



Dave Yost • Auditor of State





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To the Residents, Mayor, and Council members of Woodmere Village:

In November 2010, Woodmere Village (Woodmere or the Village) engaged the Auditor of State's Office (AOS) to conduct a performance audit of staffing levels in the Police Department for the purpose of ensuring efficiency and effectiveness. The performance audit was designed to review and analyze staffing levels in relation to peer villages, industry benchmarks, and leading or recommended practices.

The performance audit contains recommendations which identify the potential for cost savings and operational improvements. While the recommendations contained in the audit report are resources intended to assist in improving efficiency and effectiveness, the Village is encouraged to continue to assess overall operations and develop additional alternatives.

An executive summary has been prepared which includes background information; the methodology, scope and objective of the performance audit; and a summary of the recommendations, issues for further study and financial implications. This report has been provided to the Village and its contents discussed with the Council members, Mayor and Police Chief. The Village has been encouraged to use the results of the performance audit as a resource for further improving overall operations and reducing costs.

Additional copies of this report can be requested by calling the Clerk of the Bureau's office at (614) 466-2310 or toll free at (800) 282-0370. In addition, this performance audit can be accessed online through the Auditor of State of Ohio website at <http://www.auditor.state.oh.us/> by choosing the "Search" option.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Yost".

Dave Yost  
Auditor of State

June 9, 2011

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# Executive Summary

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## Background

In November 2010, Woodmere Village (Woodmere or the Village) engaged the Auditor of State's Office (AOS) to conduct a performance audit of staffing levels in the Police Department. The request for a performance audit was based on the Mayor's desire to ensure efficient and effective staffing levels. The performance audit was designed to review and analyze staffing levels in relation to peer villages, industry benchmarks, and leading or recommended practices.

### *Police Department Overview*

Woodmere Village is located in Cuyahoga County and according to the U.S. Census Bureau, its population was estimated at 750 in 2009. The Village encompasses 0.33 square miles.

The Woodmere Police Department's (WPD) stated vision is to "...preserve liberty, enhance the safety of our community and defend human dignity. We will be an organization in which each officer embraces integrity as the foundation in which our community trust is built. Our communication with the public will be direct, open, and respectful. We will value our differences, recognizing that there is strength in both. Our goal is excellence and we will accept nothing less." During 2010, WPD employed a full-time Police Chief and Lieutenant, three full-time sergeants, ten full-time patrol officers, and 13 part-time patrol officers. The hours worked by part-time patrol officers equaled 2.6 full-time equivalents (FTEs). All full-time sworn officers, excluding the Police Chief, are members the Fraternal Order of Police/Ohio Labor Council (FOP) collective bargaining unit. In addition, WPD employs a part-time clerk (0.3 FTE) that provides clerical and support services. WPD does not operate a jail or dispatch function. Instead, individuals arrested by WPD are transported to the City of Solon's jail. The Village of Chagrin Falls provides dispatching services.

## Audit Methodology, Scope and Objective

Performance audits are defined as engagements that provide assurance or conclusions based on evaluations of sufficient, appropriate evidence against stated criteria, such as specific requirements, measures, or defined business practices. Performance audits provide objective analyses so that management and those charged with governance and oversight can use the information to improve program performance and operations, reduce costs, facilitate decision-making by parties with responsibility to oversee or initiate corrective action, and contribute to public accountability.

AOS conducted the performance audit of Woodmere Village in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). These standards require that AOS plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for findings and conclusions based on audit objectives. AOS believes the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for the findings and conclusions presented in this report based on the audit objectives.

The scope of the performance audit was to review and analyze staffing levels in the Police Department, with an overall objective of assisting the Village in identifying strategies to improve efficiency and effectiveness. The following audit objective was used to guide the performance audit of WPD:

- How do staffing levels in the Police Department compare to peer villages, industry standards, and recommended or leading practices?

Audit work was conducted between December 2010 and March 2011, and data was drawn primarily from fiscal years (FY) 2009 and 2010. To complete this report, auditors conducted interviews with Village personnel and reviewed and assessed information from Woodmere, peer villages, and other relevant sources. Peer data and other information used for comparison purposes were not tested for reliability.

