

TRUSTEES:  
Joseph Kozloski  
Peter J. Grasse, III  
Gregory S. Smith  
Natasha Law

ATTORNEY FOR VILLAGE  
Ted Hilscher, Esq.



President  
JOSEPH KOZLOSKI  
Vice President  
LISA COPE  
Clerk

## VILLAGE OF CATSKILL

422 MAIN STREET  
CATSKILL, NEW YORK 12414

Tel. (518) 943-3830  
FAX (518) 943-7606  
TTY 1-800-421-1220

### NEW YORK STATE POLICE REFORM AND REINVENTION COLLABORATIVE PLAN CERTIFICATION FORM

I, Joseph Kozloski, as Vice-President of the Village of Catskill, hereby certify the following pursuant to Executive Order No. 203 issued by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo on June 12, 2020:

- The Local Government has performed a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices.
- The Local Government has developed a plan, attached hereto, to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices (the Plan).
- The Local Government has consulted with stakeholders (including but not limited to; membership and leadership of the local police force; members of the community, with emphasis in areas with high numbers of police and community interactions; interested non-profit and faith-based community groups; the local office of the district attorney; the local public defender; and the local elected officials) regarding the Plan.
- The Local Government has offered the Plan in draft form for public comment to all citizens in the locality and prior to adoption of the Plan by local legislative body, has considered the comments submitted; and
- The legislative body of the Local Government has ratified or adopted the Plan by local or resolution.

Joseph Kozloski

Name

3/30/2021

Date

Joseph D Kozloski

Signature

Vice - President

Title

**Resolution for Village of Catskill  
Village Board Police Reform  
Resolution 5 of 2021**

WHEREAS, Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order 203 directing that each local government entity in New York State with a police agency perform a comprehensive review of the police agency's deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices and develop a plan to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and to address an racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color, and

WHEREAS, in accordance with such Executive Order, the Catskill Village Board did convene Chief David Darling and stakeholders in the community to develop such plan, which considered evidence-based policing strategies, including but not limited to, use of force policies, procedural justice; any studies addressing systemic racial bias or racial justice in policing; implicit bias awareness training; de-escalation training and practices; law enforcement assisted diversion programs; restorative justice practices; community-based outreach and conflict resolution; problem-oriented policing; hot spots policing; focused deterrence; crime prevention through environmental design; violence prevention and reduction interventions; model policies and guidelines promulgated by the New York State Municipal Police Training Council; and standards promulgated by the New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program, and

WHEREAS, a committee duly appointed by the Catskill Village Board, and chaired by trustee Natasha Law did consult with stakeholders, including but not limited to membership and leadership of the local police force; members of the community, with emphasis in areas with high numbers of police and community interactions; interested non-profit and faith-based community groups; the local office of the district attorney; and local elected officials, and created a plan to adopt and implement the recommendations resulting from its review and consultation, including any modifications, modernization, and innovations to its policing deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, tailored to the specific needs of the community and general promotion of improved police agency and community relationships based on trust, fairness, accountability, and transparency, and which seek to reduce any racial disparities in policing, and

WHEREAS, the plan developed by said committee was offered for public comment at a duly noticed public hearing on March 24, 2021, and after consideration of comments made at said public hearing,

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, the Catskill Village Board hereby adopts by resolution the New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Plan for the Village of Catskill, March 2021, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a copy hereof.

Motion made by Trustee Kozloski, Seconded by Trustee Grasse and voted as follows:

AYES:    NAYES:    ABSENT:

CARRIED:

JOSEPH KOZLOSKI, Vice-President	X
PETER GRASSE, Trustee	X
NATASHA LAW, Trustee	X
GREG SMITH, Trustee	X

CERTIFICATION:

STATE OF NEW YORK:  
COUNTY OF GREENE:

I, Lisa Cope, do hereby verify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution unanimously adopted by the Village of Catskill Village Board, Greene County, New York, on the 10th day of March 2021.

