



DANVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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April 26, 2022

Board of Selectmen, Town of Danville
210 Main Street
Danville, NH 03819

RE: IMC Request for Animal Control Position

Board Members,

In response to the letter dated April 25, 2022, which provided the request for the police department to enter "ACO reports into IMC", the police department respectfully declines.

This has been a topic that has been discussed to exhaustion and it is not a matter of "not playing nice in the sandbox" as it has been so continuously described. Our police department should not be bullied into doing something because a particular department is unhappy about the way they operate. Especially, when the department has other options, and they just do not want to utilize those other options.

Danville Police Department has a relationship as a guest to Rockingham County Sheriff's Department server. Any department, in this case Danville's Animal Control Department, is responsible for establishing their own relationship with Rockingham County Sheriff's Department. If Rockingham County Sheriff's Department does not wish to establish the relationship, then that is their choice and between them and the requesting department (again in this case, Danville's Animal Control Department). Danville Police Department should not be expected to bypass Rockingham County Sheriff's Department's wishes to not establish the relationship with Danville's Animal Control Department.

As you all know, the current animal control position is a civilian elected animal control position. Furthermore, this position has zero oversight. You are requesting the police department

to enter reports from a civilian employee, which have no oversight or approval process. Our officers' reports are subject to a case management process for oversight and approval, which is handled electronically through the IMC program. This oversight is checking for things such as grammatical errors, content, and personal information. If the animal control officer turns in a report, which contents are flawed, then what? Nothing. There's nothing to be done about it.

Furthermore, who's credentials are attached to these reports? Every sign-in to IMC requires a specific identification number and password that automatically links the officer to the reports generated under that account. Rockingham County Sheriff's Department dissolved the current animal control officer's credentials a while ago. Therefore, the reports would have to be attached to another officer's name, which is not ethical. The integrity of our system is jeopardized with allowing such person to have their information stored as such in the database.

Regardless of who holds the position currently, we cannot establish bad precedents for any person to hold the position. And if the question comes to mind, "Well, our Chief of Police is elected." You are right. However, our elected Chief of Police answers to New Hampshire Police Standards and Training Council, The Rockingham County Attorney's Office, and The New Hampshire Attorney General's Office.

What benefit is there to having the police department enter "ACO reports into IMC"? I can tell you that there is no benefit to the police department. Remember, the current civilian elected animal control officer is handling civil complaints. I can tell you not one of our officers has ever provided feedback that they would have been able to perform their job more efficiently had they had access to an animal control report.

Hypothetically, the police did enter "ACO reports into IMC," then what? The civilian elected animal control officer would have no access to those reports once they are entered. What benefit is that to anyone, including the current animal control officer? In addition, does the police department now become responsible for any request for information? The police department does not want that responsibility anymore than we would want the responsibility of releasing records for any other Town department.

The idea was brought up to have the current animal control officer generate documentation to turn over to the police department, and then the police department would input it to IMC. However, if the animal control officer already creates the document, why don't they simply maintain the records themselves, as the head of the Danville Animal Control Department?

This topic has been a point of contention for too long. Our department does not want to take on this responsibility, and again will not be bullied to agree because an official is unhappy at being told "no." This matter is between the Danville Animal Control Department and the Board of Selectmen, and the police department should be left out of the discussion pertaining to it.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "justine L merced". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Justine L. Merced

Lieutenant