

CITY OF BIDDEFORD, MAINE

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City Officials Celebrate Police Department Accreditation

BIDDEFORD — The Biddeford Police Department joined an elite group of law enforcement agencies that have received national accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). This honor, awarded to only 5 percent of law enforcement agencies nationwide, was bestowed on Saturday at the CALEA conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Chief Roger Beaupre and the Police Department began pursuing accreditation in 2016. Over the past two years, BPD has worked to adopt and demonstrate an adherence to a set of established professional standards to meet the requirements of the program. The process also included an external, objective evaluation of departmental operations. The extensive requirements of the program are designed to improve the delivery of public services and to instill confidence in community members.



Pictured: Councilor John McCurry, Chief Roger Beaupre, Lieutenant Ricky Doyon, and Sergeant Jeffrey Greene pose with the CALEA banner after officially earning accreditation on Saturday.

“It should give people confidence that we’re in compliance with the gold standard of law enforcement,” Beaupre said. “It’s a difficult achievement and there’s only a few who qualify - less than 3 percent in Maine.”

Accreditation had been a goal for the Police Department for years, and with full support from the City Council in 2016, Beaupre was able to commit the resources to the process to complete it efficiently.

“I first tried to start this process in 1995, but recognized that one person working on it alone would take forever,” said Beaupre. “This time, I committed three people full time to getting this accomplished. When you sign up to participate in accreditation, they give you three years to do it, and we were able to complete it in 18 months.”

Councilor John McCurry attended the conference in Grand Rapids with the Police Department and sat in the audience as Chief Roger Beaupre, Lieutenant Ricky Doyon, and Sergeant Jeffrey Greene testified at the

accreditation hearing. When the BPD was approved to go in front of the full commission for final approval, McCurry was invited to speak on behalf of the City Council.

“I got to tell the commission how glad I was to be there to support our officers, and I thanked the Police Department for their hard work and everyone at the City for getting behind them in this process,” McCurry said. “I’m very, very proud of them for undertaking the accreditation, and especially for getting it done in a shorter amount of time than expected.”

Chief Phillip Crowell of the Auburn Police Department spoke to the rigor of the CALEA program. The Auburn Police Department became the second accredited agency in Maine in 2007 under Crowell’s leadership and was the first law enforcement agency in the state to reach Gold Standard accreditation.

“Becoming a nationally CALEA-accredited agency provides for meeting the highest standards associated with law enforcement training, operations, policy and procedures,” said Crowell. “Accreditation does not imply perfection, but rather a commitment towards excellence and accountability. Attaining CALEA recognition requires hard work and the Biddeford community should be very proud of this achievement.”

Mayor Alan Casavant agrees.

“We’ve always felt that the Police Department demonstrates its professional talents and skills every day, but earning this accreditation really proves that we have a standout law enforcement agency in this city,” Casavant said. “It’s pretty darn impressive.”

To ensure that CALEA’s high standards continue to be met, the Biddeford Police Department must stand for re-accreditation every four years, a process which includes detailed annual reports, an in-depth on-site assessment, community input and a formal hearing before a panel of commissioners.

Former Lewiston Police Chief Bill Welch experienced the accreditation process in 1995 with the City of Lewiston. Upon his retirement from the position, Welch now works as an assessor for CALEA, evaluating law enforcement departments throughout New England.

“In the reaccreditation process, CALEA will make sure that the BPD didn’t just write the policies and procedures that they said they would to earn accreditation,” Welch explained. “They have to prove that they’re walking the talk and actually implementing these policies and trainings.”

City Manager James Bennett has no doubt that the Police Department will actively follow through with the process and maintain accreditation in the future.

“Chief Beaupre has been fully committed to this for the past two years, and he and the rest of City staff are all very proud of this accomplishment,” Bennett said. “We’re looking forward to supporting them as they continue to reach the high standards that they have set for themselves for years to come.”

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