

Village of Hoosick Falls Police Department Options

Addendum to Village of Hoosick Falls Options Report

April, 2013

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Village of Hoosick Falls

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SUMMARY

In September 2012, CGR prepared a report entitled *Options for Governmental Structural Changes: Dissolutions & Alternatives Study for Village of Hoosick Falls, NY*. After the report was submitted to the study committee and presented at public forums in October 2012, CGR was asked to further define the potential costs of police service for the whole town. This was because the Village of Hoosick Falls currently provides police services, while the Town of Hoosick – which would become the operative municipal service provider in the event of village dissolution – does not currently have its own department.

To complete this additional analysis, information was requested regarding the Police Department and its activities.

The Hoosick Falls Police Department is generally staffed by two officers and deploys about 260 hours per week of officers. The department received 2,358 calls for service in 2012, or about 6.4 calls per day. The budget for the department in 2012-13 was \$390,552, or about \$1,067 per day.

The current cost of the Police Department would be \$3.50 per assessed thousand dollars if shared across the whole town. To aid in decision making, two cost projections of a whole town department are presented in this addendum:

- The first assumes current staffing levels and an increased vehicle expense of 25 percent. This option is projected to cost \$3.57 per assessed thousand dollars across the whole town.
- The second assumes a 15 percent reduction in the staffing lines and an increased vehicle expense of 25 percent. This option is projected to cost \$3.14 per assessed thousand dollars across the whole town.

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REVISION TO BASELINE REPORT ON POLICE SERVICES

After the Options Report was presented to the community, the study committee requested that CGR perform a further evaluation of the police service. The Village has approached the Town to consider a whole town police department. In order to help inform this discussion, CGR was asked to provide additional projections related to the report's "Option 2" related to a whole town police department.

Additional information was requested from the Village, HFPD and Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center. The additional information has enabled the baseline report to be revised to evaluate the demand for law enforcement in both the Town and Village. The sections included in this addendum are intended to replace existing sections in the previously written options report.

Police Department | Revised Baseline Material

The Village of Hoosick Falls operates a full service police department. The department has existed for the recorded history of the Village and has changed as needed with the times. The department is headed by a full-time Chief of Police. He has seven years with the department, the last two as chief. The Chief's schedule generally consists of three 10-hour days plus 10 hours department administration. The position is salaried at \$46,839 (plus benefits).

The police force includes one full-time officer¹ and 13 part-time officers. The full-time position is salaried at \$32,136 (plus benefits), while the part-time positions are paid between \$14.86 and \$15.45 per hour. All officers are represented by the United Public Service Employees Union.

The department provides coverage for the Village with two on duty officers with the exception of one weekday, some weekday overnights and weekend days when coverage is reduced. There are approximately 260 hours of officer road patrol scheduled on a weekly basis. When there is no village officer available to respond to calls, the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office (RCSO) or New York State Police (NYSP) provides assistance². The Village has had this schedule for the last 15 years.

¹ The full time position was vacant for several months in 2012 and early 2013.

² RCSO and NYSP are the primary law enforcement agencies in the town. NYSP does maintain an office at the Hoosick Falls Fire Department.

The department reduced the fleet from four police cars to three in 2012. HFPD drove an average of 110.6 miles per day during 2012 using an average of 10.7 gallons of gasoline. The table below shows the current vehicles and the mileage they drove last year. The mileage figure for the new vehicle is based on the amount driven by the previous vehicle.

Vehicles	Odometer Reading 1/2013	Amount Driven 2012	Gallons Used
2008 Ford Crown Victoria	66,637	12,752	836.6
2008 Ford Explorer	53,885	13,750	1358.6
2013 Ford Taurus	117	13,859	1724.6
Total		40,361	3,920

Source: Hoosick Falls PD

The department is dispatched via Rensselaer County dispatch. This is a recent change. In 2011, to save money, the Village eliminated its own dispatch operation and began contracting with the county for this service. The fee for dispatching is \$1,000 per month.

It was reported that when HFPD needs assistance from other agencies for backup on a specific call, they sometimes wait 30 to 40 minutes for troopers or deputies. Therefore the department has decided to staff two officers on duty to ensure immediate backup. The department investigates most crimes on its own, although the state police will get involved with homicide investigations.

