation, is that government has a responsibility to ensure that all its citizens are treated equally, fairly, and justly before the law and in our small municipality we take that obligation seriously.

The Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department was found by the Task Force to be highly engaged, organized, and transparent. There is a positive history of community-focused officer participation and programs and, under the current Chief of Police there is strong momentum to add to the existing programs and expand upon the positive local presence of officers in our community.

There is nothing to indicate that the HPD engages in racially motivated police practices. Nor is there evidence that HPD engages in discriminatory or bias-based stops, chokeholds, use of force for punitive or retaliatory reasons, pretextual stops, informal quotas for summonses, tickets or arrests or the use of facial recognition technology. Nevertheless, the Village acknowledges that racial disparities and racial bias whether implicit or systemic exists in all human beings; this includes residents of our Village, our staff as well as our police officers. Continued efforts to increase transparency in police conduct should help to ensure that racially motivated police practices do not occur and efforts to increase community police engagement will build trust and showcase the humanity and caring of our police.

The HPD has a diverse staffing composition and is adequately equipped to perform its duties. There is no need or desire to equip the HPD with military style equipment and the Board of Trustees will continue to make equipment decisions in the interest of the safety of the officers, the safety of the public and the fiscal integrity of the Village. Training in the Department is both mandated and encouraged and new and different training will continue to be instituted regularly. The Board of Trustees and HPD will discuss suggestions on how to measure the impact and effectiveness of training programs. In recognition of the need for discrimination and bias training, the HPD has trained an officer as a Procedural Justice instructor who in turn will train all officers. The HPD is also committed to continuing the implicit bias training that has been started. The newly purchased software for tracking HPD policies and training will allow for transparency in assessing compliance.

The Department has several community outreach programs and is enthusiastic to engage in more. Outreach programs will not interfere with the core duties and responsibilities of the HPD and will be designed to foster trust and communication between the public and the HPD officers. Youth relations has been ongoing for many years in the schools and the School District welcomes and appreciates the interaction. The District supports future efforts between the School and the HPD to engage the students and create relationships. Through its outreach to youth the HPD will endeavor, by both its actions and through building relationships, to dispel mistrust of police and

create an atmosphere where the youth view the HPD in the Village as officers who fairly aid and protect Village residents, Village youth and the general public.

The findings in the Report and the comments garnered from the public highlight the extensive work that still needs to be done in our Village. Each of us needs to engage in introspection and consider our own implicit biases. If we are able to recognize these internal biases and identify roles we play in eradicating bias and discrimination moving forward, together we can achieve positive change.

# APPENDIX A

No. 203

## EXECUTIVE ORDER

### NEW YORK STATE POLICE REFORM AND REINVENTION

#### COLLABORATIVE

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of New York obliges the Governor to take care that the laws of New York are faithfully executed; and

WHEREAS, I have solemnly sworn, pursuant to Article 13, Section 1 of the Constitution, to support the Constitution and faithfully discharge the duties of the Office of Governor; and

WHEREAS, beginning on May 25, 2020, following the police-involved death of George Floyd in Minnesota, protests have taken place daily throughout the nation and in communities across New York State in response to police-involved deaths and racially-biased law enforcement to demand change, action, and accountability; and

WHEREAS, there is a long and painful history in New York State of discrimination and mistreatment of black and African-American citizens dating back to the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in America; and

WHEREAS, this recent history includes a number of incidents involving the police that have resulted in the deaths of unarmed civilians, predominantly black and African-American men, that have undermined the public's confidence and trust in our system of law enforcement and criminal justice, and such condition is ongoing and urgently needs to be rectified; and

WHEREAS, these deaths in New York State include those of Anthony Baez, Amadou Diallo, Ousmane Zango, Sean Bell, Ramarley Graham, Patrick Dorismond, Akai Gurley, and Eric Garner, amongst others, and, in other states, include Oscar Grant,

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Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Laquan McDonald, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray, Philando Castile, Antwon Rose Jr., Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George

Floyd, amongst others,

WHEREAS, these needless deaths have led me to sign into law the Say Their Name Agenda which reforms aspects of policing in New York State; and

WHEREAS, government has a responsibility to ensure that all of its citizens are treated equally, fairly, and justly before the law; and

WHEREAS, recent outpouring of protests and demonstrations which have been manifested in every area of the state have illustrated the depth and breadth of the concern; and

WHEREAS, black lives matter; and

WHEREAS, the foregoing compels me to conclude that urgent and immediate action is needed to eliminate racial inequities in policing, to modify and modernize policing strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and to develop practices to better address the particular needs of communities of color to promote public safety, improve community engagement, and foster trust; and

WHEREAS, the Division of the Budget is empowered to determine the appropriate use of funds in furtherance of the state laws and New York State Constitution; and

WHEREAS, in coordination with the resources of the Division of Criminal Justice Services, the Division of the Budget can increase the effectiveness of the criminal justice system by ensuring that the local police agencies within the state have been actively engaged with stakeholders in the local community and have locally-approved plans for the strategies, policies and procedures of local police agencies; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of the State of

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New York, in particular Article IV, section one, I do hereby order and direct as follows:

The director of the Division of the Budget, in consultation with the Division of Criminal Justice Services, shall promulgate guidance to be sent to all local governments directing

that:

Each local government entity which has a police agency operating with police officers as defined under 1.20 of the criminal procedure law must perform a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and develop a plan to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color.

