

**VERO BEACH  
POLICE  
DEPARTMENT  
  
UNION SURVEY  
  
2024**

**Q1: I am confident that leadership will use the results of this survey to make positive changes.**

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Strongly Agree	<b>15.00%</b>
Agree	<b>17.50%</b>
Disagree	<b>50.00%</b>
Strongly Disagree	<b>17.50%</b>

**Q2: I feel my work is appreciated and valued by my supervisor**

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Yes	<b>85.00%</b>
No	<b>17.50%</b>

Comment 1: Yes. Direct supervision: yes. Administration: No.

Comment 2: No. yes by immediate supervisor. But I have worked for supervisors in the past that do not care and spend more time complaining then actually supporting.

Comment 3: Yes. I feel my work is appreciated with current supervisor, but not all.

Comment 4: Being in a specialized unit (CPU) we get full support from our supervisor Lt Harrelson.

Comment 5: No. Majority of the captains and sergeants show support to their officers. Including Kimetz, Plumb, Adamski, Dominguez, Toole, Hesse and Cox. These supervisors encourage and support officers and provide constructive criticism as needed. The female supervisors Brumley and Dewitte aggressively micromanage officers under their supervision. They cause a negative work environment and make officers not confident in making their own decisions. They are very emotional and unfit to be in more influential leadership positions.

Comment 6: Yes. I believe my work is only appreciated by my sergeant. I feel administration does not value what we do on an everyday basis.

Comment 7: Yes. My immediate supervisor makes it clear that he notices when I do good and work and makes it a point to say good job.

Comment 8: Yes. I agree that my immediate supervisor appreciates the work performed. I feel that leadership above that supervisor is only concerned about not having a perception problem regardless of if the job performed was necessary.

Comment 9: Yes. My immediate supervisors are the only thing that keeps me showing up to work.

### Q3: I feel my work is valued and appreciated by the top administration

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	37.50%
No	62.50%

Comment1: No. Administration would be more likely to write you up for discipline rather than praise. Other agencies laugh at the stupid things our officers get written up for by administration.

Comment 2: No. No one at the top is on the same page about what is important, what isn't important and the needs or wants of the department. Only value an employee when it is directly beneficial to them.

Comment 3: No. I believe that top administration does not care about anything that happens on the road unless it's beachside. I've made numerous proactive arrests in the past but it never got noticed so I stopped. Changes need to be made with admin especially Monaco.

Comment 4: No. They always hear about what is going on, but I feel as though they don't truly know. It doesn't matter if you do a great job or nothing.

Comment 5: No. I don't do this job to feel valued by top administration. I do it because I enjoy it.

Comment 6: No. Currey and Monaco are more concerned about public image and liability.

Comment 7: No. I don't think top administration has the slightest clue what happens on a day-to-day basis on the road and appear to not care either. They can't value what they don't know happened. And they won't know what happened if they don't care to look. This is one of the main things that lead to the disconnect between admin and the road.

Comment 8: No. I feel and have seen they care more about not looking bad and paranoid to the point a job done correctly will only be supported if there is no public negativity.

Comment 9: No. Not until recently have I seen that people in admin have actually been more aware of certain situations and proactivity. Seems like proactivity is shunned at times.

Comment 10: No. I don't they really care or respect us. They only care about what the public says or thinks. We need people who actually care about policing and who isn't afraid of getting their hands dirty.

Comment 11: No. The current administration does not value or appreciate anyone's work. They are the biggest hypocrites. You consistently hear administration say that everyone is lazy at this department. Though they drag out a simple task for months or don't even get their project finished.

Comment 10: No. This issue has improved by a few but still have the impression that law enforcement is not the top priority of the administration.