CLERK



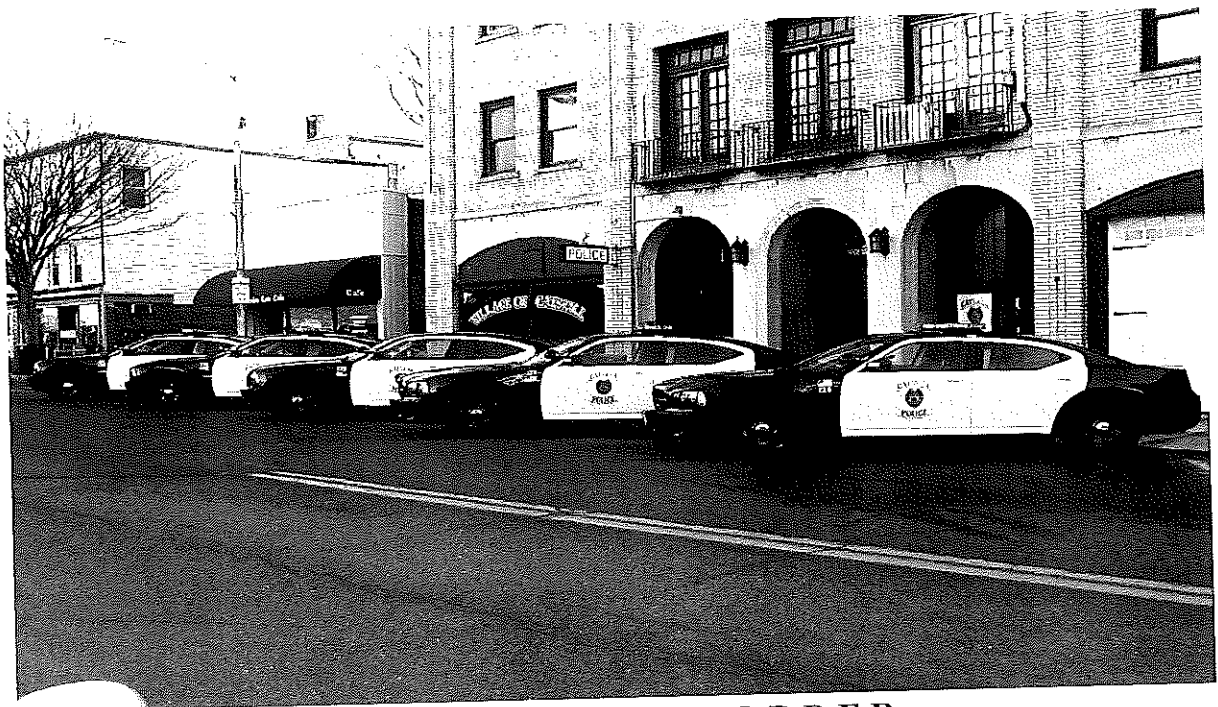
**NEW YORK STATE POLICE REFORM AND  
REINVENTION COLLABORATIVE  
PLAN  
for the  
VILLAGE OF CATSKILL**



MARCH 2021

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Executive Order 203	3-6
Introduction	7
Municipal Characteristics	8
Committee	9
The Catskill Police Department	10-12
Community Listening and Learning	13-16
Committee Recommendations	17-19
Conclusion	20



**EXECUTIVE ORDER**  
**NEW YORK STATE POLICE REFORM AND REINVENTION**  
**COLLABORATIVE**

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of New York obliges the Governor to take care that the laws of New York are faithfully executed; and

WHEREAS, I have solemnly sworn, pursuant to Article 13, Section 1 of the Constitution, to support the Constitution and faithfully discharge the duties of the Office of Governor; and

WHEREAS, beginning on May 25, 2020, following the police-involved death of George Floyd in Minnesota, protests have taken place daily throughout the nation and in communities across New York State in response to police-involved deaths and racially-biased law enforcement to demand change, action, and accountability; and