AOS used two villages as peers for benchmarking purposes: Brooklyn Heights and Glenwillow, both of which are located in Cuyahoga County. These villages were selected based upon demographic and operational data. Additionally, input was requested from Woodmere during the peer selection process. To further help evaluate WPD's staffing levels, AOS developed audit averages based on data collected in prior performance audits from six cities with populations ranging from 5,500 to 9,800. The exceptions are calls for service and daily calls for service per FTE which reflects only five cities because one city was a significant outlier, and support staff FTEs and support staff FTEs per 100 citizens reflect only four cities due to a lack of data from two cities. The selected peers include the following cities which were included in performance audits published in 2006: Napoleon, Northwood, Rossford, Shelby, Wapakoneta, and Wauseon. External organizations and sources were also used to provide comparative information and benchmarks, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and International Association of Chiefs of Police.

The performance audit process involved significant information sharing with the Village, including discussions of preliminary drafts of findings and proposed recommendations related to the identified audit areas. Furthermore, periodic status meetings were held throughout the engagement to inform the Village of key issues impacting selected areas, and share proposed recommendations to improve or enhance operations. Throughout the audit process, input from the Village was solicited and considered when assessing the selected areas and framing recommendations. Finally, the Village provided verbal and written comments in response to

various recommendations that were taken into consideration during the reporting process. Where warranted, AOS modified the report based on these comments.

The Auditor of State and staff express appreciation to the Village, WPD and the peers for their cooperation and assistance throughout this audit.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The audit report contains two recommendations that are intended to provide WPD with options for enhancing its staffing efficiency and effectiveness. In order to obtain a full understanding of the assessed areas, the reader is encouraged to review the recommendations in their entirety (beginning on page 5). The following summarizes the recommendations from the performance audit of WPD:

- Reduce staffing levels at WPD by at least 3.0, and up to 6.0, FTE sworn officer positions.
- Reduce sick leave use.

## Issues for Further Study

Auditing standards require the disclosure of significant issues identified during an audit that were not reviewed in depth. These issues may not be directly related to the audit objectives or may be issues that the auditors do not have the time or resources to pursue. The following presents issues requiring further study:

- As shown in **Table 1**, WPD covers only 0.33 square miles and employs significantly more sworn officers per 100 residents (2.21) than the prior audit average (0.21), which comprises six cities with populations ranging from 5,500 to 9,800. Likewise, the FBI's Uniform Crime Report shows that the average sworn police officer staffing level for Midwestern cities with populations under 10,000 was 0.28 per 100 citizens in 2009, while the overall Midwestern average for all cities was 0.22. As a result, WPD employs 7.9 times the number of sworn officers when compared to the FBI Midwestern average for cities with fewer than 10,000 residents and 10.0 times the number of sworn officers when compared to the overall Midwestern average. These variances show that the Village's small population significantly hinders its ability to achieve economies of scale. This, in turn, requires WPD to incur higher operating costs relative to other local governments that serve a higher population. According to the Mayor, the Village has considered consolidating police services with neighboring municipalities, but also indicated that the residents may prefer their own Police Department in order to maintain an identity. Furthermore, the Mayor noted that the Village can no longer afford to operate the police and fire departments at the current staffing levels.

Based on the factors noted above, Woodmere should further explore the option of contracting with other local governments for police services rather than operating its own department. In doing so, the Village should discuss the benefits and costs of such options with the community.



## Summary of Financial Implications

The following table summarizes the performance audit recommendations that contain financial implications. Detailed information concerning the financial implications, including assumptions, is contained within the ensuing section of the performance audit.

