


Police Department
City of Keene, New Hampshire

Date: January 10, 2022
To: Steven Russo, Police Chief SA-140
From: Todd B. Lawrence, Police Captain 
Subject: Calendar Year 2021 Recruiting Analysis

I. Identified Objectives

It is the policy of the Keene Police Department to actively conduct a recruitment program to the best extent able in order to fill all vacant positions as quickly as possible, using validated methods and instruments, and ensuring positions are filled with the most qualified candidates.

II. Demographics

The 2021 population of Keene stood at 23,047 (2020 est. US CENSUS). Males comprised 46.8% and females 53.2%. This does not include the population of Keene State College's (KSC) approximate 3,100 students or Antioch University, with an estimated 1,100 students. Additionally, Keene is the County Seat and the shopping and business center of Cheshire County. Keene is also home to Keene High School (KHS) with approximately 1,500 students and teachers present per day in attendance. It is estimated (by the City's planning department) that during a weekday there may be between 60,000 and 75,000 people in the City of Keene.

In 2020 the population of Cheshire County was at 76,458. The State's population is 1,377,529. It is a rural state, with the largest population density located in the area south and East of Concord, NH and, specifically, Manchester, NH. For recruitment purposes the following demographics are offered:

City of Keene: Population 23,047 (2020 est. US CENSUS)

- Females comprised 53.2 % of the population
- Males comprised 46.8% of the population
- 91% of the population is white
- <1% of the population is black
- <2% of the population is Asian
- >1% of the population is American Indian
- 5% identified as two or more races

Cheshire County: Population 76,458 (2020 est. US CENSUS)

- Females comprise 51.6% of the population
- Males comprise 48.4% of the population
- 92% of the population is white
- > 1% of the population is black
- 1% of the population is Asian
- > 1% of the population is American Indian
- 5% of the population is two or more races

New Hampshire: Population 1,377,529 (2020 est. US CENSUS)

- Females comprise 49.8% of the population
- Males comprised 50.2% of the population
- 94% of the population is white
- 1.5% of the population is black
- 2.5% of the population is Asian
- 1% of the population is American Indian
- 1% of the population is two or more races

The Keene Police Department's end of calendar year (CY) 2021 sworn ranks were as follows:

- Authorized full time strength during 2021 was 44
- 40 positions filled at end of CY 2021
- 90% of sworn officers were male (36)
- 10% of sworn officers were female (4)
- 5% of sworn officers are minorities (2)

Achieving a 50% female number of sworn officers for the department is unlikely. Therefore we use a nationally accepted number of 14%. If fully staffed at 44 sworn positions, this would lead us to a goal of having on staff a minimum of 6-7 (6.5) female officers, a goal we continually strive for.

The Keene Police Departments full and part-time non-sworn ranks (excluding crossing guards) were as follows:

- 20 non-sworn positions (includes Assistant County Attorney Prosecutor)
- 12 were female (60%)
- 6 were male (30%)
- 2 unfilled position (10%).
- All are Caucasian

III. Recruitment Efforts

In 2021 the Department's sworn officer shortages stayed fairly consistent between 4-6, budgeted positions. Our highest number of officer vacancies was at 6 budgeted positions. **Two (2) Probationary Officers were hired in calendar year 2021.** This brings the Department strength to 40 sworn at the end of 2021, which leaves us at the end of the CY with four (4) open, budgeted sworn positions.

In CY 2021 our department experienced two officer retirements. Another officer resigned from our agency and is now working in the private sector. The department did have a probationary officer who was terminated from employment. We did experience one retirement from our civilian employees. We also had three civilian employees resign. Two of those employees resigned while they were in a probationary training status. The third civilian employee, who was not on probation, chose a different career path.

In 2014, through efforts with the City Manager, City Council, and Finance Department, we have been authorized to hire one extra Officer above funded strength. This effort has been made to help mitigate the issue of only hiring to authorized strength, only to lose a trainee in the FTEP or having an Officer retire and leaving us again short of authorized funded strength. We see this effort as a step in the direction of having qualified Officers already hired before another Officer retires or resigns. As of this writing, we are still trying to fill this "one above" position, having never been able to achieve this through qualified candidates.