The events responded to by HFPD are recorded by the county's dispatch center. The only records that were readily obtainable for this study were summary reports for calls received for the whole year by HFPD and the individual events in the Town of Hoosick for January and July 2012. Both of these items will be discussed in this section as the volume of police work in the whole town will help inform the discussion of a potential town-wide police department.

Police Events

HFPD received or reported 1,939 events in 2011 and 2,358 events in 2012. These recorded activities do not account for the time spent patrolling the Village or interacting with the public, but they are available as a measurement of police activity. The top ten call types accounted for 60 or more percent of events each year. The top two call types of traffic stops and EMS calls accounted for 40 percent (2011) and 35 percent (2012) of all calls.

Hoosick Falls Police Calls			
Rank	Call Type	2011	2012
1	Traffic Stop	470	436
2	All EMS Calls	300	380
3	Investigation - Police	96	163
4	Animal Complaint	67	71
5	Harassment - NOT Active	65	70
6	Investigation / Followup	51	67
7	Traffic Accident - PDAA	53	59
8	Suspicious Person/Vehicle/Activity	41	60
9	Domestic - Active	31	69
10	Check - Wellbeing	49	47
Total Calls		1939	2358
Top 10 Call Types		1223	1422
Top 10 Call Types Percentage		63%	60%
Source: Rensselaer County 911 Center			

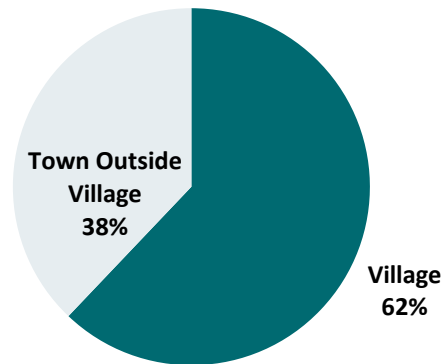
The daily average call volume in 2012 was 6.5 calls per day, up from 5.3 calls per day in 2011. There is no additional data available to consider a longer term trend.

To evaluate the call volume further, all events for January and July 2012 were requested from the county 911 center. CGR requested call data including the call type, times and addresses. The center had to transcribe the call information manually into a spreadsheet. The data do not include any information related to traffic stops, which accounted for about 18 percent of call volume in 2012. Otherwise, these two months seem representative of the police activity for the Village and it is reasonable to extrapolate the Town's call volume for this study.

Total call volume (excluding traffic stops) for the two months was 496. Although the population between the TOV and the Village is nearly equal, there are more police calls in the Village. The call volume without traffic stops in the Village was about 5.3 calls per day in 2012. The daily village average calls were 4.3 in January 2012 and 5.6 in July 2012. HFPD responded to 91 percent of the calls in the Village, with RCSO handling 7 percent and NYSP the remaining 2 percent.

During this time, the Town had an average of 2.9 calls per day in January and 3.1 in July. RCSO handled 46 percent in the Town, NYSP 42 percent and HFPD 12 percent.

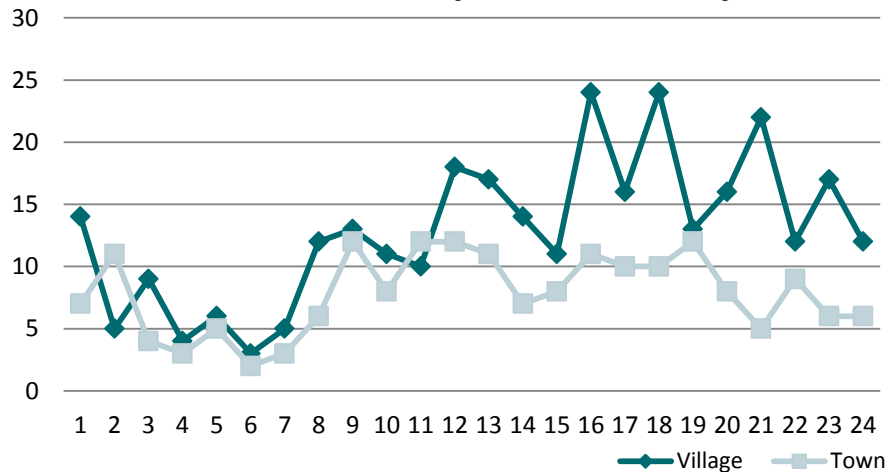
Police Call Distribution



Source: County 911 data, excludes traffic stops

Call volume across the hour of day shows significant variability. During the 62-day sample, the average call volume by hour was 12 in the Village and nearly 8 in the Town. The evening hours in the Village had a higher than average demand for nearly every hour, and the early morning was below average. The Town had less variability, although the afternoon into evening was noticeably busier. This type of distribution is common among law enforcement agencies.