### Summary of Performance Audit Recommendations

Recommendation	Impact
1.1 Reduce staffing levels at WPD by at least 3.0, and up to 6.0, FTE sworn officer positions.	\$90,000 to \$179,000
1.2 Reduce sick leave use.	\$2,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$92,300 to \$181,300</b>

## Recommendations

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**1.1 Reduce staffing levels at WPD by at least 3.0, and up to 6.0, FTE sworn officer positions.**

**Based on peer comparisons, Woodmere should reduce staffing levels at WPD by at least 3.0, and up to 6.0, sworn officer FTEs. However, the Village should ensure that staffing reductions would not adversely impact crime rates and response times. In order to account for such variables, the Village should require that WPD report crimes by category on a regular basis (e.g., monthly and yearly) and work with Chagrin Falls to segregate response time data for police and fire calls. Woodmere should also review call information, including the type of call, day of the week, time of day, and response times, to determine if work schedules should be adjusted to better align with service demands.**

**Table 1** compares demographic, operational and staffing data at WPD to the peer villages and prior audit averages.

**Table 1: Demographic, Operating and Staffing Comparisons**

	Woodmere	Brooklyn Heights	Glenwillow	Peer Average	Prior Audit Average <sup>1</sup>
<b>DEMOGRAPHIC AND OPERATING DATA</b>					
Square Miles	0.33	1.77	2.72	2.25	5.67
Population	750	1,443	615	1,029	7,935
Calls for Service	6,160 <sup>2</sup>	4,969 <sup>3</sup>	835 <sup>3</sup>	2,902	11,257
<b>STAFFING LEVELS – 2010</b>					
Sworn Officer FTEs	16.54	16.73	8.88	12.81	15.48
Jail/Auxiliary FTEs	0.00	0.35	0.00	0.17	N/A
Support Staff FTEs	0.27	1.49	0.49	0.99	1.28
<b>STAFFING RATIOS</b>					
Sworn Officer FTEs per 100 Citizens	2.21	1.16	1.44	1.30	0.21
• Ranked FTEs per 100 Citizens	0.66	0.42	0.26	0.34	N/A
• Non-Ranked FTEs per 100 Citizens	1.54	0.74	1.18	0.96	N/A
Jail/Auxiliary FTEs per 100 Citizens	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.01	N/A
Support Staff FTEs per 100 Citizens	0.04 <sup>4</sup>	0.10	0.06	0.08	0.02
Daily Calls for Service per Sworn Officer FTE	1.43	1.14	0.36	0.75	2.76
Square Miles per Sworn Officer FTE	0.02	0.11	0.31	0.21	0.36

Source: WPD, peers, and the U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>1</sup> The prior audit average reflects data collected in prior performance audits from six cities with populations ranging from 5,500 to 9,800, with the exception of calls for service and daily calls for service per FTE (5), and support staff FTEs and support staff FTEs per 100 citizens (4).

<sup>2</sup> This reflects 2010 data and excludes 1,240 shift call-ins because they do not represent actual calls for service and are not reflected in calls for service reports at Brooklyn Heights and Glenwillow.

<sup>3</sup> This reflects 2009 data because actual data for 2010 was not available at the time of the information request. However, projecting the calls for service for 2010 based on actual activity through October 2010 reveals that using the projected 2010 calls for service would not adversely affect the comparisons.

<sup>4</sup> The person filling this position was hired during 2010. Prorating the hours for an entire year equates to 0.05 FTEs per 100 citizens, still lower than Brooklyn Heights and Glenwillow.

**Table 1** shows that WPD employs more sworn officers per 100 citizens than Brooklyn Heights, Glenwillow, and the prior audit average. Likewise, **Table 1** shows that WPD employs more ranked officer FTEs per 100 citizens and non-ranked officer FTEs per 100 citizens when compared to Brooklyn Heights and Glenwillow. While WPD responds to more daily calls for service per sworn officer FTE<sup>1</sup> than the peer average, it responds to fewer calls for service per sworn officer FTE when compared to the prior audit average. Additionally, WPD covers a significantly smaller area than the peer and prior audit averages. Specifically, **Table 1** shows that

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the shift call-ins which were excluded from **Table 1**, WPD's calls for service include other instances which do not always reflect an actual call for service. However, when excluding these calls, WPD still responds to more calls for service per sworn officer FTE (1.30) than the peer average.

the peer average square mileage is 6.8 times greater than WPD, while the prior audit average is 17.2 times greater. As a result, WPD covers only 0.02 square miles per sworn officer FTE, much lower than the peer (0.21) and prior audit (0.36) averages.

