

TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

Selectmen's Office

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March 27, 2009

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am quite concerned about the proposal to increase the municipal cost of the Resident State Trooper program.

Presently the towns pay seventy per-cent of the cost of the assigned trooper(s), including overhead. Management control of the assigned trooper(s) remains with the State of Connecticut through the area "Troop" headquarters. Municipal leaders coordinate their needs with the respective Troop Commander. The Town of Bethlehem has been quite content with the 70/30 cost share. If the municipal cost share were to increase one would normally expect that there would be a commensurate change in management control. This however is probably not under consideration. But I do think that the following should be considered.

The Town of Bethlehem presently has five sworn part time Constables. Weekly total hours of patrol range from between 34 to 48 hours a week. Without a Resident State Trooper the Town would have none of this additional patrol hours.

A recent activity summary of total calls for service (covering the period January 1, 2008 to March 25, 2009) amounted to 1,651. Without a Resident State Trooper these are calls that would have had to be handled by Troop L.

It would appear that the Town is not being subsidized by the State, but the State is being subsidized by the Town. It is my conviction that if the share is changed to 85/15 the Town would probably remain in the program for the remainder of this fiscal year; however I am also most certain that the Town of Bethlehem would not continue in the program at a higher rate.

The Resident State Trooper is always available for Troop L business. In fact it was the Bethlehem Resident State Trooper, who assisted with the apprehension on Leslie Williams of Hartford in Watertown after a chase prompted by a home invasion in New Britain on March 30, 2008.

It is my firm conviction that the State comes out well ahead with this program as it is. At least the Town is paying some of its support—not like Hartford which had State Troopers patrolling for months last year (at no cost to Hartford).

Please do not change the program. There is something in it for the Towns and for the State.



Jeffrey Hamel
First Selectman