

Paula Stotts
Mechanic Falls
LD 726

Good day legislators,

I'm reaching out to you as a council person from the town of Mechanic Falls who's town police department and it's tax payers are tired of being taken advantage of by the bigger towns who are constantly stealing our new police recruits straight out of the academy due to the lack of consequences monetarily or other wise being to the towns .

Changing laws and reimbursement costs around Police academy formulation is needed in order to make it fair for towns who are being forced to eat a portion of the costs paid to send and graduate individuals from MCJA and then having other larger towns coming along enticing them away from the town that foot the bill .This-one is a multi-level issue that needs being addressed .

Here is what Our police Chief Goss along with our town financial over seer Lisa Provost came up with for what it has cost our town to send an individual through the MCJA and what then we are reimbursed when another Department steals them right after graduation from the MCJA

New Police Officer Costs as of 6/2024

Phase I	\$426.00	
Phase II	\$426.00	
Academy	\$3,000.00	
Physical	\$50.00	
Pyshe Eval	\$800.00	
Polygraph	\$300.00	
Uniforms	\$1,680.00	
Vest	\$1,237.00	
12 weeks on the job training	\$12,771.36	
Academy pkg	\$1,363.00	
Blue gun	\$62.00	
Blue tazer	\$64.00	
tolls for travel to Academy	\$41.25	
mileage reimbursement to Academy	\$1,411.02	
overtime for Officers to cover shifts	\$31,571.00	

Total costs for new officer \$55,202.63

Last Reimbursement Received \$48,816.75

As you can see we are losing money each time we send someone to the MCJA and then they are promptly lured to a bigger department. In the last year we have lost at least 4 individuals this way most within months of graduating the MCJA .And its not just a monetary cost but it's also hard physically on the officers of department both manpower and mental health wise who remain behind and then are forced to start from scratch with the next new recruit.

This kind of behavior hurts small departments like Mechanic Falls and Mexico who just shut down their PD due to these same hiring issues. There needs to be legislative changes to impose both monetary and legal consequences for departments doing this. Also departments/towns should be allowed to require individuals who haven't been through the Academy to have to sign contracts that require them to stay a certain amount of time with the department that puts them through the academy.

We are told by our towns legal council that Maine law prohibits this and it needs to be removed and made so departments can choose to do this practice if they want to in order to protect the town from being a revolving door like Mechanic Falls has dealt with especially sense Covid.

Thank you for time and efforts in correcting these inequalities that harm small towns and their small departments.

Sincerely,
Paula J Stotts Council person town of Mechanic Falls