WHEREAS, there is a long and painful history in New York State of discrimination and mistreatment of black and African-American citizens dating back to the arrival of the first enslaved Africans in America; and

WHEREAS, this recent history includes a number of incidents involving the police that have resulted in the deaths of unarmed civilians, predominantly black and African-American men, that have undermined the public's confidence and trust in our system of

law enforcement and criminal justice, and such condition is ongoing and urgently needs to be rectified; and

WHEREAS, these deaths in New York State include those of Anthony Baez, Amadou Diallo, Ousmane Zango, Sean Bell, Ramarley Graham, Patrick Dorismond, Akai Gurley, and Eric Garner, amongst others, and, in other states, include Oscar Grant, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Tamir Rice, Laquan McDonald, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray, Philando Castile, Antwon Rose Jr., Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, amongst others,

WHEREAS, these needless deaths have led me to sign into law the Say Their Name Agenda which reforms aspects of policing in New York State; and

WHEREAS, government has a responsibility to ensure that all of its citizens are treated equally, fairly, and justly before the law; and

WHEREAS, recent outpouring of protests and demonstrations which have been manifested in every area of the state have illustrated the depth and breadth of the concern; and

WHEREAS, black lives matter; and

WHEREAS, the foregoing compels me to conclude that urgent and immediate action is needed to eliminate racial inequities in policing, to modify and modernize policing strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and to develop practices to better address the needs of communities of color to promote public safety, improve community engagement, and foster trust; and

WHEREAS, the Division of the Budget is empowered to determine the appropriate use of funds in furtherance of the state laws and New York State Constitution; and

WHEREAS, in coordination with the resources of the Division of Criminal Justice Services, the Division of the Budget can increase the effectiveness of the criminal justice system by ensuring that the local police agencies within the state have been actively engaged with stakeholders in the local community and have locally approved plans for the strategies, policies and procedures of local police agencies; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of the State of New York, in particular Article IV, section one, I do hereby order and direct as follows:

The director of the Division of the Budget, in consultation with the Division of Criminal Justice Services, shall promulgate guidance to be sent to all local governments directing that:

Each local government entity which has a police agency operating with police officers as defined under 1.20 of the criminal procedure law must perform a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and develop a plan to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color.

Each chief executive of such local government shall convene the head of the local police agency, and stakeholders in the community to develop such plan, which shall consider evidence-based policing strategies, including but not limited to, use of force policies, procedural justice; any studies addressing systemic racial bias or racial justice in policing; implicit bias awareness training; de-escalation training and practices; law enforcement assisted diversion programs; restorative justice practices; community-based outreach and conflict resolution; problem-oriented policing; hot spots policing; focused deterrence; crime prevention through environmental design; violence prevention and reduction interventions; model policies and guidelines promulgated by the New York State Municipal Police Training Council; and standards promulgated by the New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program.

The political subdivision, in coordination with its police agency, must consult with stakeholders, including but not limited to membership and leadership of the local police force; members of the community, with emphasis in areas with high numbers of police and community interactions; interested non-profit and faith-based community groups; the local office of the district attorney; the local public defender; and local elected officials, and create a plan to adopt and implement the recommendations resulting from its review and consultation, including any modifications, modernizations, and innovations to its policing deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, tailored to the specific needs of the community and general promotion of improved police agency and community relationships based on trust, fairness, accountability, and transparency, and which seek to reduce any racial disparities in policing.



Such plan shall be offered for public comment to all citizens in the locality, and after consideration of such comments, shall be presented to the local legislative body in such political subdivision, which shall ratify or adopt such plan by local law or resolution, as appropriate, no later than April 1, 2021; and

Such local government shall transmit a certification to the Director of the Division of the Budget to affirm that such process has been complied with and such local law or resolution has been adopted; and

The Director of the Division of the Budget shall be authorized to condition receipt of future appropriated state or federal funds upon filing of such certification for which such local government would otherwise be eligible; and

The Director is authorized to seek the support and assistance of any state agency to effectuate these purposes.