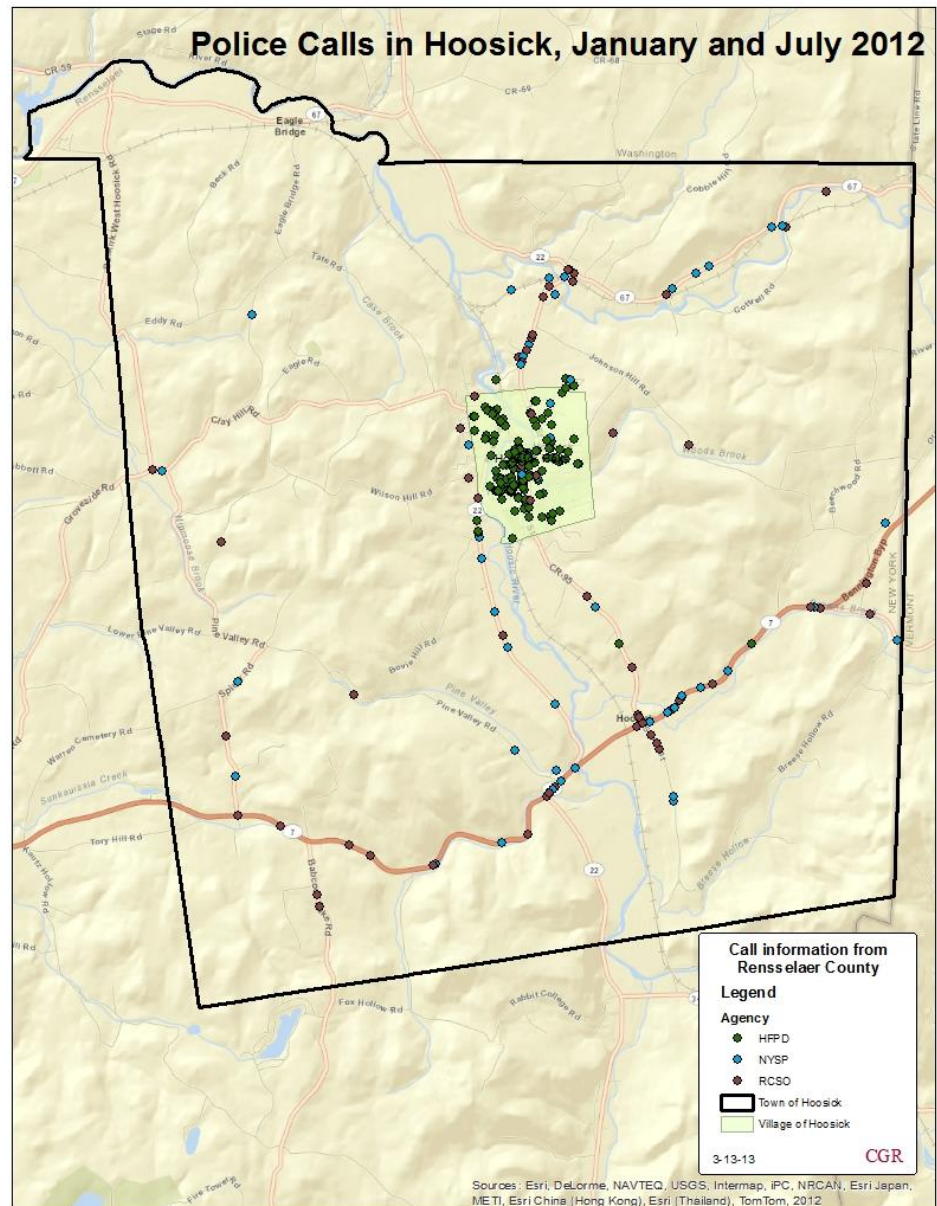
Call Volume by Hour of Day



Source: County dispatch data, January and July 2012

In addition to calls for service, the HFPD provides court security for both the town and village courts; provides officers for high school football games; and will respond to calls from school (outside of the Village) and intervene until RCSO or NYSP arrive. They have responded to serious

calls in the Town when requested. In the two month sample, HFPD responded to the Town 22 times. Four of the calls were to the high school and four others were for traffic accidents.