**Q4: My agency puts officers concerns before public perception**

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Strongly Agree	<b>5.00%</b>
Agree	<b>17.50%</b>
Disagree	<b>30.00%</b>
Strongly Disagree	<b>47.50%</b>

**Q5: I feel the VBPD has been slow to adapt to modern policing (i.e. utilization of technology)**

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Agree	<b>90.00%</b>
Disagree	<b>10.0%</b>

Comment 1: Agree. PAPER PAYROLL. The end.

Comment 2: Agree. I understand budgeting and grants and the difficulty/time with new programs, tools, and clothing. But the cheapest route is always chosen and in the end the department ends up paying more.

Comment 3: Agree. It seems we have wasted time, money, and resources just to attempt to veer away from what IRCISO does. Ultimately, they are on the right track. Why not follow it.

Comment 4: Agree. We have a cad system that has been obsolete for years and the only reason we are changing is because the company is no longer in that business. We have people making the final decisions on technological items that can barely use a computer and insuring we aren't like the county, so they buy systems that are ineffective i.e. our lpr cameras that run mailboxes and our body cameras that are so no frills the state attorney doesn't want to sue them.

Comment 5: Agree. VBPD has become the least aggressive law enforcement agency in the treasure coast. VBPD focuses on dealing with crime after it occurs instead of preventing crime or catching criminals on the act. Because of this old school mentality VBPD technology is outdated and limited. VBPD is dependent on the resources provided to them by surrounding agencies. And we can never support these agencies when they need us because admin is concerned with liability.

Comment 6: Agree. I believe the agency will look for the cheaper option rather than the better option. Multiple ideas for technology that other local agencies are using are frequently brought up by the officers, but nothing is ever done about these ideas.

Comment 7: Agree. It was a struggle to get access to flock. And then once we had access, used it daily. And used it to assist in locating suspect vehicles and solving cases. We decide to purchase a whole other system that nobody knows how to use of cares to use because it's bad. We cited costs as to why we went with vigilant over flock, and now two people department use the system.

Comment 8: Agree. The department has made progress in this area, but I feel the department is limited in its budget. This could be due to the City of Vero Beach being slow to modernize its policies and protocols to better serve our needs and those of the citizens. One disturbing example of this is the lack of vehicles

purchased during last year's budget cycles. Due to the city's fleet purchasing protocols the departments vehicle order was canceled through no fault of our own, prohibiting the departments vehicles from being purchased. Other examples of the city not being modern is the lack of computerized payroll or the ability to pay a parking ticket with a credit card online.

Comment 9: Agree. Technology is far behind other departments. Drones are not available to road patrol as an example. Older vehicles with older technology should have been phased out already and all of the newer vehicles with newer technology should have gone to road patrol where they would have been utilized rather than sitting at schools with SROs.

Comment 10: Agree. I believe they are making steps in the right direction and continuing to get better at listening to their officers' concerns about how technology is needed.

Comment 11: Agree. We have a very outdated program and process for how things are handled around here. It would be great to see IRC SO and VBPD actually get together and work hand in hand rather than let the egos and pride get in between. This is about getting the best for the agency and most importantly the officers. For a better way to perform their job.

Comment 12: Agree. We are far behind on our card system and basically everything else far behind on vehicles it doesn't make sense that new vehicles were ordered and 2-3 years later we start to get new ones.

Comment 13: Agree. Patrol squads use a dry erase board to plot out their monthly schedule. The department uses a paper payroll system that has been covered in whiteout because of every day changing schedule. That means payroll mistakes are constant. The admin spent \$180,000 on a consultant for a new CAD System, yet I am confident we will get an outdated version of whatever crappy system our administration chooses. That was a huge waste of money.

Comment 14: Agree. A big example is the departments previous decision to not proceed with the Flock Camera System. The Flock Camera system is vital when it comes to locating suspects/missing vehicles, stolen vehicles, and general tool for solving crimes. The department lacks a proactive approach to addressing crime. Instead, they prefer we sit back and wait for crime to occur and then be reported.

Comment 15: Agree. This issue is slowly improving. However, the programs and tools used by the agency for law enforcement are not of high quality.

