

Wilton – Jay Police Collaboration Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 15, 2025 – 6:00 pm – Jay Town Office

Present: Terry Bergeron, Lee Ann Dalessandro, Lisa Bryant, Jennifer Lynch, Joseph Sage, David Leavitt, Keith Swett, Ethan Kyes, Maria Greeley, Shiloh Lafreniere, Mathew Bickford, Sarah Caton

Guest: Neil McLean (Franklin County District Attorney), Virginia Ashby, Brenton Eva, Nick Santora, Doug Hiltz, Nate Hiltz, Alan Burke, Susan Stinchfield

Minutes from August 18, 2025, reviewed and approved unanimously.

Welcome new member: Sarah Caton (replacing Amand Lee) Wilton resident.

District Attorney Neil E. Mclean Jr, Esq., Franklin County was introduced. Chief Sage posed a question for DA Mclean, if under a quasi-municipality entity governing one department for both towns, “would the district attorney’s office be able to prosecute cases” based on the understanding that both municipalities have agreed to provide the entity jurisdictional authority to operate in a law enforcement capacity. DA Mclean stated that the quasi-municipal entity sounded more formal than the typical memorandum or understanding or mutual agreement and he believed that towns are “going to have to speak with your town attorneys”. He also stated so long as each officer, as they do now, meets the certification requirements, training requirements that will all be handled through the main Criminal Justice Academy”, “everybody's got their certifications, his office would not have an issue.

MMA (Maine Municipal Association) Town managers provided the committee with a copy of the MMA associate membership manual as well as the application that would need to be completed in the event the towns were to enter into a quasi-municipal entity was pursued, then a separate membership would be required. The new membership cost would be \$710 which would be applied to the first year’s dues. The application was included with the information that would be required if this was pursued.

MOU - A draft MOU was presented by Chief Kyes, modeled after the Farmington Police Department. It is a typical MOU agreement that outlines the agreements to perform/render mutual police aide in cases of emergency. The document is going to be amended and sent to the town office managers for further dissemination as well as review by the individual town attorneys for review. It was agreed this effort is beyond the scope of the committee and all further actions on the matter will fall within the two towns’ normal processes.

Franklin County Sheriff Department Questions: the committee had produced additional questions during the meeting such as administration positions as well as some individual budget items that were presented differently for each town expenses.

The committee will submit the existing and additional questions to the town managers to submit/engage with the county administration to be reviewed during the next meeting.

Discussion on information gathered from existing regional departments.

Lee Ann discussed finding throughout four States that have achieved similar collaborations.

Ethan and Lee Ann further spoke about several other agencies that have overcome the same dilemma and affirmed that there is substantial information out there to help develop a regional department /quasi-municipal entity if that is the direction the towns wish to continue towards. Ethan even mentioned that another agency approached him for information as they were considering a similar scenario with their town and a neighboring town that was having trouble filling a Chief of Police position within the state of Maine.

A restatement of the committee's intent was to perform an investigation of options the towns have and that the committee has identified four options for consideration.

1. Take no action; maintain existing departments within each town
2. Contract Services from the Sheriff's Office
3. Merge; establish a Quasi-Municipal entity with joint oversight
4. Merge; one department provides services for both towns under a contract

The committee discussed and determined that a pros (advantages) and cons (disadvantages) matrix is needed for each option and that the same topics be established and applied across all the options. Additionally, the committee could include action items that would be required for the individual options they reviewed. Some of the comparable options would include things like 'legal requirements', 'insurance requirements', 'budgets etc.

Lee Ann spoke about a presentation from another community that established a collaboration between towns that was used to present information to the residents and will share with the committee for our next meeting.

Next meeting was determined to take place on October 20, 2025 at the Wilton Town Office. The 6th of October meeting date was cancelled due to insufficient time to gather additional information.

Motioned to adjourn the meeting was unanimous at 7:26 pm.