The absence of effective tracking, reporting, and monitoring of key data (i.e., response times and crimes), failing to assign staff based on call volumes throughout the day, and using high amounts of sick leave (see **1.2**) increase the risk of inefficient and/or ineffective staffing levels. These issues are summarized by the following:

- WPD does not report and monitor response times. Currently, Woodmere's response time report reflects both police and fire calls. According to the Chagrin Falls Dispatch Center, the system vendor was contacted in an effort to separately report fire and police response times. During the time of this assessment, Chagrin Falls did not provide separate response times for police and fire. *Municipal Benchmarks* (Ammons, 2001) reports that based on a study conducted by the League of California Cities, high service level departments should respond to emergencies within five minutes.
- While the sergeants indicated that calls for service reports are reviewed on a monthly basis, WPD does not track crimes in a manner that enables effective management reporting. Specifically, according to one of the sergeants, WPD cannot easily produce a monthly or yearly report of crimes by category within the Village. In order to produce such reports, the sergeant indicated that the data would have to be compiled from the daily call logs. Conversely, Brooklyn Heights and Glenwillow report crime data through Ohio's Incident-Based Reporting System. Brooklyn Heights also reports crime data through the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. Additionally, *Officers-per-Thousand: Formulas and Other Policy Myths* (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2007) indicates that no meaningful correlation has been found between the number of officers employed in a community and the crime rate. The article states that if a community wishes to reduce crime, additional officers can only help when added to an effective, mission-focused department, one that has instilled throughout the organization accountability for community livability and for the level of crime. The article indicates that the following steps can guide staffing choices:
  - Set community goals;
  - Review efficiency and effectiveness;
  - Tie recommendations to results; and
  - Make decisions/hold accountable.

- WPD schedules uniform staff coverage regardless of workload requirements that can vary throughout the day.<sup>2</sup> By comparison, *Law Enforcement Shift Schedules* (Shiftwork Solutions, 2003) recommends that police departments use alternative scheduling to redistribute personnel from less busy times (typically 3:00 am to 10:00 am) to the higher workload periods (typically 10:00 am to midnight). This would avoid understaffing the busy periods of the day and overstaffing the less busy periods.

In order to achieve the peer average of 1.3 FTEs per 100 citizens, the Village would need to eliminate 6.78 FTEs. This would result in WPD covering 0.03 square miles per sworn officer, still much lower than the peer and prior audit averages. While the daily calls for service would increase to 2.43 per sworn officer, it would still be lower than the prior audit average. If the Village chose to reduce half of the abovementioned positions to still employ more FTEs per 100 citizens than the peer average, it would equate to eliminating 3.39 FTEs.

*Financial Implication:* If the Village eliminated 3.0 sworn officer FTEs, it would save approximately \$90,000 annually in salaries and retirement benefits. Eliminating 6.0 sworn officer FTEs would save approximately \$179,000 annually in salaries and retirement benefits. These savings are based on the lowest salaried patrol officers in 2010 to provide a conservative estimate.

## 1.2 Reduce sick leave use.

**Woodmere should review factors that can impact sick leave use at WPD, such as the composition of staff, accrual rates and limitations, monitoring activities, and disciplinary measures. In particular, the Village should consider increasing the use of part-time staff and decreasing the use of full-time staff. Along with helping to reduce sick leave use, this would help reduce insurance costs and increase WPD's flexibility in scheduling staff. Reducing sick leave use would help maximize productivity and minimize the need for overtime.**

WPD used an average of 116 sick leave hours per full-time position in 2010, much higher than Brooklyn Heights (90) and Glenwillow (47). As a result, sick leave comprised 5.0 percent of the total compensated hours at WPD in 2010, higher than Brooklyn Heights (4.4 percent) and Glenwillow (1.0 percent). Likewise, WPD's sick leave use per full-time position is three times higher than the average of 39 sick leave hours per State employee represented by the FOP

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<sup>2</sup> Prior to 2010, WPD scheduled staff to three 8-hour shifts. However, in 2010, the Village switched to a 12-hour schedule. The sergeants indicated the change was necessary to address scheduling difficulties as a result of three officers being placed on paid administrative leave. Typically, WPD schedules its weekday shifts with full-time officers and weekend shifts with part-time officers, who also work as needed during the week.

bargaining unit in 2010, as reported by the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS).<sup>3</sup> WPD's higher use of sick leave is partially due to certain employees taking extended medical leave. However, 11 of the 15 full-time employees used more than the DAS benchmark of 39 sick leave hours. Further, WPD's higher sick leave use is partially due to a greater reliance on full-time officers, when compared to Glenwillow. WPD provides sick leave and insurance benefits only to full-time employees. **Table 2** compares WPD's use of part-time sworn officers in to the peers.