Comment 16: agree. Various outdated and in operable equipment observed throughout the department i.e. vehicles, shields, Internet service.

#### **Q6: There is a strong sense of unity in the department**

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Yes	<b>27.50%</b>
No	<b>72.50%</b>

**Q7: What is your number 1 thing you would like to see changed?**

Comment 1: Morale. The agency is extremely toxic currently and work is no longer enjoyable. Our HR department is horrendous, our city manager does not value us, and our admin spends too much time fighting for power over each other.

Comment 2: For officers to be treated just and fairly. For administration to stop dismissing input from rank and file.

Comment 3: An administration more open to change and not stuck with the “This is how it’s always been” mentality.

Comment 4: Salary and modernization.

Comment 5: Promotional testing should only include policy and contract. Take out book and articles.

Comment 6: Morale. We need to implement a better workplace for employees. They spend zero effort in making the agency better but just try to put out fires.

Comment 7: Replace Gabrielle at City Hall with someone more positive and better suited for the position. She is awful and doesn’t care about the PD Personnel.

Comment 8: Officers need to put first over the publics concerns and complaints.

Comment 9: Employees complaining.

Comment 10: Would like to see a culture change of the year organization.

Comment 11: I would like to see strong leadership at the top, not managers of their own careers who spend too much time playing politician.

Comment 12: Educational degree requirements and promotional testing process to include only departmental policies.

Comment 13: Communication between all departments.

Comment 14: Changing old policing mentality for new modern techniques. Changing how top admin disciplines their agency. We need more training and progression into new tracks.

Comment 15: A willingness for administration to accept charge. The running joke around the agency is “that’s how we’ve always done it”

Comment 16: The people who make decisions.

Comment 17: Stagnation in the upper ranks. Maybe there should be a buyout policy in the COVB

Comment 18: Leadership at the top and a more progressive mindset. There are too many examples to last, but one example would be the excessively strict pursuit policy that forces the police department to rely on the sheriff's office to the job for us.

Comment 19: Administration

Comment 20: A better step by step review policy for reviewing body cameras.

Comment 21: Too many people wear too many hats leading to a dissolution of core functions.

Comment 22: Police work being done without admin worrying about the optics of how it will look to others.

Comment 23: Administration actually following through with "unity" and "family" which this agency always brags about. Administration has failed time after time and DOES NOT support, protect, or defend their own people (officers). They shame them and call them out but will not talk about their actions or wrong doings.

Comment 23: I would like better pay. Compared to surrounding agencies, why would any stay.

Comment 24: Unity at the department.

Comment 25: The overall culture at the department. Nobody who has the power to make decisions can get over the "that is the way it has always been done" nobody thinks outside the box. Our administration is plain vanilla.

Comment 26: Leadership needs to be changed with that moral will go up and the department will prioritize the needs of the department such as proper gear and training and an administration that will support its officers.

Comment 27: Pay

Comment 28: Better software programs and law enforcement tools.

Comment 29: improved pay and support from administrators, also a review of policies to help improve productivity and proactiveness

**Q8: Do you think that the VBPD places a priority on your health, both mental and physical?**

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Agree	<b>43.50%</b>
Disagree	<b>56.41%</b>

Comment 1: Disagree. We have several officers seeking therapy. There are zero after action debriefs. Admin never checks in. They do not care about us whatsoever. It's sad to see.

Comment 2: An IA is the answer to every complaint. The CM's response according to the article shows the problem is city wide.

Comment 3: Disagree. Poor gym equipment and lack of physical standards. Lately mental health has been a common topic and becoming more of priority.

Comment 4: Disagree. They care more about not filling a shift with overtime than actually letting officers use their time off to take care of themselves. There are also zero debriefs. Insane.

Comment 5: Depends what they know about so it's hard to give an answer on that.

Comment 6: Agree. Offering time to exercise at work is effective and the new option at Emerald Health is helpful.