The above map shows the geographic distribution of calls that occurred during the two months analyzed. The different colors indicate which calls were handled by which agencies. The map shows that relatively few calls occur outside of the Village and Route 7 or 22 corridors.

Staffing Analysis

Determining the adequate level of law enforcement staffing is a challenging task, as each community is unique. The common perception among those interviewed for the study is that the Village has greater demand for police services than the Town and therefore needs to have its own police force. The current staffing model of at least two officers on-duty has developed over a period of time and provides a certain degree of officer safety by having backup staffing readily available.

A common method used to assess staffing levels for police departments is the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Relief Factor Analysis. This method evaluates the number of calls and determines how many patrol units (officers) are needed to meet the call demand. The method is based on full-time officers, however, and needs to be modified when considering a primarily part-time department. The table below shows the analysis for both the Village and a projected full town department.

For this evaluation, CGR was provided with data on calls for service for the Village of Hoosick Falls for 2011 and 2012. The data include all calls reported by police to the dispatch center or where the dispatcher sent an officer to respond, including traffic stops. However, there is no comparable Town-outside-Village data to use in this analysis. CGR was provided with call data for two months in 2012 for the whole town, which allowed Town service demand to be imputed. In this sample, CGR found that for every ten calls for service in the Village, there were six calls for service in the Town. In the following staffing analysis, the column for the Village is based on the available call data from the report and the column for the entire Town plus Village is the call data in the Village plus sixty percent.

IACP Relief Factor Staffing Analysis for Hoosick Falls and Hoosick			
	Village Alone	Town Plus Village	Defined
Public Initiated Events over 24 month period 1/1/2011 to 12/31/2012	4297	6875	Public initiated events includes all traffic stops, 911 calls and other events that are recorded by 911. Town plus village volume is 160% percent of village alone volume
Annual Public Initiated Event Average over 24 month period	2149	3438	
Annual Time on Calls (in hours)	1826	2922	Time a unit spends per event is was 51 minutes based on 2 month sample. This number is multiplied by annual event number
Patrol Factor	3	3	Assumes officers spend 1/3 of their time on a call for service, the rest on patrol or other duties
Time on Tasks	5479	8766	Annual Calls multiplied by (time on calls multiplied by buffer)
Patrol Shift Hours	8	8	Length of shift
Annual Patrol Hours	2920	2920	Length of shift multiplied by 365
Patrol Elements Needed for Call Demand	1.88	3.00	Time on task divided by patrol hours. Patrol Element is a full time unit on patrol.
Scheduled Hours	2080	2080	Based on Union Agreement
Average Leave Taken	200	200	Estimated time taken off by officers for vacation, training and illness
Hours Officers Available to work	1880	1880	Scheduled Hours minus Average Leave Taken
Officers Needed per Patrol Element (Availability Factor)	1.55	1.55	Patrol hours divided by number of hours officers work annually
Road Patrol Elements	2.91	4.66	Number of full time equivalent officers needed to meet current call demand

Based on the analysis, a Village alone department would need 3 full time equivalent (FTE) officers to fill necessary patrols to cover the call volume, while a full Town department would need 4.7 FTE officers. This is exclusive of administrative and investigative time by the chief or “stand by” time at specific events such as court or school events. By comparison, one officer on duty at all times (168 hours per week) would require about 4.7 full time officers.

The HFPD currently schedules about 260 hours of patrol per week or 13,250 hours per year. This staffing is equal to about 7 FTE officers. Based solely on the IACP formula above, the current staffing is 4 FTEs above what service demand in the Village would appear to require, and 2.5 FTEs over the demand for service in the entire Town. HFPD should be able to handle the increase in call volume associated with patrolling the town with their current staffing levels. It also appears that HFPD could meet the patrol and response of the full Town with reduced staffing that focuses on the busiest times of the day.

The staffing decisions that have led to this higher level of patrol are based on a desire to have a minimum of two police officers on duty for officer and community safety. Backup officers are not readily available from the RCSO or NYSP.