G I V E N under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State in the City of Albany this twelfth day of June in the year two thousand twenty.

BY THE GOVERNOR

Secretary to the Governor

## **INTRODUCTION**

This plan is intended to aid the Village of Catskill and its Police Department by ensuring that law enforcement services are being performed and will continue to be performed in a fair and just manner.

Natasha Law, Village of Catskill Trustee, established the Police Reform & Reinvention Collaborative Committee as directed by Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 203 of June 12, 2020. After George Floyd's murder we have all, once again, witnessed disproportionate injustice, racism, and oppression in our communities. This process was structured according to the guidance provided in the New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Handbook and required community input and participation along with a full assessment of The Catskill Police Department's policies and procedures.

The Village of Catskill has committed to a full review of its police policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that all citizens are treated equally and fairly under the law and that our law enforcement agency is trained in understanding and eliminating racism and injustice in all our policing policies and practices.

The Village of Catskill understands that maintaining public safety is extremely important and is one of the essential roles of government. To achieve that goal, there must be mutual trust and respect between police and the communities they serve.

The process for the Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative were as follows:

- Review the needs of the community served by the Catskill Police Department and evaluate the department's current policies and practices.
- Involve the entire community in the discussion by way of public and zoom meetings and by a survey.
- Establish and evaluate policies that allow police to safely perform their duties.
- Develop policy recommendations resulting from this review.
- Offer information and allow public comment at a public hearing.
- Present the plan to the board of trustees to adopt.
- Certify adoption of the plan to the State Budget Director on or before April 1, 2021.

## **MUNICIPAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The Village of Catskill is a small village in the Town of Catskill in upstate N.Y. with a 2.2 square mile radius.

As of the census of 2010, there were 4,081 people, 1,565 households, and 1,026 families residing in the village. The population density was 1,962.0 (2000) people per square mile (757.0 per km<sup>2</sup>). There were 2,048 housing units at an average density of 914.9 per square mile (2002) (353.0 per km<sup>2</sup>). The racial makeup of the village was 60.40% White, 30.73% Black or African American, 0.39% Native American, 0.61% Asian, 0.02% Pacific Islander, 2.48% from other races, and 3.37% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race was 7.22 (4% Mexican) of the population.

There were 1,765 households, out of which 29.8% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 38.9% were married couples living together, 18.3% had a female householder with no husband present, and 37.6% were non-families. 31.2% of all households were made up of individuals, and 12.9% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.39 and the average family size was 2.99.

In the Village, the population was spread out, with 25.5% under the age of 18, 8.2% from 18 to 24, 26.7% from 25 to 44, 22.2% from 45 to 64, and 17.5% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 37 years. For every 100 females, there were 89.0 males. For every 100 females aged 18 and over, there were 85.5 males.

The median income for a household in the village was \$28,075, and the median income for a family was \$34,635. Males had a median income of \$32,857 versus \$21,578 for females. The per capita income for the village was \$15,169. About 16.6% of families and 19.0% of the population were below the poverty line, including 29.1% of those under age 18 and 9.9% of those age 65 or over.

## **COMMITTEE**

The Village of Catskill Chief of Police David Darling requested Village Trustee Natasha Law to chair the committee for the Police Reform Collaborative. A committee was formed from members of the community with different ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds.

Committee members are:

Natasha Law- [nlaw@villageofcatskill.net](mailto:nlaw@villageofcatskill.net) - Business Owner and Village Trustee  
Junait Shah- [junaitshah@catskillcsd.org](mailto:junaitshah@catskillcsd.org) - Catskill High School Principal  
Mayra Johnson- [mayramjohnson@icloud.com](mailto:mayramjohnson@icloud.com) - Family Service Worker/Advocate  
Elliott Matos- [elliottmatos@gmail.com](mailto:elliottmatos@gmail.com) - Catskill Food Pantry volunteer/Student at Bard  
Sam Aldi- [samaldi@yahoo.com](mailto:samaldi@yahoo.com) - Business Owner  
Joe Stanzone- [jstanzone@discovergreene.com](mailto:jstanzone@discovergreene.com) - Greene County District Attorney  
Rita Taylor- (does not have email) - Community Member.  
Willie Davis- (does not have email) - Deacon of 2nd of Baptist Church Main Street  
Patti Dushane- [pattidushane86@gmail.com](mailto:pattidushane86@gmail.com) - Community Volunteer/Matthew 25 Food Pantry