The department continues to use the Great Bay Community College (GBCC) testing alliance as our secondary testing/recruiting mechanism. The Great Bay Community College testing alliance only ran two (2) tests this year due to COVID-19 concerns. The department continues to successfully use the established testing alliance during our mixed hiring processes. The Department finds it more beneficial to advertise our open positions on-line. By soliciting applications on a more consistent basis, it allows the department to administer in-house hiring processes more frequently.

Additionally, we have in the past signed up for several colleges Job Boards advertising our open positions. This type of advertising and recruiting was extremely limited in 2021, due to COVID-19 concerns.

We continue to advertise our open positions with the use of social media. The department has accounts with Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The department also advertises our open positions on the City's website and has a dedicated website called kpdjobs.com. This site leads candidates to our department employment website. We continuously use the employment website Indeed, to advertise our job postings.

In addition to the above social media, the department has advertised our open positions on the following platforms: Police App.com, Military.com, Equal Opportunity Employment & Education Journal, and CALEA.

In CY 2018 we created a recruitment video. Since the video was created in CY 2018, the video is still relevant to today's department. The video was professionally done in order to attract candidates to our department. The video focuses on five different officers within the

department. Each officer explains what they may encounter on a daily basis. Some of the officers talk about the overall atmosphere of the agency. Other officers discuss why they were interested in applying to our department. The video also demonstrates the different types of department teams and other ancillary responsibilities within the department. The video lasts 2 minutes and 27 seconds. The video was posted on all of our social media sites as well as YouTube. The following link plays our video on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h81th1q-ZGg&feature=youtu.be>

As of this writing, the video was viewed 2,849 times on YouTube, and 20.3K views on our Facebook page.

We continue to have incentives in place to attract candidates from the heavier populated areas of the state (Central and Seacoast) and Certified Police Officer whether In-State or Out-of-State Certified.

The incentives were posted on our department website and social media sites. The incentive packages are as follows:

NH Certified Officers (\$5,000)

- Successful completion of Departmental Orientation (usually 30 days) \$ 1,500
- 6 months \$ 1,500 (successful interim evaluation)
- 12 months \$ 2,000 (+step increase, probation completion)
- \$ 5,000**

Out of State Certified Officers

- Successful Admittance to a NH Police Academy Class \$ 1,000
- 6 months \$ 1,500 (successful interim evaluation)
- 12 months \$ 1,500 (+step increase, probation completion)
- \$ 4,000**

Uncertified hires

- 6 months Probationary schedule increase (successful interim evaluation)
- 12 months Step increase (probation completion)

All newly hired probationary officers (certified or uncertified)

Vacation leave

-40 hours of vacation leave during the probationary period after completion of 6 months of employment and a successful interim evaluation

Relocation Assistance (if required to move from longer distances)

-Up to \$1,000 paid out on a reimbursement basis for moving, housing, or related expenses

We have the ability to start certified officers off at a higher starting pay grade within the CBA contract, due to their various levels of work experience. The department in the past has bought out certified officer's contracts with other local departments to allow them to move to KPD sooner than they would have been able to.

Although in CY 2021 the department hired two (2) new officers under the hiring incentive program, it is difficult to say if the hiring incentives played a role in the candidate's interest in the Keene Police Department. Neither of the officers hired were certified police officers. I have had only one (1) certified officer express enough interest in our department to start the hiring process. Based on our current shortage of officers, I would recommend keeping the incentives in place in order to stay competitive within the employment market.

As briefly noted above we expanded the offering of in-house written testing for all those who sent in applications. This has met with mixed results, which can be seen below in section IV.

IV. 2021 Sworn Officer Hiring Processes:

During CY 2021, the Department conducted **seven** hiring processes. Four hiring processes were in-house processes. Two processes were mixed hiring processes. The department had one certified hiring process. There were no individual hiring processes this year. An **in-house process** is when candidates express self-initiated interest in a career with our department. **Mixed hiring processes** are candidates that express self-initiated interest in a career with our department and candidates from the GBCC test. A **certified officer hiring process** are candidates previously certified that express interest in our department. An **individual hiring process** is rarely utilized at our department. There are certain circumstances this process will be utilized when a candidate cannot attend the other hiring processes listed above.