Departmental Expenses

Most police department expenditures are segregated into a specific budgetary cost center. However, certain expenses such as health insurance for full time officers, retirement contributions, social security, and worker's compensation are pooled by the Village into general budget categories covering all departments. Using the 2012-13 budget, it was determined that these fringe benefits are equal to about 33 percent of the payroll expense.

The Village has made several changes in recent years to reduce cost associated with the department. The costs for 12-13 will likely come in under budget as the full time position was empty for several months reducing the healthcare costs.

Hoosick Falls Police Expense Detail By Fiscal Year					
	2010-2011 Actual	2011-2012 Actual	2012-13 Budget	2012-2013 to Jan.	Percent
Police Payroll*	\$ 280,715	\$ 265,549	\$ 239,339	\$ 164,054	69%
Equipment	\$ 6,973	\$ 10,876	\$ 20,000	\$ 9,234	46%
Telephone	\$ 4,426	\$ 5,690	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,032	101%
Insurance	\$ 16,183	\$ 7,583	\$ 12,500	\$ 5,977	48%
Vehicle Repair	\$ 3,706	\$ 10,501	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,205	52%
Community Service	\$ 381	\$ 130	\$ 500	\$ 81	16%
Police Contractual All Other	\$ 26,281	\$ 18,461	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,761	105%
Total Police Budget	\$ 338,665	\$ 318,791	\$ 300,339	\$ 203,345	68%
Dispatch Subscription			\$ 12,000	\$ 7,000	58%
Fringe Benefits *	\$ 91,734	\$ 86,778		\$ 53,611	69%
State Retirement			\$ 44,650		0%
Social Security			\$ 18,450		0%
Workers Compensation			\$ 3,300		0%
Disability Insurance			\$ 613		0%
Hospital/Medical Insurance			\$ 11,200		0%
Other Budget Costs	\$ 91,734	\$ 86,778	\$ 90,213	\$ 60,611	67%
Total Police Costs	\$ 430,399	\$ 405,569	\$ 390,552	\$ 263,955	68%
* Fringe estimated at 32.6% of police payroll based on 2012-13 budget figures					

Departmental expenses have been reduced in the last three fiscal years as hours have been trimmed back and the dispatch function was contracted to the county. One additional expense that is not recorded in the above table is the cost of healthcare to police department retirees. In 2012, it was \$30,092.

Option 2 | Village Dissolves, Police Department Becomes Town-wide

At each stage of the study, the discussion of how village dissolution would impact the Police Department has brought forth people's passions. CGR's general sense, based on discussions with the Steering Committee and municipal officials, is that the Village is well served by the Police Department and that there is a value in consistent police presence in the area of densest population. In addition to the sentiment that the Village area needs the Police Department, there is also an opinion that residents in the Town outside the Village do not feel they need police patrols and do not want to be taxed for the service.

Assuming village dissolution, *there is currently no mechanism in state law to allow for a police department to serve only a portion of a municipality*³ (such as through a "police district"). Therefore, the only current options for *municipal* police service are for total dissolution as described in Option 1 *or* for the Police Department to become a town-wide agency upon dissolution of the Village.

The cost structure and narrative for Option 2 are the same as those described for Option 1 with the exception of the Police Department.

For purposes of this model, all costs related to the Police Department are moved into the Town general fund. The total budget cost for Village police operations in 2012 is \$390,552. The costs are broken down on the table below.

The level of police staffing would be determined by the Town under this model. The Town could maintain the current level of staffing or choose to change the staffing either up or down. As shown by the IACP model above, the current level of staffing is greater than is needed by call demand alone for the whole town. Police staffing levels and scheduling design requires more information than was available for this report.

³ CGR has performed dozens of similar studies and the desire to have police in certain areas of a town has come up in many municipalities. There would need to be a change in state law to allow for the creation of a law enforcement district similar to the other districting powers that a town has under current law.

Vehicle expenses (shown above in contractual and vehicle repair) would go up an estimated 25 percent in a whole town department.

To aid in decision making, two cost projections of a whole town department are shown below. Option 2A shows current staffing levels and an increased vehicle expense increase of 25 percent. Option 2B shows a 15 percent reduction in the staffing lines and a vehicle expense of 25 percent. Any residual costs from the retired police officers will be included in the village debt district and won't be a part of a future town's responsibility, therefore they are not considered in the expenses below.