Unfortunately, Rita Taylor had to remove herself from the committee for personal reasons on January 26, 2021.

Throughout this process, John Holt, Catskill EMS and Catskill Fire Chief, could not commit to being on the committee full time but he was considered a junior Committee Member. He actively joined in conversations, reviewed minutes and policies and procedures, and provided great feedback from the perspective of a lifelong resident and medical worker.

## **THE CATSKILL POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The committee met with the Catskill Chief of Police David R. Darling and its two lieutenants Ronald Frascello and Daniel Waer twice previous to any public meetings to gain knowledge of how its department was run. It was important to know what policies and procedures were currently being followed and the following data was collected from these two meetings:

- The Village of Catskill Police Department receives an average of 10-15 calls daily.
- Calls range from wellness checks, disturbance calls, Walmart larceny, domestic, mental health, traffic calls, and overdoses.
- There are four shifts. Each shift has two officers, one sergeant, and one dispatcher.
- There are 15 full-time officers. This number includes the Chief of Police, two lieutenants, and four Sergeants. There are currently two part-time officers, two full-time dispatchers, and four part-time dispatchers.
- There are currently two minority officers and no female officers. Within the last three years, there were three officers of color and one female officer. Two of these officers retired, one officer went to the Greene County Sheriff's Office and the other officer went to the NY State Police.
- The 2020 budget for Catskill Police Department was \$1,311,880.
- An estimated 4,100 people are living in The Village of Catskill. However, roughly 20,000 people pass through the village daily for work, to shop, and to eat.
- All calls to the Catskill Police Department are recorded through the lines of the Police Department. If you call 911 within the village limits from a landline it directly gets routed to the Catskill Police Department.
- Catskill Police Department has a 3–5-minute response time for almost all calls.

- Catskill Police Department has been an accredited Police Department for the last twelve years. We are currently the only accredited Police Department in our County.
- Newly hired officers are mandated to do 21-23 hours of training annually.
- All new hires are mandated to ride along with a senior officer for 160 hours before they can patrol alone.
- Current annual training includes firearms training and qualifications, use of force and deadly force, less-lethal substances and devices, OSHA and related topics, workplace harassment, discrimination and bullying, anti-bias training, de-escalation training, community policing, mental health awareness for law enforcement, legal policy and instruction reviews and updates.
- As of July 11, 2019, it is required that any use of force be reported to the Division of Criminal Justice Services.
- All officers are Narcan-trained. Two doses of Narcan are always in each police vehicle and each officer is required to carry a kit as well.
- Anyone receiving Narcan does not get arrested or face any criminal charges. They are recommended to go to the hospital for treatment. Catskill Police Department does not currently transport these individuals. Their name is entered into the OD Map database within a maximum of eight hours by either a sergeant of the Catskill Police Department or Catskill EMS. Their name is given to the Greene County Sheriffs' Office for follow-up wellness checks utilizing a newly started program ICP also known as the Impact Citizen Program.
- No Knock Warrants are banned in the Village of Catskill Police Department.
- Choke Holds are banned in the Village of Catskill Police Department.
- Catskill Police Department does not possess any riot gear.
- Catskill Police Department does not practice "Stop and Frisk."