Each chief executive of such local government shall convene the head of the local police agency, and stakeholders in the community to develop such plan, which shall consider evidence-based policing strategies, including but not limited to, use of force policies, procedural justice; any studies addressing systemic racial bias or racial justice in policing; implicit bias awareness training; de-escalation training and practices; law enforcement assisted diversion programs; restorative justice practices; community based outreach and conflict resolution; problem-oriented policing; hot spots policing; focused deterrence; crime prevention through environmental design; violence prevention and reduction interventions; model policies and guidelines promulgated by the New York State Municipal Police Training Council; and standards promulgated by the New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program.

The political subdivision, in coordination with its police agency, must consult with stakeholders, including but not limited to membership and leadership of the local police force; members of the community, with emphasis in areas with high numbers of police and community interactions; interested non-profit and faith-based community groups; the local office of the district attorney; the local public defender; and local elected

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officials, and create a plan to adopt and implement the recommendations resulting from its review and consultation, including any modifications, modernizations, and

innovations to its policing deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, tailored to the specific needs of the community and general promotion of improved police agency and community relationships based on trust, fairness, accountability, and transparency, and which seek to reduce any racial disparities in policing.

Such plan shall be offered for public comment to all citizens in the locality, and after consideration of such comments, shall be presented to the local legislative body in such political subdivision, which shall ratify or adopt such plan by local law or resolution, as appropriate, no later than April 1, 2021; and

Such local government shall transmit a certification to the Director of the Division of the Budget to affirm that such process has been complied with and such local law or resolution has been adopted; and

The Director of the Division of the Budget shall be authorized to condition receipt of future appropriated state or federal funds upon filing of such certification for which such local government would otherwise be eligible; and

The Director is authorized to seek the support and assistance of any state agency in order to effectuate these purposes.

G I V E N under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State in the City of Albany this twelfth day of June in the year two thousand twenty.

BY THE GOVERNOR

Secretary to the Governor

## APPENDIX B

The Uniform Crime Report divides crimes into two categories, Type One and Type Two.

Type One Offenses are:

- Murder, Rape, Robbery, Assault, Burglary, Larceny, and Motor Vehicle Theft.
- In 2019 there were 52 larcenies reported, 4 Burglaries reported, 2 Aggravated Assaults reported.

Type Two Offenses are all other crimes.

- The most notable type 2 crimes reported in 2019 were:
- 25 Criminal Mischief reported, 18 Simple Assault reported and 14 Controlled Substance, Use or Possess reported.

### **2019 Traffic Citations:**

In 2019 there were 580 Traffic Citations issued by officers of the Hastings-on-Hudson Police Department. Citations types include equipment violations, Stop Sign Violations, Red light Violations and other aggressive driving violations.

### **2019 Arrests:**

In 2019 there were 135 arrests made, these arrests have been separated into three different categories: Department of Motor Vehicle Arrest (DMV), Graham School Arrest, and Penal Law Arrest. The tables below will display an in depth look at each category followed by a summary with a percentage breakdown.

DMV Arrests:

In 2019, there were a total of 69 arrests made for suspensions / revocations which represents 51 % of the department's total arrests. A further breakdown of these arrests is as follows:

Sex:

- 67% of DMV Arrests were Male
- 33% of DMV Arrests were Female

Race:

- 27% of DMV Arrests were Male White
- 17% of DMV Arrests were Male Black
- 19% of DMV Arrests were Male Hispanic
- 3% of DMV Arrests were Male Asian
- 4% of DMV Arrests were Female White
- 25% of DMV Arrests were Female Black
- 4% of DMV Arrests were Female Hispanic

Age:

- 100% of DMV Arrests were 18 years of Age or Older

Category:

- 100% of DMV Arrests were Misdemeanors

Resident vs Non-Resident:

- 96% of DMV Arrests were non-Hastings-on-Hudson Residents
- 4% of DMV Arrests were residents of Hastings-on-Hudson

Graham School Arrests:

In 2019 there were 27 arrests made at the Graham School, which represents 20% of the department's total arrests. A further breakdown of these arrests is as follows:

Sex:

- 67% of the arrests made at Graham School were Male
- 33% of the arrests made at Graham School were Female

Race:

- 0% of the arrests made at Graham School were Male White
- 63% of the arrests made at Graham School were Male Black
- 1% of the arrests made at Graham School were Male Hispanic
- 0% of the arrests made at Graham School were Female White
- 33% the arrests made at Graham School were Female Black
- 0% the arrests made at Graham School were Female Hispanic

Age:

- 74% of the arrests made at the Graham School were under the age of 18
- 26% of the arrests made at the Graham School were 18 years of age or older

Category:

- 70% of the arrests made at the Graham School were for Misdemeanors
- 26% of the arrests made at the Graham School were for Felonies
- 4% of the arrests made at Graham School were for violations

Penal Law Arrests:

In 2019, there were a total of 39 arrests made for Penal Law Violations, which represents 29 % of the department's total arrests. A further breakdown of these arrests is as follows:

Sex:

- 74% of Penal Law Arrests were Male
- 26% of Penal Law Arrests were Female

Race:

- 38% of Penal Law Arrests were Male White
- 13% of Penal Law Arrests were Male Black
- 23% of Penal Law Arrests were Male Hispanic
- 21% of Penal Law Arrests were Female White
- 2.5% of Penal Law Arrests were Female Black
- 2.5% of Penal Law Arrests were Female Hispanic

Age:

- 82% of Penal Law Arrests were 18 years of Age or Older
- 18% of Penal Law Arrests were under the age of 18 years old

Category:

- 64% of Penal Law Arrests were Misdemeanor's
- 13% of Penal Law Arrests were Felonies
- 23% of Penal Law Arrests were Violations

Resident vs Non-Resident:

- 64% of Penal Law Arrests were non-Hastings-on-Hudson Residents
- 36% of Penal Law Arrests were residents of Hastings-on-Hudson

## APPENDIX C



Date: 11/17/2020

To: Chief Dosing

From: Sgt. John DeBlasio

Subject: 2020 Department Training.

Training conducted for the year 2020:

De-escalation: Common-Sense Tips for all Cops- In Service Training Program.

Death of George Floyd/ The response that might have been-In Service Training Program.

In The Line of Duty Verbal Judo / Body Language # 1 – In Service Training Program.  
Verbal Judo # 2.

Ambush Recognition / What Every Cop Needs to Know- In Service Training Program.

Throughout the year all officers receive additional training in the use of their duty pistol, patrol rifle and department issued shotgun. All officers must pass a qualification course of fire with all the above firearms and any off-duty firearms that they carry.

Additional In-Service training conducted throughout the year is:

Breaching for first responders

Any updated material relating to the Coronavirus

Officer Safety and Risk Management

The use of several types of ballistic vests / body armor

Counter ambush techniques

Target identification drills

Officers typically receive certification and refresher training in the use of the Conducted energy device (Taser)

Baton and OC spray.

NYS article 35 use of force

Any updated NYS Laws and changes to the Dept. manual.

Narcan nasal spray

Gas mask use

Training also conducted on any new or updated equipment

Principals of Investigation and report writing

Defensive Tactics techniques

All the above training is typically conducted throughout the year.

This year (2020) some of the training had to be put on hold due to Covid-19.

Thank You.

Sgt. John DeBlasio

## **APPENDIX D**

Police Reform and Reinvention Process Public Comments

[https://www.hastingsgov.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf3241/f/uploads/process\\_public\\_comments.pdf](https://www.hastingsgov.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf3241/f/uploads/process_public_comments.pdf)

Police Reform and Reinvention Task Force Draft Plan dated February 9, 2021 Public Comments

[https://www.hastingsgov.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf3241/f/uploads/draft\\_release\\_public\\_comments.pdf](https://www.hastingsgov.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf3241/f/uploads/draft_release_public_comments.pdf)



**APPENDIX E**  
**VILLAGE OF HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON**  
Municipal Building  
7 Maple Avenue  
Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706

**RESOLUTION**

On motion of Trustee Lambert, seconded by Trustee Lopez the following Resolution was duly adopted:

**28:21 -RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE POLICE REFORM AND REINVENTION COLLABORATIVE PLAN**

- WHEREAS,** the Village has performed a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices; and
- WHEREAS,** the Village has developed a plan to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices (the "Plan"), attached hereto; and
- WHEREAS,** the Village has consulted with stakeholders (including but not limited to: membership and leadership of the local police force; members of the community, with emphasis in areas with high numbers of police and community interactions; interested non-profit and faith-based community groups; the local office of the district attorney; the local public defender; and local elected officials) regarding the Plan; and
- WHEREAS,** the Village has offered the Plan in draft form for public comment to all citizens in the locality and, prior to ratification of the Plan by the Village Board of Trustees has considered the comments submitted; now, therefore be it
- RESOLVED:** that the Mayor and Board of Trustees ratify the Plan and direct the Village Manager to complete and submit a certification regarding the above and a copy of their Plan to the Director of the New York State Division of the Budget on or before April 1, 2021 at E0203Certification@budget.ny.gov.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>NAY</b>
Trustee Mary Lambert	X	
Trustee Georgia Lopez	X	
Trustee Morgen Fleisig	X	
Trustee Marc Leaf	X	
Mayor Nicola Armacost	X	

**CERTIFICATION**

I, Joseph L. Cerretani, Village Clerk of Hastings-on-Hudson, do hereby certify that I have compared the foregoing copy of the Resolution adopted at the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees on March 30, 2021 with the original now remaining on file at this office and that the same is a correct transcript therefrom and of the whole of said original.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and the official seal of the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson this 31<sup>st</sup> day of March 2021.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph L. Cerretani  
Village Clerk