**Table 2: Use of Part-Time Staff**

	Woodmere	Brooklyn Heights	Glenwillow	Peer Average
<b>Sworn Officers: % Part-Time</b>	46.4%	39.3%	75.0%	57.1%
<b>Sworn Officers Regular Hours: % Part-Time</b>	17.9%	2.4%	37.5%	20.0%

Source: WPD and peers

**Table 2** shows that 46.4 percent of sworn officers at WPD are part-time, a number that is significantly lower than Glenwillow. Similarly, part-time officers comprise 17.9 percent of the total regular hours at WPD, less than half the percentage in Glenwillow (37.5 percent). Other factors such as accrual rates, monitoring practices, and disciplinary measures can also contribute to higher sick leave use. For example, WPD's collective bargaining agreement allows for unlimited sick leave accrual.

High use of sick leave increases the need to employ more staff (see **1.1**) and incur more overtime. For instance, overtime comprised 1.73 percent of total hours at WPD in 2010, which is higher than the peer average of 1.27 percent.<sup>4</sup>

*Financial Implication:* If WPD reduced the percentage of overtime to the peer average by taking measures to reduce sick leave use, the Village would save approximately \$2,300 annually in salaries and retirement benefits. This estimate is based on the lowest salaried patrol officers in 2010 to be conservative.

<sup>3</sup> Even when including the part-time positions which do not use sick leave, WPD averaged 60 sick leave hours per employee, which is 54 percent higher than the DAS benchmark.

<sup>4</sup> Overtime at Brooklyn Heights and Glenwillow comprised 0.80 and 1.73 percent of total hours, respectively.

## **Client Response**

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The letter that follows is Woodmere's official response to the performance audit. Throughout the audit process, staff met with Village officials to ensure substantial agreement on the factual information presented in the report. When Village officials disagreed with information contained in the report and provided supporting documentation, the audit report was revised.

The Village's official response did not require any modifications to the performance audit report. Although the Village's official response indicates that the Police Chief would provide a separate response letter, that letter was not received at the time of final publication and release of this audit report. Furthermore, audit staff followed up with the Chagrin Falls Dispatch Center to address the questions raised by the Police Chief at the exit conference meeting. This follow-up confirmed the accuracy of the call data used in the performance audit.



## The Village of Woodmere

"Gateway To The Chagrin Valley"

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216/831-9511

**CHARLES E. SMITH**  
MAYOR

May 4, 2011

David Yost, Auditor of State  
88 East Broad Street  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Mr. Yost:

The Village of Woodmere recently engaged the Auditor of State's Office to conduct a Performance Audit of our Police Department.

In particular due to the changing economy, we wanted an independent review of our staffing in the police department in comparison with other comparable communities. Woodmere is unique in that we have approximately 850 residents and as many as 15,000 visitors passing through during the day and evening at our various business/retail stores.

Your auditors did an excellent job in providing us with financial data information that will allow us to move forward and consider various recommendations from their report. We will work with Village Council to strategize on how to implement their recommendations that are determined to provide an economic benefit without jeopardizing the safety currently provided to our residents and businesses.

Our Police Chief did have a question with regards to some of the data provided to the auditors by Chagrin Falls Dispatch that he will respond to in a separate letter. I also want to acknowledge the staff who conducted the audit for their professionalism and the manner in which they presented the audit results to our Village Council.

Sincerely,

  
Charles E. Smith, Mayor

Cc: Village Council  
Ross S. Cirincione  
Terence Calloway  
Thomas M. Cornhoff