

Monday, April 04, 2022
6:31 PM

THE REAL COST OF POLICING

Recently there has been a lot of talk about the budget for the Cold Spring Police Department. The Village of Cold Spring Police Benevolent Association wants the public to be informed of the actual cost to the taxpayers and not the misleading opinions of a few misinformed individuals.

In 2021 the entire police budget was \$483,111. That included vehicles, maintenance, salaries, computers, uniforms, telephones, radios, pens, paperclips, parking enforcement, and all the school crossing guards.

There are 905 taxable properties in Cold Spring. Simple math works out to each homeowner paying \$1.47 per day for 24 hours of police coverage. At three shifts per day it costs the taxpayer \$0.49 per shift.

That is less than the cost of one cup of coffee in the village.

The police department operates 24 hours per day, 365 days per year and is comprised of all part time officers who have retired from other police and law enforcement agencies providing the village with a wealth of experience, training and professionalism.

The village pays no benefits to the officers: ie. No medical, dental, vision, no vacation time or sick time. In fact the only time the officers get paid is when they actually work and then there is a state cap on that salary.

As for the comments regarding the sheriff responding to calls in the village it is highly unlikely they will be equal or faster than the 1 to 2 minutes it takes the Cold Spring Police to respond. The oft mentioned Nelsonville sub station is an unmanned office meaning that a deputy would be responding from somewhere in Philipstown or Garrison, and with the Sheriff's Department undergoing their own staffing constraints what would the level of service be like.

As an exercise, stand completely still, do not move a muscle for 8 to 12 minutes. Now stand completely still for 1 to 2 minutes.

Now add the stress of an emergency and then decide whom you'd want to come to your aid.

Regarding a suggestion that the Cold Spring Police only operate during the day and have the sheriff handle the overnights the commenter failed to take into account that the sheriff has a minimum overnight staff for the entire county. Once again that response time comes into play.

We all carry health insurance and auto insurance in case something happens. Doesn't your safety and well being deserve the same consideration.

The members of the Cold Spring Police Department not only answer emergencies but also respond to a variety of calls for service.

We open your car door when you lock your keys inside. We check on your house when you go on vacation. We check on your welfare when concerned family or friends say they can't reach you. We respond to noise complaints preventing you from sleeping. We are the first ones to check on smoke or burning odors. We come when you are in need of medical assistance or to just help you up after you've fallen. We take over school crossings when the guards are out sick. We secure roads when storms flood or bring wires down and contact the appropriate agencies to fix them. We help you look for your lost dog and get it back safely home. We work all holidays making sure you can enjoy them with your families.

Finally, accountability should be left to the Mayor and Board of Trustees and not to the county legislators who neither live here or have a stake in your comfort and safety.

Thomas Ciero, President
Village of Cold Spring Police Benevolent Association

ADVERTISEMENT