Town of Hoosick Police Projected Expense					
	2012-13 Budget	Option 2A Whole Town Projection with Increased Vehicle Costs	Difference from 2012 /13 Budget	Option 2B Whole Town Projection - Increased Vehicle and 15 % Decreased Payroll + Fringe	Change from 2012 /13 Budget
Police Payroll	\$ 239,339.00	\$ 239,339.00	0%	\$ 203,438.15	-15%
Equipment	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	0%	\$ 20,000.00	0%
Telephone	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	0%	\$ 3,000.00	0%
Insurance	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00	0%	\$ 12,500.00	0%
Vehicle Repair	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 12,500.00	25%	\$ 12,500.00	25%
Community Service	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	0%	\$ 500.00	0%
Police Contractual All Other	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 18,750.00	25%	\$ 18,750.00	25%
Total Police Budget	\$ 300,339.00	\$ 306,589.00	2%	\$ 270,688.15	-10%
Dispatch Subscription	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	0%	\$ 12,000.00	0%
Fringe Benefits					
State Retirement	\$ 44,650.00	\$ 44,650.00	0%	\$ 37,952.50	-15%
Social Security	\$ 18,450.00	\$ 18,450.00	0%	\$ 15,682.50	-15%
Workers Compensation	\$ 3,300.00	\$ 3,300.00	0%	\$ 2,805.00	-15%
Disability Insurance	\$ 613.00	\$ 613.00	0%	\$ 521.05	-15%
Hospital/Medical Insurance	\$ 11,200.00	\$ 11,200.00	0%	\$ 9,520.00	-15%
Other Budget Costs	\$ 90,213.00	\$ 90,213.00	0%	\$ 78,481.05	-13%
Total Police Costs	\$ 390,552.00	\$ 396,802.00	2%	\$ 349,169.20	-11%
* Fringe estimated at 32.6% of police payroll based on 2012-13 budget figures					

As shown in the options above, the difference between the current police expenses and a whole town department would vary depending on the level of staffing that is used. Just adding the increased vehicle costs would lead to a **2 percent increase** in the police budget compared to an **11 percent decrease** if there was a 15 percent reduction in police staff costs to go along with the increase in vehicle costs.

The decision on the size of the police department budget would be made by the Town Board. Based on the 2011 Taxable Assessed Value, the incremental cost of providing police service to the entire Town of Hoosick would range from \$3.57 per assessed thousand under Option 2A to \$3.14 per assessed thousand under Option 2B.

Option 2A (village dissolution and creation of a town-wide police department with a 2 percent *increase* from current police costs) would shift the tax burden in the community. Residents of the former Village would see an **anticipated savings of 36 percent** on their current municipal tax bill. Residents of the Town outside the former Village would see an anticipated **increase of 50 percent**. If the Citizens Empowerment Tax Credit⁴ (CETC) is awarded by the state, former village residents would have their taxes **reduced by 45 percent** and residents of the former TOV would see an **increase of 23 percent**.

Option 2B (village dissolution and creation of a town-wide police department with an 11 percent *decrease* from current police costs) would also shift the tax burden in the community. Residents of the former Village would see an **anticipated savings of 37 percent** on their current municipal tax bill. Residents of the Town outside the former Village would see an anticipated **increase of 46 percent**. If the Citizens Empowerment Tax Credit (CETC) is awarded by the state, former village residents would have their taxes **reduced by 46 percent** and residents of the former TOV would see an **increase of 20 percent**.

A table showing the estimated impact follows.

Rate per \$1000 of Assessed Town Value	2012 Rate	New Rate	Percent Change from Current Local Rate	Total Property Tax Bill Change (No CETC)	New Rate w/ CETC	Percent Change from Current Local Rate	Total Property Tax Bill Change (w/CETC)
Option 2A- Police Costs Increased for Additional Vehicle Usage, No Change in Personnel Costs							
Former Town Outside Village	\$ 11.46701	\$ 17.17	50%	5%	\$ 14.14	23%	3%
Former Village Residents	\$36.51524	\$ 23.28	-36%	-10%	\$ 20.25	-45%	-13%
Option 2B- Police Costs Decreased for Personnel Costs and Increased for Vehicle Usage							
Former Town Outside Village	\$ 11.46701	\$ 16.74	46%	5%	\$ 13.71	20%	2%
Former Village Residents	\$36.51524	\$ 22.86	-37%	-11%	\$ 19.82	-46%	-13%

As noted previously, municipal taxes comprise only a portion of the typical property owner's overall tax bill. The above table reflects the impact on *only* the Town / Village portion of the property tax.