Comment 7: Agree. Peer support team has been formed and made available and in services training specific to mental health (struggle well) physical health is prioritized as well to include time to work out and upgrades to gym.

Comment 8: Disagree. They say they do but have done nothing to show that. There is no physical standard for officers and no incentives for physical fitness. They also have said they wanted to start a peer-to-peer group but still are discussing what that will be almost 2 years later.

Comment 9: Agree. Our union and road supervisors always look out for our officers well-being.

Comment 10: Agree. I believe the agency is trying to make mental health a higher priority. However, I feel they still have more they could do.

Comment 11: Disagree. The only priority is that I've noticed is public perception.

Comment 12: Disagree. We are just a number and a body. "The Vero Beach Police Department was here before you and will be here after you"

Comment 13: Agree. I feel some people place too much of a priority on fitness because if we get 1 hour to work out on duty why do some people take 1.5 or 1.75 to get it done? Admin included. We used to have two treadmills and now have none. Red tape from trying to buy one with a grant is keeping the treadmill(s) in limbo instead of just budgeting for them. I feel the department is also trying to show they care about mental health training that is designed to have officers share feelings and events in their life as part of the training. Therefore, nobody will talk because nobody wants their business out in front of everyone. So, 8 hours of only listening to an instructor and PowerPoint is what results-not productive.

Comment 14: Agree. They take an active role when officers are in need.

Comment 15: Agree. Department allows us to work out. The mental health aspect is personal and should be handled by the officer.

Comment 16: Disagree. We used to have mandatory physicals and checkups.

Comment 17: Disagree. The HR department. Our administration and anyone else in charge could care less. The head of HR increased our insurance because people are using the insurance. If you are in patrol and at minimum staffing you can't workout. Yet if you are in any other department, you can work out for hours!!! There has only been a mention of peer-to-peer support. That was only a mention nothing else.



Comment 18: Disagree. I believe that my mental is my own responsibility not the agencies. The agency should merely provide an outlet does not make metal health training a mandatory training cycle.

**Q9: Does previous discipline against you or another officer make you hesitant in the performance of your duties?**

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	<b>62.50%</b>
No	<b>37.50%</b>

Comment 1: Yes. Specifically, Officer Hernandez. This has always been a thing. We are very quick to Monday morning quarterback.

Comment 2: Yes. Disciplinary action on officers and supervisors on the stabbing on New Years Eve 2024. Unnecessarily disciplinary action over minor policy violations (concern of public perception instead of looking out for their own people) Overboard disciplinary criminal action against our own officers when different decision could have been made. (Concern of public perception instead of looking out for their own people).

Comment 3: Yes. Soledad Hernandez, morgan Saucier, James Doty.. Shall I continue? Constant hesitation from unnecessary discipline.

Comment 4: Yes. ABSOLUTELY!! It has affected me personally and I've watched it affect other officers as well.

Comment 5: Yes. I have personally watched young officers operate out of fear of being "written up" on calls for service. That type of hesitation will ultimately get an officer hurt or killed. The word "optic" is used regularly by command staff when decisions are made during an internal review.

Comment 6: Yes, Currey and Monaco have a terrible habit of distributing written discipline so they can follow up with progressive disciplining. This causes a very negative work environment and causes officers to not be confident in their duties. Often times, the disciplining is on policy discrepancies that can be easily addressed through conversation and a verbal reprimand. I wish admin would speak to officers one on one before any permanent decisions. This would allow officers to be heard & admin could provide feedback/criticism. A lot of recent crime mentality that VBPD admin has resulted because of the "soft on crime" mentality that VBPD admin has. They are overly concerned with liability that they hinder any progress or prevention of crime. They also fail to implement the proper training to prevent liability, like defensive tactics, high risk scenarios, pursuits, violent felonies.

Comment 7: Yes. I find myself second guessing some decisions bases on what I think administrators will say about it after the fact.

