

# Lewiston Police required to submit plan by April 1

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"Our business community is a pretty quiet walking community, there's no patrols walking the streets. So it's not the businesses themselves, per se.

"But it could be," he said, adding that any business with a concern could go to Jennifer Pauly. He suggested that Pauly's background with Lewiston's festivals and experiences with law enforcement activities in the village would prove helpful in this area.

"She's the one who gets there in the wee hours of the morning, she sees what is going on."

Of the talk on police reform, Broderick added, "Change is always hard. Just from me being a police officer looking at some of the things the governor is doing, I cringe at it ... like bail reform.

"I believe bail reform (in concept) was a good idea. But what should have occurred is that they should have put together a committee to analyze it, and that committee should have included prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, police officers (and) minority organizations.

"It should have been a whole melting pot to go together, because just to wipe out all the bail for all those scenarios was a terrible idea.

"So I'm not against police reform per se, but just to flip-flop it, do a 180 degree, upside down turn of it, I wouldn't agree with that. It's

a not a bad thing."

While Broderick said he supports police reform overall, he did say he felt Lewiston's police department and the small community it serves simply does not have the issues that other much larger departments contend with and, "It may be harder for our community to make changes, than it is for the City of Buffalo or Rochester.

Chief Previte said that reform is an everyday concern in today's police departments.

"I think a lot of people don't realize that probably the police departments, specifically in this state have been in a constant state of reform (already) because of the changes in bail reform. Being in law enforcement, people don't realize (this). It's probably one of the professions that's been reformed the most ... recently. It's been so dynamic. ..."

"I understand the state's intention, but I think that there's always a problem, first of all when you mandate something and don't fund it, which is a constant issue with the state.

"And I think that it's a generalized approach, where you can't treat it as a generalized approach. The Lewiston Police Department is not the Rochester Police Department. I don't have the same issues. ... Some it is too broad. ...

"Having said that, I think it could be a good thing. (But) we have a

pretty unique relationship, I think with the community.

"(We're) well accepted, well liked, well supported. That has been a focus here since I've been a supervisor. That was the focus when I became chief, was to reach out to the community. I think it has helped. We have a good relationship and a healthy relationship.

"And I also think it's a lot easier to manage."

Explaining his position, Previte continued, "Some of the things the state has been concerned about, like what happened in Seattle or with George Floyd (there was numerous complaints). So the state was concerned.

"But here, it's just such a different dynamic. If I have an officer that's a problem here, I know the next day. It's too small, I can't hide anybody here, even if I wanted to, which I would never want to. But it's not the same, I don't have the same issues.

"If we were having some issue with something or somebody, with an officer here or with the public, or if there was a racial issue or a tension with the police department or the public, it would be evident to everybody. It is a community that is that small, that close. I would hear about it.

Of Lewiston's rank and file, he added, "Hopefully a little bit of my outlook has rubbed off on them."

Of the police reform measure,

Previte went on to say, "Regardless of how it's presented I still think this is a good opportunity to engage with the public some more. And get some feedback from the different stakeholders that we have in the town - even if we're things doing well, how we can do them better. (And) if we can't do them better, how make sure and ensure that we continue to them well through training, etc.

"If we don't have problems and this committee looks at it and concludes that we're doing pretty well in the community ... then the focus can be how do we continue that."

Previte said there were preliminary discussions on conducting a survey at the first meeting and that he supports it.

Recalling the Sentinel's earlier Lewiston Police survey (wnypapers.com Sept. 20, 2014), it gauged community sentiment on the Lewiston Police Department, and questioned whether the department should be retained or disbanded. Results found that "95% of Lewiston residents ages 18 and older voted in favor of retaining the Lewiston Police Department."

Examples of comments received by residents include the following:

•"We need them! They (are) vital to our community!"

•"These guys know Lewiston best and they are always right there when needed. It's also nice having their presence close to the school

district! Yes. As a parent it makes it nice to know they are right there if ever needed! Also a good deterrent for criminals."

•"Awesome job out there! We can all rest a little more comfortably knowing you're protecting us and our loved ones!"

•"Yes! They make this community safe. Especially with all the festivals and concerts, we need them!"

•"Yes, I have lived in Lewiston all (of) my life and there is a reason I choose to stay here. Lewiston is an inherently safe place to live, and the reason for that is the Lewiston Police Department and its dedicated staff of officers that keep this area safe."

•"Absolutely! We would be insane to even consider giving them up!"

•"I feel safe in my community and at my house. Having (police) be our neighbors and a part of our community is priceless."

•"Yes, keep the (LPD), but make it compulsory for the events and festivals to pay for the police service."

At this writing the ad hoc committee, which met Thursday is said to be moving toward developing an online survey to gauge the public's sentiment on police reform, which would be introduced in the near future. Lewiston Police, like all law enforcement agencies in New York, is required to submit their plan to the state by April 1.

## Security & law enforcement students practice skills

Students in Jess Traver's security and law enforcement program have been busy practicing their handcuffing procedures. The Niagara Career and Technical Education Center students must demonstrate standing, kneeling and prone handcuffing procedures as part of the training.

"These skills build into a larger scenario where students must respond to 911 calls of a domestic disturbance," Traver said. "These practicals expose students to the law enforcement career field and the skills necessary to be successful."

In the photo are students Michael McCrossan (North Tonawanda) and Jeffrey Fleming (Lewiston-Porter). (Submitted photo)



## SNAP: 6-month increase in food benefits

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients receive a 15% boost in benefits

The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance announced New Yorkers enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will receive a 15% increase to their monthly food benefits for January through June. In addition, all households will receive the maximum monthly benefit for January under the emergency food assistance issued since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The pandemic has caused immeasurable economic hardship for so many New Yorkers and this additional assistance will help people continue to feed themselves and their families," Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance Commissioner Mike Hein said. "This temporary increase in benefits will bring some measure of relief to vulnerable New Yorkers as we continue to navigate these unprecedented times."

For January, SNAP recipients will receive the additional 15% as a separate issuance that will be distributed starting in mid-January and continue through the end of

the month. The federal legislation authorizing the increase was not approved in time to include the additional amount as part of the regular benefits for SNAP, which is administered by the state Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).

Additionally, emergency assistance will be issued to any SNAP household that does not ordinarily receive the maximum allowable benefit per month, which will be \$234 for an individual and \$782 for a family of four over the next six months. The emergency assistance supplement will be distributed along with the additional 15% for those who are eligible. About half of all households receiving SNAP in New York will receive the emergency benefits for January.

Under the direction of Gov. Andrew Cuomo last spring, OTDA submitted a plan to the U.S. Department of Agriculture to provide emergency supplemental payments to any SNAP household getting less than the maximum monthly benefit. Since that time, more than \$1 billion in additional benefits have been distributed, bringing much-needed federal dollars to local retailers throughout the state.

As with the prior months, the payments will be delivered directly to recipients' existing Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) account and can be accessed with their existing EBT card. Like regular SNAP benefits, the supplemental benefits can be used to purchase food at authorized retail food stores. Any unused SNAP benefits will be automatically carried over to the following month.

For more information on the emergency supplemental SNAP benefits, including answers to frequently asked questions, visit [otda.ny.gov/SNAP-COVID-19](http://otda.ny.gov/SNAP-COVID-19). New Yorkers can check their eligibility for SNAP and apply at [mybenefits.ny.gov](http://mybenefits.ny.gov).

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