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recommendations from Rural Awakening

2 messages

Pat Hults <hultsp@outlook.com>

Fri, Feb 26, 2021 at 3:21 PM

To: Bill Federice <federicebill@gmail.com>

Rural Awakenings recommendations for the committee.

Patricia Hults

Sent from **Outlook****AlternativePlanforAction_CountyRecommendations_Feb25.docx**

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Sun, Feb 28, 2021 at 12:39 PM

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Check out the official Town of Conesville Website at:

<http://www4.schohariecounty-ny.gov/government/town-of-conesville/>**AlternativePlanforAction_CountyRecommendations_Feb25.docx**

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Alternative Plan for Action
Schoharie County Sheriff Department
In Response to EO 203

EO 203 requires a plan of action leading to improvements in policing departments within the State of New York.

- **Citizens Collaborative Committee / Citizens Advisory Committee (or name TBD)** – As discussed and agreed by the Sheriff’s Office at the February 9, 2021 Law Enforcement Review Meeting and further discussed at the February 16, 2021 meeting, a Citizens Collaborative Committee (CCC) will meet quarterly for the purposes of reviewing compliance with the County EO 203 Plan and discussing law enforcement issues as they relate to the Schoharie County Sheriff’s Office. The CCC should report to the Law Enforcement and Judicial Committee any citizen’s complaint that they are aware of, review the data noted below as well as ~~annually~~ review policies of the Sheriff’s Office as needed. to see that they conform to current best practices. It is important that progress on the Plan be reviewed to identify what is and is not working and adapt strategies accordingly. As appropriate, the CCC will report to the Schoharie County Board of Supervisors Law Enforcement and Judicial Committee any findings or recommendations. If accepted by the Law Enforcement and Judicial Committee, the recommendations will be forwarded to the full Board of Supervisors for comments and/or adoption or to the Sheriff, as applicable. The CCC will consist of five Schoharie County citizen members appointed by the Board of Supervisors to two-year terms, to be reflective of diverse communities within the county; the Sheriff or his/her designee; and one member of the Board of Supervisors outside of the Law Enforcement Judicial Committee.
- **Transparency** - Policing policies and practices require transparency to earn public trust. Transparency means that the police department provide information to the public upon request in all police events. Transparency should include policies, officers’ disciplinary records, body camera recordings, other pertinent material, and complaints. Complainants must have the ability to review results of their complaint. Transparency must also be timely. NYS law now requires the release of disciplinary records through FOIL request; agencies should fully comply, in the spirit of transparency.
- **Implicit Bias Training** - The Sheriff’s Department shall continue to provide and the County shall support adequate and substantial training specifically focusing on implicit bias, and it shall be repeated/updated regularly, at least annually. Funding for such training is essential, and should be allocated by the relevant government body.
- **De-escalation Training** - The current emphasis on de-escalation training shall be continued and supported by the county. Funding for such training is essential, and should be allocated by the relevant government body.

- **Police Culture** - A police culture that does not tolerate misbehavior, and holds officers accountable should continue to be fostered, supported and promoted. This includes peer accountability and support, re-training when necessary, and firing and/or bringing criminal charges when appropriate. Leadership must be role models and enforce policies.
- **Mental Health Services and Use** – Not only should officers continue to have access to high quality mental health services, but the department shall continue to foster and strengthen a work environment that encourages and normalizes use of such services.
- **Law Enforcement Arrest Data** – Once available, the Schoharie County Sheriff’s Department and Citizens Collaborative Committee will review arrest data collected by the Court systems and arrest data collected by the Sheriff’s Office. The Court system data will be accessed on the public websites of the Division of Criminal Justice Services and the Office of Court Administration as mandated by the State under the New York State Police Statistics and Transparency Act enacted June 2020. It is recognized the usefulness of the data will be subject to the quality and timeliness of what the State provides. The intent of these ~~analysis-analyses~~ is to measure the impact of county policing on diverse members of the community, particularly those historically underrepresented and overly impacted.
- **Reporting Excessive Use of Force** – Studies indicate two of the most important deterrents to excessive use of force are intervention by other police officers and reporting excessive use of force by fellow police officers. The County Sheriff’s Department policy has a clear imperative to intervene when observing excessive use of force. The requirement to report excessive use of force is less clear and opens the door to under-reporting such incidents. The Sheriff’s Department should clarify the language of the policy to reinforce the need to report.
- **LEAD Program** –The Schoharie County Sheriff’s Office participates in a successful pre-arrest diversion program and that program is currently expected to be expanded.
- **Development of multi-agency critical incident response team**-The Sheriff’s Office is currently involved in the formulation of a critical incident response team, work and training on this effort should continue. ~~LEAD Program—The Schoharie County Sheriff’s Office participates in a successful pre-arrest diversion program and that program is currently expected to be expanded~~

In the course of the EO 203 review process, the Use of Force and related policies were completely revised by the Sheriff’s Department, continuing a process that had begun before the EO 203 order. These policies were fully shared with the public and input into changes was listened to, with some specific policies adjusted. The community members involved in the process are appreciative of the time, effort, and openness of the police officers involved. The

community members also recognize that some reforms are outside the scope of individual police departments.

~~Development of multi-agency critical incident response team The Sheriff's Office is currently involved in the formulation of a critical incident response team, work and training on this effort should continue.~~