

## Qualities of a Police Officer

As the Chief of Police I am always seeking input and comments on how our department is serving the citizens and visitors of our community. What do you expect or want in your Police Officers? I would expect descriptions such as courageous, honest, and ethical, and you would be correct with these expectations. I would add a few other qualities that are desirable for a successful officer.

Because the job of a police officer is often “thankless” and involves adversarial encounters, we seek candidates that display a true sense of selfless service and a desire to serve the community. Each employee of this department enters into an unwritten contract that agrees to serve the community to the best of their ability. Their service is demonstrated by honesty, courage, discretion, compassion, personal conduct both on duty and off, dedication to the values-goals-and objectives of the department, fair and ethical treatment of everyone, and understanding the constant need to maintain the respect and support of the community.

The role of a police officer should never be described as “just a job” – the demands are too great. The department utilizes policy and procedures and constant training methods to emphasize these qualities and provide guidelines for the officers. The demands that are placed on officers by the nature of the job, along with balancing of family and personal obligations, plus the constant observation and evaluation by the public - are great.

The expectations are high, but through it all, our focus must remain on how to serve the community with competent officers, respectful attitudes, compassionate service, and garner the respect and support of those we serve. So let me know how we are doing. Better yet – tell an officer how much you appreciate what they do each and every day.

Should you have questions about this or other police operations I can be reached at (931) 455-0530, or [pblackwell@tullahomatn.gov](mailto:pblackwell@tullahomatn.gov).