



POLICE MONTHLY REPORT

To: Dennis Bullen, Interim Town Manager
From: Lee Miller - Police Chief
Date: January 1st, 2026
RE: Police Department Report for December 2025

Police Department Updates

Message from Chief Miller

As we close out the year, it is important to reflect on what we have accomplished as a police department. In 2025, we successfully graduated two officers from the police academy, both of whom are beginning field training this week. We also secured more than \$90,000 in grant funding, ensured our officers remained current on all required training, and provided the equipment necessary for them to perform their duties safely and effectively. Overall, it has been a strong and productive year for the Lincoln Police Department.

I am also pleased to report that we did not lose any staff this year, and we continue to focus on retaining our current officers. Retention is critical to the long-term success of the department and requires continued support from both the administration and the Town Council. It takes more than a year to recruit, hire, train, and place a well-qualified officer on the road, and retaining those officers depends on competitive wages, proper equipment, and ongoing professional development.

Equally important is the culture we build within the department. When officers feel supported, properly equipped, fairly compensated, and valued, we are better positioned to grow and sustain a professional, effective police department that serves the Lincoln community well.

Looking ahead to 2026, we have several key goals. These include achieving a fully staffed and fully trained department and beginning the process of becoming an accredited law enforcement agency. We will start that work in the coming year and aim to complete the majority of the accreditation requirements as we move forward.

Policies and Administrative

I want to provide an update on the Critical Incident Review I discussed in last month's report. This review focuses on evaluating significant law enforcement events, such as the February 12th officer-involved

Policies and Administrative Cont.

shooting, with the goal of improving departmental policies, training, tactics, and operations. It does **not** assess justification—that is handled separately—but instead identifies strengths and areas for improvement.

The review committee, which includes law enforcement professionals, mental health experts, and a community representative, thoroughly examined the incident, our policies, and training records. I am pleased to report that many recommendations, including enhanced mental health training, body-worn cameras, and Taser standardization, have already been implemented or are in progress. We hope that when the council tours our facilities in January, we can sit down to review this report and discuss these improvements in detail.

I was asked to serve on Bangor's Post-Shooting Critical Incident Review Committee for the June incident. Our committee met in early December to thoroughly review the events and evaluate policies, training, and operational practices

Grants

Received funding for OUI enforcement details, and DRE training reimbursement money to send Officer Morales to training. The radios have been installed in all the vehicles and each officer has been issued one, working out a few bugs in the system.

We are still waiting for money to be released in regards to the Federal Vest Grant, this is money that is given to departments every year to help support the cost of half of each vests. Vests have a shelf life of five years and each vest is specific to each officer. A vest and carrier runs around \$1000.00. Usually this money is given out in the Summer. As of this date the application has closed but the money has not been released yet. The Lincoln Police Department had not put in for this grant for many years, which is issued to every department you just had to submit for it. When I started here several officers had expired vests which was not safe we have gotten that fixed.

Trainings

We worked to complete all required end-of-year training, including our Bureau of Labor Standards training and other mandatory training required by the Maine Criminal Justice Academy. In addition to mandated training, officers are required to complete twenty hours of elective training every two years, which we continue to stay on track with.

Detective Jacobs and I completed an online training focused on property and evidence room management. As a result of this training, we are implementing a best practice of using heat-sealed evidence bags. Going forward, any evidence brought into the evidence room will be packaged by Detective Jacobs using heat-sealed bags to improve accountability and evidence integrity.

Administrative Assistant Worster attended a Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) webinar, which directly supports her role as she routinely handles public records requests.

Our supervisors also continue to complete monthly online training through the Daigle Law Group. Recent training focused on managing recordings, social media, and First Amendment-related issues. Additionally, we have been conducting policy quiz training every few weeks to reinforce department policies and ensure consistency.

Over the next few months, we have several additional training opportunities scheduled that will help us continue to improve professionally and strengthen the department as a whole.

Staffing

Officer Manna will take his PT test and attend orientation at the academy on January 5th. He has been performing very well and is expected to complete this successfully.



Staffing Cont.

We attended the graduation of Officers Milner and House from the Maine Criminal Justice Academy, where they completed 18 weeks and over 720 hours of classroom instruction. They have now returned and are working in a field training capacity. This training period is expected to take approximately three to four months before they will be on the road independently without a training officer.