Those that take a Police Written Exam with our testing alliances are invited to the hiring process if they score a 75% or higher in either the overall score or the cognitive score (GBCC). GBCC written exams consist of three scores, cognitive, personality, and overall. Those who take our in-house test must score a 75% or higher on a validated Police Written Exam we purchase through a vendor.

It should be noted that we invite back most candidates from the previous processes that failed the written test or physical fitness test (PFT), with an emphasis on getting female and minority candidates to return if possible.

The **first** hiring process was held on January 25, 2021, an in-house process based on self-initiated interest. We invited thirty (30) candidates. From that, we received:

- 13 candidates stated they would attend
- 8 candidates showed for the process

Five of the candidates passed the written exam and scored a 75% or higher on the test. Later that day the five candidates that passed the written test were invited for a PFT. All the candidates showed for the PFT testing process. One of the five candidates failed the required testing.

This brings the total number of invitees to thirty (30), twenty-seven (27) males and three (3) females. Out of the total invitations only four moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

On January 26, 2021 oral boards were conducted as scheduled. Three of the four candidates were recommended by the oral board. None of the candidates passed the background phase and were released from this process.

Our **second** hiring process was held on April 12, 2021, an in-house process based on self-initiated interest. Eighteen (18) invitations were sent out. From that, we received:

- 7 candidates who stated they would attend
- 7 candidates showed for the process

Five out of the seven candidates passed the written exam. Later in the day all five candidates showed up for the PFT and four of the candidates passed the PFT.

This brings the total number of invitees to eighteen (18), sixteen (16) males and two (2) females. Out of the total invitations, four candidates moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

On April 13, 2021 oral boards were conducted as scheduled. All four candidates fully participated in the oral boards. Two of the four candidates were recommended by the oral board. None of the candidates passed the background phase and were released from this process.

Our **third** hiring process was held on June 14, 2021, as a mixed hiring process. We invited Fifty (50) candidates. Thirty-two (32) candidates were from the GBCC testing alliance. The other eighteen (18) candidates applied directly to the department. From that, we received:

- 8 candidates stated they would attend (1 from GBCC)
- 8 candidates showed for the process (1 from GBCC)

Five candidates passed the written exam and scored a 75% or higher on the test. Later that day the five candidates that passed the written test were invited for a PFT. As stated above one candidate from the GBCC written test took the PFT. Four of the six candidates passed the required testing.

This brings the total number of invitees to fifty (50), forty-five (45) males and five (5) females. Out of the fifty (50) total invitations only four moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

On June 15, 2021 oral boards were conducted as scheduled. Three of the four candidates were recommended by the oral board. **One candidate successfully passed the background phase and was hired by the department.**

Our **fourth** hiring process was held on July 26, 2021, an in-house process based on self-initiated interest. Sixteen (16) invitations were sent out. From that, we received:

- 6 candidates stated they would attend
- 5 candidates attended the process

Five candidates showed up for the written test. Four candidates passed the written exam and scored a 75% or higher on the test. Later that day the four candidates that passed the written test were invited for a PFT. Only two of the four candidates passed the required testing.

This brings the total number of invitees to sixteen (16), fourteen (14) males and two (2) females. Out of the total invitations only two moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

Oral boards were conducted as scheduled. Both candidates participated in the oral boards and both candidates were recommended by the oral board. **One candidate successfully passed the background phase and was hired by the department.**

Our **fifth** hiring process was held on September 20, 2021, an in-house process based on self-initiated interest. Twenty (20) invitations were sent out. From that, we received:

- 5 candidates stated they would attend
- 3 candidates attended the process

The three candidates that showed up for the written test, all three passed the written exam and scored a 75% or higher. Later that day the three candidates that passed the written test were invited for a PFT. Only two of the three candidates passed the required testing.

This brings the total number of invitees to twenty (20), sixteen (16) males and four (4) females. Out of the total invitations only two moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

Oral boards were conducted as scheduled. Both candidates participated in the oral boards and both candidates were recommended by the oral board panel. None of the candidates passed the background phase and were release from this process.

Our **sixth** hiring process was held on December 13, 2021, as a mixed hiring process. We invited Fifty-one (51) candidates. Twenty-nine (29) candidates were from the GBCC testing alliance. The other twenty-two (22) candidates applied directly to the department. From that, we received:

- 7 candidates stated they would attend
- 5 candidates attended the process

Four candidates passed the written exam and scored a 75% or higher on the test. Later that day the four candidates that passed the written test were invited for a PFT. As None of the candidates from the GBCC written test took the PFT. All four of the candidates passed the required testing.

