

U-Act Questions

Answered by Chief Lucchesi and the Town Board, July 10 2020

Please post photographs and brief bios of all employees on the NPPD, Village and Town websites and Facebook pages. Your community needs to know its community police force. Help us get to know each other.

The Chief has some concerns about this, but more than willing to discuss this with U-Act or any other group.

We appreciate your past community policing efforts. However, we haven't seen those efforts of late. We'd like to see you bring back officers on bicycles and on foot getting to know us and vice versa as soon as health and safety conditions permit.

Members of our agency have not stopped conducting foot patrols in the Town and Village. Officers walk daily. Additionally, when school is in session, they conduct foot patrols in each of the schools. Bike patrols have not been utilized as much due to staffing levels and not having as many officers trained. Several county agencies have requested the bike patrol training and we hope to have one scheduled next year.

Please keep the community informed on your Facebook page and website of your progress on The "8 Can't Wait" policing policies listed below, as directed by Governor Cuomo; Ban chokeholds and strangleholds, Require de-escalation, Require warning before shooting, Exhaust all other means before shooting, Duty to intervene and stop excessive force by other officers, Ban shooting at moving vehicles, Require use-of-force continuum, Require comprehensive reporting each time an officer uses force or threatens to do so.

Our current defensive action policy, available on our website, addresses all of these. Additionally, our reporting requirements are more stringent than what New York State requires.

Have the "Defensive Actions" that are noted in your minutes followed the 8 Can't Wait Steps?

Yes, the department policy adheres to all eight areas. In fact, the "Defensive Actions" noted in the minutes refers to the Town Board as Police Commission reviewing the reports submitted and reviewed by the police department.

Is "Defensive Action" the same as "use of force?"

Yes

What kind of documentation do you each review regarding "defensive actions?" Do you each review them every month?

The Town Board as Police Commission reviews the reports filed by officers as well as the investigative steps taken by the sergeants, lieutenant and chief to investigate the force to ensure it complies with department rules, policy, training and supervision. The Town Board as Police Commission's review is the final step in the review process. These are publicly reviewed at the monthly Police Commission meeting.

Many of our members believe that your response to the Paul Echols case and subsequent Citizen Advisory Committee resignations could have been handled better. We note that you seek volunteers to join a new committee and ask how you will empower it to provide thoughtful, informed and indemnified advice from New Paltz residents.

The New Paltz Town Council intends to put civilians on the Police Commission.

REQUEST TO UPDATE WEBSITE INFORMATION - Please describe on your website exactly what happens after someone files a complaint with the Police Commission.

Complaints are received and given to the Police Commission and the Lieutenant Police Chief. At which time the Lt. updates the Police Commission while the investigation is underway until a final report is delivered.

Who ultimately imposes disciplinary action? *The Town Board*

Do you as Commissioners have a role in that outcome? *Yes*

How can this process be improved? *Through the creation of a civilian Police Commission.*

If you go into Executive Session to discuss Disciplinary Action, please announce that as the purpose of the session.

REQUEST OF THE BOARD - We request that you make copies of your current contract with the police available to the public. Have you addressed concerns about the influence of police unions on police reform? We refer you to this on the power of police unions.

We will work to make these public.

Are NPPD employees required to reside in New Paltz? If not, why not? Having NPPD families attend the same schools, houses of worship, supporting our local stores, businesses and restaurants, will build trust and community cohesiveness.

NPPD employees are not required to reside in New Paltz and there may be legal issues in requiring the police personnel but not other employees of the town and/or village to reside in New Paltz. However, many of them are residents. They and their families attend the same schools, houses of worship and support local stores and businesses with the community they serve. In fact, many volunteer their time as youth coaches, scout leaders, firefighters and participate in community organizations.

Your website currently lists Neil/David/Marty as contract negotiators. Has this been updated? Can other stakeholders be appointed? *We will update this information*