

The Old Saybrook Democratic Town Committee strongly endorses the bipartisan recommendations of the Police Commission, the Board of Selectmen, and the Board of Finance, for an appropriation of \$98,790 from the capital non-recurring fund to fund an organizational review, with a focus on recruitment and retention, of the Old Saybrook Department of Police Services, as outlined in the Police Executive Research Forum's proposal dated September 28, 2023. The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) is an organization with expertise in evaluating police departments' policies, practices and operations throughout the country.

The proposed organizational review is in direct response to the urgent situation outlined by Chief Spera in July and August 2023. Old Saybrook has had difficulty over the last few years in recruitment and retention of police officers, and has seen many of its officers leave to work in other towns. It is important to obtain an independent review of the Police Department to determine what steps are necessary to reverse this trend. Chief Spera has recommended significant changes to the salary and benefit structure for Old Saybrook police officers as a way to increase both recruitment and retention. One result of the PERF organizational review will be a recommendation of the appropriate salary and benefit structures for recruitment and retention.

Old Saybrook Democrats strongly support our police officers and other law enforcement personnel. We look forward to getting this objective outside review to enable the Town to be more competitive going forward.

All residents are invited to a Town Meeting on Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at the Old Saybrook Middle School auditorium at 6:30 p.m. where this bipartisan initiative will be discussed in greater detail. We encourage all residents to attend the Town Meeting to voice your opinions, share your insights, and actively contribute to the process.

More importantly, the Town will hold a referendum for this initiative on Monday, January 22, 2024 from 12 noon to 8 p.m. at the Old Saybrook High School. Your vote is vital. Thank you for your participation as, together, we support the community of Old Saybrook.