- The percentage of white to minority arrests in the Village of Catskill is 80 percent white to 20 percent black. The last twenty years of data were reviewed to obtain this percentage.
- Evaluations are done annually for every officer and are up-to-date.
- The last time Catskill Police Department used pepper spray was January 2013.
- The last time Catskill Police Department used a taser was November 2019.
- There have not been any complaints of an officer using excessive force within the last 5 years.
- There have been no reports of any person being injured by a Catskill Police officer. 10 years of data were reviewed.
- If there are any complaints about an officer, the sergeant on duty is also written up because they must assure all policies and procedures are being followed.
- The Catskill Police Department currently does not have body cams or cameras on their police vehicles due to the initial cost and the cost to maintain.
- In the last two months, there were 689 calls to the Catskill Police Department, of which 28 calls led to arrests.
- There were three personnel complaints in the last year. Investigations were done, and all were found to be true. In all cases, disciplinary action was taken and the cases were documented.
- Catskill Police Department does not usually intervene unless requested.
- The only “target locations” used for policing by Catskill Police Department are for traffic complaints such as regular excessive speeding.
- There must be real probable cause for any vehicle stop by a Village of Catskill Police Officer.

## **COMMUNITY LISTENING AND LEARNING**

Two community listening sessions were hosted by the committee during this process.

There was an email address set up by the committee for people to voice any concerns they may have regarding our Catskill Police Department. That email address was [policereformvillageofcatskill@aol.com](mailto:policereformvillageofcatskill@aol.com)

A public survey was created.

The first meeting was held on November 30, 2020, at 6 pm, at the Catskill Middle School in the auditorium. Masks were required and social distancing was practiced, and all individuals were required to get their temperature checked.

This meeting was also available to attend LIVE through our Village of Catskill Facebook page for anyone uncomfortable attending in person due to COVID-19.

This meeting was announced on the Village of Catskill website, on the Village of Catskill Facebook page, in the local newspaper, on the Catskill Community Board Facebook Page and it was announced at the bi-monthly Village Board Meeting.

In attendance were our committee members, our chief of police, two lieutenants, and most importantly it consisted of our community members. Questions were posed to the Chief and the Lieutenants from our community members. They were asked to explain the process, policies, and recent changes to the law. During this meeting, it was discussed and decided that the Catskill Police Department should not attend the next public comment meeting so people would be more comfortable discussing their feelings regarding the Catskill Police Department.

The second meeting was on February 1, 2021, at 6 pm Via Zoom. This meeting was announced on the Village of Catskill website, the Village of Catskill Facebook page, and on the Catskill Community Board. The zoom link was attached to these announcements. It was also announced at the bi-monthly Village Board Meeting. In attendance at this meeting were only the committee members and members of the community. Police were not allowed to attend this public meeting. At this meeting, it was discussed as a committee that we were not satisfied with the amount of community input we had received so we agreed to create an anonymous public survey for the community to take before our meeting as a committee to write our recommendations.



The survey was created through an app called Survey Monkey with the title “Your Opinion Matters” and was released to the public on February 15, 2021. It was open until February 22, 2021. It was not required to answer all questions. The link for the survey was available on the Village of Catskill website and Facebook page as well as the Catskill Community Board Facebook page. A QR code was created, and fliers were placed around the Village of Catskill with the QR code. The survey was set up so that it could only be taken once from a specific IP address. Hard copies were available at the Village Clerks office. In doing this survey, we as a committee learned a lot.

The Survey Questions are below with the data collected:

