



Unadilla Township Police Department

126 Webb St. • P.O. Box 264 • Gregory, MI 48137-0264
(734) 498-2325, Office • (734) 498-3021, Fax
(517) 546-9111, Central Dispatch



Est. 1968
www.unadillapolice.org

David S. Russell
Chief of Police

HISTORY



Law enforcement began in Unadilla Township in 1894 with the appointment of two constables, that being F.E. Marshall on April 8, 1894 and William Pryfrur on April 12, 1894. Prior to Unadilla Township having constables, the Livingston County Sheriff Department serviced the Township with the first County Sheriff being elected on the first Monday in May 1835. The Sheriff was Justus J. Bennett. Unadilla Township was a quiet and religious community. The Township was formed on the first Monday in April of 1835.

The first Justice of the Peace for Unadilla Township was Elnathan Noble. Noble was also one of the first associate judges in Livingston County. Before the county was organized, he was appointed territorial justice of the peace by Michigan Governor Stevens T. Mason. Elnathan Noble is given credit for naming Unadilla Township after a township in Otsego County, New York.

The Township's first documented homicide was in 1845. Victim Green was shot and instantly killed by a man by the name of Cole while in the woods near his house. Cole admitted to the shooting. Cole claimed he mistook Green for a deer and accidentally shot him. No positive proof was brought against Cole at trial.

Constables served as Peace Officers until 1978 with the hiring of the first Township police officer. Unadilla Township ended the use of constables in 1985 when Larry Owen was sworn in as the first Chief of Police for Unadilla Township. Prior to being sworn in as Chief of Police, Owen was the Township's only full time police officer. Larry Owen was hired in 1978 and was assisted by Constable William Jack McGee. Earnest Clark was appointed as a constable in 1967 and served until 1978 (the badge of Constable Clark is displayed in a glass case at the Township police station). Ofc. Owen was also assisted by Constables Calvin Sommers, James Bolling and Charles Wertz.



Unadilla Township officially formed a police department on March 19, 1968 when the need for better police response and service was required. Unadilla Township could not get the service of a police department from constables or from the Sheriff's Department.

UNIFORMS

Constables wore every day clothes (there was no uniform). The badge was silver and displayed the words Constable, Livingston County.

The first uniforms were brown and were handed down from the Livingston County Sheriff Department with the patch also being brown. The patch displayed the words Unadilla Township Police. This was the uniform Ofc. Larry Owen wore. The uniform and patch was then changed in 1986 to french blue pants, navy shirt, and a blue and gold



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patch that displayed the words Unadilla Township Police. The shoulder patch was then changed in 1994 to white and blue lettering with a blue background and colored print seal of the State of Michigan. In 1995 the uniform was changed to navy pants with a black stripe on each outer pant leg. In 2005, the year of the Township founding was added to the shoulder patch.

PATROL VEHICLES

Constables Used their own cars to patrol the township and handle calls. The first police car acquired by the police department was a Dodge which was donated by the Livingston County Sheriff in 1978. The first new police car purchased was a grey 1983 Plymouth. The car number was L-54 used from 1977 until 2003 when it was changed to the vehicle radio system number which became 3227, 3229 and 3275 for each of the Township's police cars. The call sign was also the car number, L-54 or L-55, until a digital radio system was acquired by the Michigan State Police in 1998. In 2010, in a joint grant venture with the fire department; both departments acquired and share an all-terrain-vehicle. The Polaris Ranger is a an all-wheel six-wheel drive vehicle utilized for remote fire fighting, emergency rescue and off road patrol operations. In 2013, the department purchased an all wheel drive Ford Interceptor Utility.

POLICE STATION



The old Unadilla Township Hall stood on Main Street and was also used by the police department until fire destroyed the building in 1987. The police department was then located inside a small red building located where the current fire department station is located. The police department then moved to Dexter Trail into the Township Offices in 1991 until 1994. In 1994, the old fire station was renovated and the police department took up operations in the old fire hall. In 2004, the police department and township offices moved into the former Howlett Elementary School along with the Township offices. The police department continues to utilize the former police garage located at the former police station at 122 Main St. The new police facility offers a larger office area, interview room, administrative office, squad room, records room, locker room and evidence room.

RESERVE POLICE OFFICER PROGRAM

The reserve officer program was instituted in June of 2003. Presently, the department employs three reserve police officers. The first reserve police officer was William J. Cowan. The department currently employs four reserve officers.

K - 9 PROGRAM

The K-9 program was instituted in November of 2005. Ofc. Jeff Soli employs his police canine "Quinn" during his patrols of the Township. Quinn is trained as a tracking dog and narcotics dog. In April of 2013 the K-9 program was reinstated and Ofc. Steve Hart employs his partner, Kizer, a German Shepherd which is a dual purpose dog trained and certified in narcotics identification and tracking.

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LAKELAND TRAIL MOUNTED PATROL

The mounted patrol program was instituted in August of 2005. Ofc. Jeff Soli employed his police horse "Misty" during periodic patrols of the Lakeland Trail.

INVESTIGATOR POSITION

In March 2007 Unadilla Township Police Department created the position of investigator. The first investigator appointed to the department was Ryan Hamlin who currently serves the community in that position. Inv. Hamlin has conducted a variety of criminal investigations including narcotics, armed robbery, home invasion and stolen vehicles. Inv. Hamlin also conducts advanced crime scene investigations.

PATROL RIFLE PROGRAM

In January of 2013 the department instituted a patrol rifle program. Assault rifles were obtained under a grant from the United States Department of Defense. The agency had a certified armorer modify the weapons from military use to law enforcement use. The weapons are used for critical incidents including perimeter control, barricaded persons and other violent individuals.

CHIEFS OF POLICE

Larry G. Owen was appointed first police officer of the Township police department from 1978 until 1985 when he was appointed first Chief of Police of the Unadilla Township Police Department.

James R. Lytle was appointed police officer of the Township police department from 1992 until 1996 when he was appointed Chief of Police. Chief Lytle served until February 2003.



William S. Cook was appointed police officer of the Township police department from March 2002 until February 2003 when he was appointed Interim chief of Police until October of 2013.

David S. Russell has been appointed Chief of Police as of October 7, 2013. Chief Russell started in 2003 as a full time officer. He was promoted in 2004 to Sergeant. He held that position until his promotion to Chief David Russell this past October.



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