Comment 8: No. I am able to answer no to this because I'm confident in my abilities and myself. However, I can see this happening to newer or less confident officers, and it is extremely dangerous to the offices and the public they serve.

Comment 9: Yes. I don't want to get arrested for doing my job. Thanks.

Comment 10: Yes. Officer Butterfield should never have been fired. He was wrong. He should have disciplined (including unpaid time off), retrained and had probation extended. It has killed our recruiting at IRSC because recruits (and others) feel it was a decision made to make the Chief look better at a time he was being scrutinized in the media by other entities. Some officers have said they will be less likely to be proactive since they fear a poor decision or use of discretion will be judged in the same light.

Comment 11: Yes. I do my job anyway, but it is always in the back of my mind that things may come back in me negatively for doing my job.

Comment 12: Yes. Seen people go to jail for trying to cut someone a break. The whole agency turned on the person when it should've been handled in house and not immediately gone straight to the press about it. I heard someone got switched from their shift to a different one for no reason when it wasn't even their time yet to leave their original shift.

Comment 13: Yes. People are afraid to make a decision. They feel like they are walking around on eggshells.

Comment 14: Yes. In my past experience discipline has been more about appeasing the public over the investigating whether the officer had actually violated a policy or law. The mentality is not changing fast enough. Also, the bodycam/dashcam program is not transparent enough in that administration can view the videos we have. It's almost impossible to know who has watched what videos. There should be an email notification feature installed that automatically informs the officer when a person watches one of their videos.

Comment 15: yes. Criminal charges for a policy violation seems excessive for disciplinary action.

**Q10: I would describe the morale at the agency as...**

Answer Choices	Responses
Good	2.50%
Bad	57.50%
Average	40.00%

Comment 1: Bad. Rank and file Do not feel top leadership cares about them

Comment 2: Bad. Fighting among administration and poor leadership directly affects morale

Comment 3: Bad. Morale is bad simply because the LT's can't get along. Monaco talks down to people. Huddy is extremely rude and unprofessional. The chief is blamed because he is the one that leads the agency but he's not even the problem. The rest of command staff is.

Comment 4: The morale tanked here at our agency when Officer Butterfield was arrested for what should have been a policy violation. That decision was made out of fear of public perception. I often hear from Officers on street that do not feel that command staff will support them if they are involved in an incident.

Comment 5: Average. Good at times, poor at times, no different than any other agency or job.

Comment 6: Bad. The officers are united in a desire to make change but they are discouraged and not confident in their leadership.

Comment 7: Bad. There is obvious tension within the agency. Most of this is caused by outside influences. However, I feel that administration is putting unneeded stress on the officers due to these outside influences.

Comment 8: Bad. The agency is expert in making guys who to work not want to work anymore. Things such as charging one of our coworkers with a ridiculous crime has a tendency to do that.

Comment 9: Bad. Average trending towards bad. Officers and even Admin officers are voicing concerns and frustrations with some Admin not being held accountable for policy violations and contract violations. I just read that a civil lawsuit was filed by a LT suing the city for hostile work environment. If a Lt. feel threatened and has that much seniority how does a new or younger officer expect to be treated? And will they stay long enough to see if it's true or not? Bad times right now at the VBPD. Communication between the Admin and rank and file has significantly broken down. I don't mean Chiefs Chatter. I mean daily communication from an Administrator to the people under that command about the daily happenings. There is no Lt working night shift and sergeants were removed from staff meetings when the Chief's scrutiny by outsiders began. Half the departments officers and supervisors have no interaction with an administrator except a once-a -month chief's chatter. Most communication is therefore done by email, and every leadership course says that method is useless.

Comment 10: Average. People are going to complain about their jobs. It's impossible to make 100% of the agency happy. I also feel that peoples attitudes are a direct result of their home life as well as their work environment.

Comment 11: Not terrible but it's not exactly great either now is it.