- 1. I am satisfied with the services of the Catskill Police Department.**  
75 percent agree. 12 percent neither agree nor disagree. 13 percent disagree.
- 2. Overall, I trust Catskill Police Department.**  
76 percent agree. 9 percent neither agree nor disagree. 15 percent disagree.
- 3. Overall, I find ALL officers of the Catskill Police Department to be respectful.**  
68 percent agree. 15 percent neither agree nor disagree. 17 percent disagree.
- 4. Catskill Police Department makes it easy for the community to provide input about things happening around them.**  
63 percent agree. 14 percent neither agree nor disagree. 23 percent disagree.
- 5. When I see Catskill Police Department patrolling in my area, I feel safe as an individual.**  
75 percent agree. 8 percent neither agree nor disagree. 17 percent disagree.
- 6. I feel safe alone in the Village of Catskill at night after dark.**  
75 percent agree. 7 percent neither agree nor disagree. 18 percent disagree.
- 7. Catskill Police Department proactively works with the community to improve public safety, solve local problems, and advance community goals.**  
64 percent agree. 11 percent neither agree nor disagree. 26 percent disagree.
- 8. I feel safe that I can file a complaint about an officer and not experience any retaliation.**  
57 percent agree. 16 percent neither agree nor disagree. 26 percent disagree.

- 9. A Village of Catskill Police Officer should respond to all mental health calls even if a mental health worker responds.**  
59 percent agree. 14 percent neither agree nor disagree. 27 percent disagree.
- 10.I agree with defunding the police.**  
18 percent agree. 17 percent neither agree nor disagree. 66 percent disagree.
- 11.I feel comfortable calling the Catskill Police Department when needed.**  
80 percent agree. 3 percent neither agree nor disagree. 17 percent disagree.
- 12.Have you ever been stopped, searched, or questioned by a Catskill Police Officer for no apparent reason?**  
17 percent yes. 83 percent no.
- 13.Have you personally experienced or witnessed inappropriate, threatening, or intimidating treatment by an officer in the Village of Catskill Police Department?**  
16 percent yes. 84 percent no.
- 14.Have you personally experienced or witnessed discrimination by the Village of Catskill Police Department because of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or for any other reason?**  
16 percent yes. 84 percent no.
- 15.Do you think a formal complaint against a Catskill Police officer will be taken seriously?**  
69 percent yes. 31 percent no.
- 16.Do you think Catskill Police Department does enough community policing and has enough positive involvement with the youth of the community?**  
58 percent yes. 42 percent no.
- 17.Do you live in the Village of Catskill?**  
86 percent yes. 14 percent no.
- 18.Would you like to see an increase in police presence in the Village of Catskill?**  
48 percent yes. 52 percent no.

**19. Have you called or witnessed someone else call Catskill Police Department who was experiencing the following: Mental Health, substance abuse crisis, domestic dispute, or any noncriminal issue?**

53 percent yes. 47 percent no.

**If you answered yes to this question, how did Catskill Police respond to this?**  
78 percent professionally. 12 percent refused to answer. 10 percent unprofessionally.

**20. The Catskill Police Department takes up 1/3 of the Village of Catskill budget annually. Where do you think monies for our village would be better used if we were to defund the police?**

This question had many write-in responses. Many repetitive responses requesting programs for the youth, community outreach, lowered taxes, not to defund the police, mental health services, food and housing, infrastructure, and a full-time code enforcement officer.

**21. How long have you lived in the Village of Catskill?**

0-5 years 18 percent  
6-10 years 14 percent  
11-20 years 18 percent  
Over 20 years 51 percent

**22. Are you happy with the response time when you have called or have witnessed someone call the Village of Catskill Police Department?**

92 percent answered yes. 8 percent no.

**23. Do you want to keep our Village of Catskill Police Department?**

85 percent yes. 15 percent no.

## **COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

After the two public meetings with community members and after reviewing the analyzed data from the public survey the committee has come up with several recommendations for the Village of Catskill Police Department.