This brings the total number of invitees to fifty-one (51), forty-two (42) males and nine (9) females. Out of the total invitations only four moved onto the oral board phase of the hiring process.

On December 14, 2021 oral boards were conducted as scheduled. Three of the four candidates were recommended by the oral board. At the time of this writing, these candidates have not finished the background phase.

Our **Seventh** hiring process was with a **certified officer**. This candidate was a male. The processes started on December 22, 2021. The candidate passed both the PFT and oral board. This candidate is currently in our background phase.

V. Overall Sworn Hiring Statistics for 2021:

Invited candidates, Male:	143
Invited candidates, Female:	25
Total	168
Invited candidates that actually showed up:	35 (20.8% of total invitees)
Passed PFT:	21 (60% of those that showed up)
Passed oral board:	16 (76.1% of those who passed PFT)
Passed background investigation:	2 (12.5% of those who passed oral board)
Hired	2 (12.5% of those who passed oral board;

9.5% of those who passed the PFT; 1.1% of all those invited)

There was a slight increase in the number of candidates invited in CY 21 from the previous calendar year. The difference in the number of invited candidates from CY 20 (138) to CY 21 (168) is 30 or up 21.7%. This slight increase is encouraging, but still significantly lower than the number of invitees in CY 19 (376).

VI. Civilian Position Hiring Processes

In CY 2021 the department ran two hiring processes for our open full-time Dispatcher positions. One hiring process was held in January, the other process was held in November. The department hired two full-time dispatchers from the January hiring process. The dispatchers we hired both resigned during the late phases of their field training. We did not hire any dispatch candidates from the November hiring process. We are currently accepting applications for two full-time Dispatcher positions. The next hiring process will likely occur in early CY 2022.

The department also had a hiring process for a new civilian position of Community Liaison Specialist. This process was held in February. The department successfully hired a candidate for that position.

We continue our practice of seeking assistance from the City's Human Resources (HR) Department for the hiring of non-sworn positions. This assistance centers on advertisement, the use of their automated database for candidates to apply rather than applying directly to the Police Department, as well as assistance in notification to those who have applied for the position posted.

VII. Ongoing Activities:

Our department has reviewed the Governor's LEACT Recommendations for Hiring Practices and Background Investigations. The Keene Police Department has done its best to recruit and hire a diverse law enforcement workforce. Our background investigations exceed the LEACT recommendations and subsequent Police Standards and Training Council rule changes to vet out any candidates who possesses or demonstrate an outward bias towards a protected group. This vetting process is done through an aggressive polygraph examination and subsequent background investigation interviews.

Both our College Liaison Officer (CLO) at Keene State College and our School Resource Officer (SRO) at Keene High School continue to provide meaningful interaction between both high school and college students at their respective schools, solidifying the visibility and professionalism of the Department.

In light of the difficulty of hiring female officers, the Department has strived to retain those that we have on staff. To this end, one has achieved the position of detective and remains in that position as of this writing, as well as being a defensive tactics instructor and being on the

current Sergeants promotion list; one is a Field Training Officer and a OC instructor. The third is on the night shift who has expressed interest in the Collision Analysis Team. The fourth officer recently entered the full time Police Academy.

VIII. Conclusion:

Recruiting in this part of the state has historically been challenging, and continues to be. Younger candidates are often pulled through social and family contacts to the more populated areas of the south central and eastern portion of the State. This, coupled with resource and budgetary constraints, makes non-standard recruiting practices difficult. Over the recent past we have used a variety of techniques, to include newspaper and radio ads, the mentioned Police Testing Alliances, college fairs, local job fairs, various web sites, and word of mouth. We have also committed to the recruitment of veterans.

What we have found is that the best outcomes is the continuation of our own hiring process and the established testing alliances to rely on a large number of candidates, as well as our web site, FaceBook page, public web sites such as Police App.com, Military.com and college bulletin boards. These constant hiring processes gives us the best chance of drawing a variety of minority and females from a wide area of New England. We also continuously attempt to recruit certified officers from surrounding agencies and elsewhere.