Comment 12: Bad. Everyone does not want to come to work. They think this administration is a joke and the decisions they make. I really hope the truth is spoken in this survey. I am sick of having people complain about this agency but are afraid to speak up.

Comment 13: Average. The morale has improved slightly since the previous survey. However, there are still many issues that need resolve.

**Q11: Has the turmoil within the departments administration effected your morale?**

<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Yes	<b>77.50%</b>
No	<b>22.50%</b>

**Q12: Are you currently seeking employment with another agency?**

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	<b>22.50%</b>
No	<b>77.50%</b>

Comment 1: No. I'm not yet because unfortunately being here for less than 3 years I will owe the agency an absence amount of money.

Comment 2: Yes. Better pay. Better equipment. Better facility. Better communication. Different leadership. More resources and better relationship with nearby agencies.

Comment 3: I am indeed if this contract does not go through.

Comment 4: No. Our community is great and genuinely appreciates us and our agency has great officers. With a strong union and membership that stands together change will come.

Comment 5: Yes. I love this community, but other agencies offer better condition, pay, and training. I just want to be allowed to do real police work and not be afraid of unnecessary discipling. There is no real incentive to stay at this agency long-term, or past a few years. The starting salary isn't a big concern but the progressive career steps (i.e. steps 2-5) need to be more competitive and actually compensate officers who put their time in at this agency. There also needs to be a better work environment that allows officers to be proactive, if not, there are several agencies that will allow officers to be more proactive, have more freedom, and they will pay much more.

Comment 6: Yes. I have looked at agencies that have more opportunities and ones that take a more proactive approach towards law enforcement by offering more specialized positions, equipment's, and policies geared towards that. The retirement is the only thing that is keeping me here. Had that been transferable I would even be willing to take a pay cut for better opportunities. I know the agency keeps trying to say we are family here, but it feels we are very far from being that. My family is constantly telling me I should leave for better opportunities or to go somewhere that I am valued.

Comment 7: No. I am not seeking it. The money in PSL is hard to argue against though.

Comment 8: No. I'm not giving up. I want the city of Vero Beach and the VBPD to be the best that it can be. It sucks coming to work and listening to people complain, including Lieutenants, and nothing ever changing.

Comment 9: Bad. I think officers like each other and help each other but they are very unhappy and untrusting towards the top leadership. There is an obvious decision between officers and staff level leadership.

Comment 10: No. But it has been something that's crossed my mind multiple times.

Comment 11: No. With the pay they offer us and the me-too clause and being told we are basically the same as the trash guys why shouldn't I.

Comment 12: Yes. I am looking for employment outside of law enforcement.

Comment 13: yes. Better pay, and a better work environment.

**Q13: If you were to file a complaint with HR, do you believe that it would be fairly and accurately investigated?**

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	17.50%
No	82.50%

Comment 1: No, Gabrielle will sweep it under the rug and find nothing wrong despite the evidence

Comment 2: I believe HR will do anything and everything to protect the city and not the employee.

Comment 3: No. ABSOLUTELY NOT. GABRIELLE MANUS SHOULD NOT BE EMPLOYED BY THE CITY.

Comment 4: No. Personally I have not had any experience with HR but from word of mouth about the situation where multiple supervisors and certain officers were called into HR to discuss a hostile workplace. I believe that the investigation was not as thorough as it could have been.

Comment 5: No. Manus needs to be fired. She's horrendous and violated all of our hippa rights. Does not care about us and is corrupt. She has publicly lied on public record. The investigation conducted was a scam.

Comment 6: No. I feel as though HR does not conduct fair and non-bias investigations.

Comment 7: No. The current lawsuit is a fine example of what HR really does. Protect the city, not the employee.

Comment 8: No. Previous HR "investigations" were complete farces. HR outright said she would never go against a department head so what is the point. Also, her reports from what I have seen are full of lies and misinformation.

Comment 9: No. HR Struggles to maintain functioning and sustainable department.