- The committee recommends that the Village of Catskill Police Department utilize their Facebook Page more. There should be a meet the officers' section and it should show all officers who are currently on the force as well as when someone new is hired. This would be a great way for the community members to get to know the officers so when they interact with them in public it makes for a better experience. The Facebook page should also be used more to share job opportunities to become a Village of Catskill Police Officer when there is a hiring opportunity. It also should be used regularly to post community-involved activities. This will build better relations between the community and their officers.
- The committee recommends a change of uniform in the new fiscal year. Research shows that the police uniform in itself can be very intimidating. Khakis and a polo shirt tucked in with the Catskill Police Department Logo on it are recommended for at least one officer to wear per shift. This officer will be the initial officer to make contact when arriving on the scene.
- The committee recommends that the Catskill Village Board of Trustees meet with the Greene County Mental Health Department to establish a plan to have 24-hour on-call Mental Health and MCAT Services. There should be a mental health worker responding to many of the calls with the Catskill Police Department that the Village of Catskill Police receives daily. The committee is recommending that the Village Board of Trustees meet with both the Town of Catskill elected officials as well as the County Legislatures to possibly offset this cost.
- For officers to effectively communicate with their community, earn their trust, and get citizens to cooperate with their instructions, some effective communication strategies that are deployed should include:
  - The "80-20 principle," Officers should spend 80% of their time listening and 20% talking, and then use what they hear to make a connection.
  - Using body language to show the person that the officer is listening carefully, asking many questions, and making simple requests, one at a time.

- Understanding how “emotional contagion” can benefit or hurt you. A person with mental illness may not understand all of the words an officer says, but the person will sense their tone and attitude. If the officer is shouting orders and appears tense, that increases the tension. Speaking slowly and calmly can help de-escalate the situation and convey to the person that the officer is not in a rush, that they have as much time as needed to converse and reach an understanding. Because of this, the committee is recommending more training on communication for all Village of Catskill Police officers.
- The committee recommends that a detailed police budget be made available for all members of the community at the Village of Catskill Clerks Office on the second floor at 422 Main Street. Transparency is key when building relationships between police and the community.
- The committee recommends that a Police Advisory Accountability Board be established. After reviewing the survey, the committee learned that the community is not comfortable with making complaints about an officer and they do not think it will be followed up. The Board should consist of 5 members of the community of various backgrounds. Any complaints that come in should also go before the Elected Village Trustees that sit on the committee for the Police Department as well as the Chief of Police to assure their concerns are being addressed.
- The committee recommends that the Village of Catskill Police Department take Diversity and Inclusion Training. The committee recognizes that Catskill Police Department is an accredited Police Department and surpasses required training however additional training in this specific area is needed.
- The committee recommends that the NY State Police also take Diversity and Inclusion Training. State Troopers conduct a major portion of the police activities and interactions within the Village of Catskill but they do not practice community policing and Diversity and Inclusion Training is not currently included in their academic training. This was a significant concern, expressed both at public meetings and within the reform committee.
- The committee recommends that the Village of Catskill Police Department increase officer-involved programming and events in the community, such as youth programming. It is recommended that the lieutenants meet with the committee within the first 60 days of adopting this plan to go over ideas on how to do this.

- The committee recommends that all Village of Catskill Police Officers take the Science of Recovery and Addiction training.
- The committee recommends that this committee not be dissolved for a minimum of one year. The committee should meet quarterly to monitor the progress of the Village of Catskill Police Department and these recommendations.
- The committee recommends that the Chief of police give a bi-weekly report to the Board of Trustees about what is happening in the department to include unexpected expenses and total arrests.
- The committee recommends that the board of trustees take a serious look at the budget lines for the Catskill Police Department and all departments to see if there is money that can be allocated to serve the needs of the community such as youth programming.

## **CONCLUSION**

Police and community members know that their success in fighting crime and building strong communities depends on creating and maintaining a strong relationship. Despite this knowledge, police and communities too often are not yet working together in an ideal way. This plan is intended to guide the police and the community to work more productively together on issues of concern. Failing to maintain good police-community relations is not an option here in the Village of Catskill and it should not be an option anywhere. While we do not currently have the issues that larger cities have and have had, we would be ignorant to say it could never happen here. There is always room for improvement. Deep community mistrust has rightfully followed controversial incidents involving officer use of force throughout our nation. Good relations and transparency are essential to effective policing. Public engagement does not end here. This collaboration is just one of the many important steps in building and strengthening the relationship between the community and the Village of Catskill Police Department.

# Community Participation

