

LWVN Observer Notes:

**Newton Police Reform Task Force Meeting  
Wednesday, August 20, 2020, 5:30 – 7:30 pm**

This meeting took place by Zoom.

The purpose of the meeting was for the Task Force to hear about community experiences with the Newton Police Department. Community members were asked to share the details of that experience, whether positive or negative.

About 130 people participated in the Zoom call. About 25-30 people provided comments on their personal experiences with the Newton police, those experiences being a mixture of both positive and negative interactions.

Without detailing the personal nature of the comments, we can report the overarching nature of some of the comments:

Positive:

- the police have responded with professionalism and in nonthreatening manners, especially to 911 calls;
- interactions with police on traffic stops have been positive;
- the police are effective at deescalating tense situations.

Negative:

- aggressiveness in handling certain situations;
- officers don't necessarily have the skills to deal with emergency calls dealing with social and emotional situations;
- police do not respond quickly enough to calls regarding violations of certain laws (such as the leafblower regulations);
- there are too many officers assigned to traffic control for construction and other duties, and/or a lack of attention by police when assigned to these type of duties.

Some time at the end of September there will a community budget survey that will be open to all members of the community.

For more information on the Newton Police Reform Task Force and to sign up to receive email updates from the Task Force go to the [Newton Police Reform Task Force Information Page](#) on the City of Newton's website.