We are still recruiting one additional officer, which would bring the department to full staffing for the first time in many years.

We're proud to recognize Officer Ashley Winslow on her 5-year anniversary with the department.

Over the past five years, Officer Winslow has proven herself to be a dedicated professional who shows up every day ready to serve the community with integrity, compassion, and a strong work ethic. She consistently represents the department well, whether she's handling calls, or engaging with the public.

Community Outreach

Breakfast with Santa: Officer Winslow and I attended the Breakfast with Santa event, assisting with breakfast alongside many dedicated town staff. It was a fantastic community event, made possible by the generous time and effort of our volunteers.



Officer Peters participated in the Wreaths Across America wreath-laying ceremony this month, honoring and remembering our nation's veterans.



Community Outreach Cont.

Toys for Tots: Later in the day, Officer McMoarn, Officer Milner, and I participated in the Toys for Tots event at Walmart, helping spread holiday cheer to local children and families.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our community and the support of our first responder partners, we collected 742 toys, over 150 stocking stuffers, and 6 bikes to help make Christmas brighter for local kids.



Christmas Light Parade: Officer Winslow and Sgt. Mason concluded the evening by attending the Christmas Light Parade, celebrating the season with the community.

Food Program: The food program, led by Katie, is progressing well. We now have a stock of food available for distribution in situations where immediate assistance is needed.

Sand for Seniors Program: We have distributed over a dozen buckets of sand to help seniors stay safe during the winter months.



Red Flag Law

Maine recently enacted a voter-approved red flag law that will allow certain individuals to petition the court directly for an Extreme Risk Protection Order. While this law will soon be available as an additional tool, it does not replace Maine's existing yellow flag process, which law enforcement has been successfully using for several years. From an officer safety and public safety standpoint, the yellow flag process remains the preferred approach because it requires law enforcement involvement from the outset, includes a professional mental health evaluation, and allows officers to assess, de-escalate, and manage risk before firearms are removed.

Red flag orders may be issued without that initial law enforcement and clinical involvement, which can create unpredictable and potentially dangerous situations when officers are tasked with serving those orders. For these reasons, we continue to recommend that community members bring concerns directly to the police department so they can be handled through the yellow flag process, which has proven effective and remains the safest option for officers, the individual involved, and the public.

ICE Law

The recently enacted Maine law addressing cooperation with ICE is not viewed as a positive change for law enforcement, as it adds additional limitations and complexity without improving public safety outcomes. That said, it is not expected to have a significant impact on the day-to-day operations of this department. Our focus remains on public safety, criminal enforcement, and service to the community, and that will not change. We will continue to investigate crimes, make arrests based on criminal violations, and work collaboratively with our federal law enforcement partners when matters involve criminal activity or public safety concerns. The law does not prohibit cooperation with federal agencies on criminal investigations, task forces, or information sharing, and it is not anticipated to negatively affect our working relationships with federal agencies. Overall, the impact on our operations is expected to be minimal.

Had over 12 arrests for the month of December, including arresting a subject for violation of bail conditions when we completed a search of his residence and finding a shotgun. He was arrested and is currently at Penobscot county jail.

Included this month of arrests include OUI, violations of Protection order, and a domestic violence arrest, with several other warrant arrests.

Detective Jacobs is handling around a dozen higher end cases, including a few sexual assaults, high end thefts, weapons offenses, and a few other type cases that are still active and under investigation.

Law Enforcement in Action how we do the Job**IA and how they are completed**

This month, I wanted to briefly explain how we handle personnel complaints so council has a clear understanding. We accept all complaints—written or verbal, named or anonymous. Once received, we assess the seriousness and decide whether a supervisor or an outside entity will investigate. I do not investigate most serious internal affairs (IA) cases, as I am the decision-maker. Larger departments often have a “number two” handle investigations, but since we don’t have that option, we use an outside company that also handles our background checks. The owner has extensive law enforcement experience, including serving as a northern commander for MDEA and sheriff of Aroostook County.

IA investigations are usually administrative, focusing on whether policy was violated. Some cases can be both administrative and criminal, which requires separate investigations because officers have different rights in criminal matters. After an investigation, we review the facts and determine if a policy violation occurred. If sustained, disciplinary action is assigned, which can range from a verbal or written warning to suspension or dismissal. Complainants are notified of the outcome, and any sustained discipline is recorded in the officer’s personnel file.