

From: [KB](#)
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Dear Commissioners,

As a life-long resident of the City of Portsmouth, I have had the opportunity to see the Portsmouth Police Department over the course of many years. However, it was not until 2019, when I served on a Portsmouth Police Commission Sub-Committee on body cameras that I became more familiar with the department and its officers. It was through the research, officer interviews, and studies that I learned more about the complicated nature of policing. There is no doubt that there are good police officers and bad police officers—just as there are good doctors and bad doctors, or good lawyers and bad lawyers. Any profession that gives one person power over another is susceptible to corruption. While there is certainly room for change and improvement (just as there is room within any company, hospital, or government agency), I do not feel that an entire profession should be tarnished by the conduct of a few.

As a resident, I have observed the officers respond to traffic issues and neighborhood problems with discretion, showing and understanding of the community that enables them to deal with matters as safely and efficiently as possible. As a businessperson in the city for more than 25 years, I have seen the officers handle difficult situations with practiced skill and diplomacy. They have always been available to answer questions and address concerns. Their transparency and openness has made them an approachable and trusted presence within the community. As the past president of the Portsmouth Athenaeum, I have dealt with the department on alarm calls and civil issues, all of which were handled promptly, courteously, and professionally, showing the department's ability to deal with different and sometimes complicated scenarios. We are a small city—but our police department has consistently shown its ability to deal with more complicated scenarios than one might find in a typical “small town” setting.

I have never been disappointed with the level of service the Portsmouth Police Department has rendered. The training, leadership, and ability to work alongside the community provides the city with a valuable service, which most residents appreciate deeply. While, of course, no institution is infallible, I feel that the Portsmouth Police Department is held to high standards by the residents of this city. There is room for change and growth in the future of policing, but good work should be recognized, and the Portsmouth PD's continued efforts to improve and maintain best practices is admirable.

Thank you for your time.

Karen Bouffard
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