



From the Desk of the Chief of Police... MISSION, VALUES, VISION

May 9, 2014 – “To protect and to serve”, is a classic description of the mission of a police department. Developed in 1955 by the Los Angeles Police Department, it has come to embody the basic tenets of everyday law enforcement. In its essence, serving and protecting has become the basic mission of the police. The message it conveys is simple. It speaks to the notion that the police are a first line defense against crime and disorder and it identifies the fact that there are entities that either want or need the services provided by the police. But, is the mission of a police department more than that? Should it or could it be more than that?

During my first week in Norwalk, I challenged the officers to answer these questions and others. I asked them, who do THEY work for; who do WE work for and are they the same? Why are we here? What is our purpose? What do we do each day? Are we doing what is expected of us or merely doing what we want to or what we think is expected of us? I asked these questions because true self-reflection has a way of making one consider all of the small details of one's own efforts towards an issue or problem. When these ideas/questions are considered thoughtfully and carefully, in the context of do the police do more than protect and serve, you can see that describing the mission of the Norwalk Police Department with just those few words would be inadequate at best.

The officers met my challenge head on by adding their ideas to a list over a two week period. It was quickly obvious, based on their ideas, that the officers have a high level of care and concern for the community. So, after careful consideration and with the input from all members of the department, the following mission statement was developed to guide us as we “protect and serve”

With commitment and resolve, the Norwalk Police Department will provide noticeable, professional and dedicated service through citizen focused efforts that, solve problems, maintain the public trust and produce a safe, prosperous community.

While the mission is important to the overall work ethic of an organization, the mission is only as good as the values that embody the organization's attitude towards its daily tasks and objectives. The Norwalk police department has three core values that guide us while we pursue the organizational mission.

1. Accountability for our actions and inactions
2. Citizen centric customer service
3. The diversity of life experiences among us

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The mission statement guides our daily work. It is an internal mechanism to remind us of our daily purpose. The mission is what we do. The values are what our core beliefs are concerning how we will accomplish the mission. The values are how we do what we do. Conversely, the departmental vision is the external component of how we want the community to view us as we work towards completing the mission. The vision of the Norwalk Police Department can be summed up in three words. Noticeable, Professional, and Dedicated.

Noticeable plus Professional equals Dedicated

When members of the department are being **noticeable**, they are actively engaging the citizens in community policing activities. They are present at community functions, attending meetings and events as speakers, and providing crime prevention tips to residents and businesses. They are visible on the roadways, actively patrolling all of the streets in the city and making arrests when needed and appropriate. They are engaged and involved in school activities. A noticeable police department is central to the core activities of a City. It is not a department that is an afterthought, operates on the periphery or hides behind a building or the badge. We are first responders, on the front lines, and should be noticeably on the forefront of services provided by the City.

A **professional** department is proud of their place in the community, of the uniform and what it represents. Likewise, if a department is professional in its ongoing law enforcement actions, the community will be supportive of the men and women who serve in that capacity. A professional police force builds pride in a community. Officers who work in a professional department are prepared for all types of incidents. They are well trained and competent in the various aspects of law enforcement and are compassionate when interacting with the public. Professional police officers are willing to help a stranded motorist, stand tall in the face of danger and hug a child in need all in the same day.

A **dedicated** department is one that understands that the ultimate measure of success is the satisfaction of the community. If the members of the department are operating in a noticeable and professional manner, then the dedication of these officers will be apparent. In short, noticeable plus professional equals dedicated. I believe our police department **IS** a dedicated unit of public servants who consistently strive to apply these ideals every time they pin on the badge.

Mission, Values and Vision are how this organization is oriented. These are the principles that Norwalk Police Department stands for. The police department is working diligently to keep Norwalk a safe, prosperous place to live and work. This is what I believe. However, I ask each member of the community to think critically about what “to protect and to serve” means to you. Is the police department meeting your expectations? If so, please tell the next officer you see as the gesture will be appreciated. If not, please let me know how we can satisfy the public safety needs of Norwalk in a manner more consistent with your vision of “to protect and to serve”.

Sincerely,
Greg Staples, Chief of Police

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About Norwalk, IA

Settled in 1846 and incorporated in 1900, Norwalk has grown to nearly 10,000 residents. Norwalk is located in Southern Polk and Northern Warren Counties and just south of the Des Moines International Airport and Highway 5 bypass. Business Week awarded Norwalk with the distinction of being the 2010 Best Affordable Suburb.

www.norwalk.iowa.gov