



# Department of Police



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Chief of Police

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May 18, 2015  
Council Of Neighborhoods  
President Holly Wills

I would like take this opportunity to thank the Council of Neighborhoods for your continued support by voicing your public opposition to the Mayor's veto. This veto would have eliminated three (3) Neighborhood Initiative Officers, three (3) School Resource Officers, and all cell phone communications between the Neighborhood Officers and the citizens that they serve.

The partnership that exists with the Meriden Police Department and the Council of Neighborhoods is critical to the success of the Community Policing Program. We have successfully reduced crime over the last 10 years and have grown the program to include three (3) supervisors and nine (9) officers. The School Resource Officer program has also grown to six (6) with an officer recently added to the elementary schools.

This veto would have reduced the Neighborhood Initiative Officer Program by 33% and the School Resource Officer Program by 50%. These cuts would have a detrimental effect on our community engagement efforts and crime reduction strategy. As we've seen in cities like Ferguson, MO, police departments that aren't engaged in their community are more likely to experience negative social consequences.

The attempt to eliminate cell phone communication between the Neighborhood Initiative Officers and the citizens they serve would have an equally detrimental effect in terms of response times, service delivery, and quality of life. I recognize the importance of instant communication between the citizens and the Neighborhood Officers. These dedicated officers often answer their cell phones and address neighborhood concerns even though they may be off-duty at the time of the contact.

We are fortunate to have a City Council that is in touch with its constituents and recognizes the importance of community engagement by continuing to support our Neighborhood Initiative Program and School Resource Officer Program. This was quite evident by the Council's unanimous vote to reject the Mayor's veto in reference to these two line items within the Police Department's budget.

I look forward to continuing this valued partnership in an effort to make Meriden a safer place to live and work.

Jeffry W Cossette,  
Chief of Police