In the context of the total property tax bill (*i.e.* including municipal, county, school, fire and library taxes), and for a house with a market value of \$100,000, former Town outside Village residents would see their taxes **increase 5 percent under Option 2A** without CETC funding, or **increase 3 percent** with CETC funding. By contrast, former Village residents

⁴ The CETC is provided for in state law to incentivize municipalities to dissolve or consolidate. The credit would be 15 percent of the combined levies of the two municipalities. The value of the CETC used for this report is \$336,343 based on the 2012 tax levies.

would see their taxes **decrease 10 percent** under Option 2A without CETC funding, or **decrease 13 percent** with CETC funding.

In the context of the total property tax bill (*i.e.* including municipal, county, school, fire and library taxes), and for a house with a market value of \$100,000, former Town outside Village residents would see their taxes **increase 5 percent** under Option 2B without CETC funding, or **increase 2 percent** with CETC funding. By contrast, former Village residents would see their taxes **decrease 11 percent** under Option 2B without CETC funding, or **decrease 13 percent** with CETC funding.

For a resident in the TOV or in the former village, the difference between the illustrated options of police service is only a few percentage points on the total tax bill. The impact of the CETC is much greater than the difference between the two police options illustrated here.

Comparison of Options on Total Property Tax Bill

The following two charts describe the impact of the Options 1, 2a and 2b on current Village residents and Town outside Village. The charts are based on the 2012 tax rates that were in effect when this study began. The total tax bill includes the county, town, village, school, fire and library tax levies. The rates are based on full valuation of the property, not the current assessments.

Current Village Resident Projected Tax Impact					
Projected impact on a home of \$100,000 market value	Town Tax Rate (per 1000)	Town Tax Bill	Total Property Tax Bill	Total Dollar Change	Total Percent Change
Current Town & Village Tax Rate	\$ 37.00	\$ 970	\$ 3,413	n/a	n/a
Option 1 -No CETC	\$ 20.00	\$ 518	\$ 2,962	\$ (452)	-13%
Option 1 – with CETC	\$ 17.00	\$ 439	\$ 2,882	\$ (531)	-16%
Option 2a- No CETC	\$ 23.28	\$ 612	\$ 3,056	\$ (358)	-11%
Option 2a – with CETC	\$ 20.25	\$ 533	\$ 2,976	\$ (437)	-13%
Option 2b- No CETC	\$ 22.86	\$ 601	\$ 3,045	\$ (369)	-11%
Option 2b- with CETC	\$ 19.82	\$ 521	\$ 2,965	\$ (449)	-13%

For a current Village resident in a \$100,000 home, the savings ranges from \$358 under Option 2a with a town-wide police department and no CETC to \$531 for Option 1 without a police department and with the CETC.

Current Town Outside the Village Residents Projected Tax Impact					
Projected impact on a home of \$100,000 market value	Town Tax Rate (per 1000)	Town Tax Bill	Total Property Tax Bill	Total Dollar Change	Total Percent Change
Current Town Tax Rate	\$ 11.00	\$ 301	\$ 2,741	n/a	n/a
Option 1 -No CETC	\$ 14.00	\$ 358	\$ 2,799	\$ 57	2%
Option 1 – with CETC	\$ 11.00	\$ 278	\$ 2,719	\$ (23)	-1%
Option 2a- No CETC	\$ 17.17	\$ 452	\$ 2,893	\$ 151	5%
Option 2a – with CETC	\$ 14.14	\$ 372	\$ 2,813	\$ 71	3%
Option 2b- No CETC	\$ 16.74	\$ 440	\$ 2,882	\$ 139	5%
Option 2b – with CETC	\$ 13.71	\$ 361	\$ 2,802	\$ 60	2%

For a current Town outside Village resident with a \$100,000 home, they might see a savings of \$23 for Option 1 for village dissolution without a police department and the CETC to an increased cost of \$151 for Option 2A with the Village dissolving and the creation of a town wide police force and no CETC.