Comment 10: No. I have voiced concerns with the HR director, and they have seemed to be ignored in order to present a more favorable view for the city.

Comment 11: No. There are documented cases of HR doing absolutely nothing when valid complaints are made. Gabrielle Manus is an absolute moron.

Comment 12: No. Absolutely not. I have personally heard HR Director Ms. Manus say, "My job is to look out for the city" Therefore, I do not feel she can perform an objective investigation.

Comment 13: No. I believe a complaint would get handed as long as it wasn't against top leadership.

Comment 14: No. Based on recent events not a chance.

Comment 15: I don't know.

Comment 16: No. I have no faith in the HR director of the City of Vero Beach, nor do I have faith the deputy Chief or Chief would handle the complaint without attempting to change it in favor for the city.

Comment 17: No. Never heard of HR helping anyone.

Comment 18: No. I believe our HR department should receive an award for worst HR in the United States. They are rude, unprofessional, and just horrible human being.

**Q14: Do you believe that the PD is properly prepared to handle a natural disaster?**

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	<b>12.82%</b>
No	<b>87.18%</b>

Comment 1: No. Chief and Deputy Chief are more concerned with money and public image.

Comment 2: They are more worried about money than making sure we were properly staffed during the last hurricane. The city and VBPD also do not have the proper equipment to assist citizens.

Comment 3: This was extremely showcased recently. Zero planning, we are so under prepared. We worry too much about money and Monaco has NO clue what he's doing.

Comment 4: No. Who can truly day they're prepared. There is always improvements to be made.

Comment 5: No. Hurricane Milton. Enough said.

Comment 6: No. We just experienced this recently. We don't have the equipment or tools to handle flooding or debris in the roadway at all.

Comment 7: Yes. Agency has responded very well to countless hurricanes over the years and as recently as this October.

Comment 8: No. Not when administration is more worried about paying overtime then planning appropriately.

Comment 9: Top Admin is out of touch with modern policing and handling disasters. They are overly concerned with liability.

Comment 10: No. Not at all. The last hurricane/tornadoes incident was an absolute mess.

Comment 11: No. The response to the tornados and hurricane were atrocious. We had a chief, deputy chief, and two lieutenants on scene of a natural disaster in the city and they gave command to a sergeant from IRCISO. We were one of the only local agencies not on A/B. We had a night shift plus 4.

Comment 12: No. Really dropped the ball for Hurricane Milton. Not knowing if alpha/bravo was needed until it was too late while other departments not in its path were activated and prepared to handle any unforeseen circumstances.

Comment 13: No. In years past we have properly prepared before a storm, such as having all essential personnel on duty (Alpha/Bravo) just prior to the storms arrival we had city fleet personnel at the station to repair our vehicles, if necessary, during the storm, building maintenance people at the station, sufficient and appropriate food to eat for personnel ( for the duration of the event), sleeping cots and assignment sin case people could not go home. According to the emergency operations plan. However, during Hurricane Milton, this was not done or done properly. The COVB was never out of the “cone” of the storm’s path, in fact, we were in a hurricane warning (defined as hurricane conditions are expected) and additionally, tornado warnings were expected. In fact, the VBPD IT Specialist (who is essential personnel) was not made to work which left the VBPD without internet to run department laptops until he was told to come in two days later. The food was PB & J and cold cuts but were gone within 2 days and there weren’t even plates. To be frank, this was a joke of a hurricane preparation, because clearly the city Admin thought it would only be a little rain and over in a day. They then had to play catch up and extend the storm response until Monday (5 days later) without having prepared for it to last that long (poor preparation, poor decision making). The brand-new golf cart was not secured at the station prior to the storm and became flooded at its beach parking space. In years past we moved all patrol cars and low vehicles to the courthouse parking garage just in case we got flooding but not this time. The city has been prone to flooding, even in afternoon rainstorms, yet since Hurricane Francis and Jean in 2004, the city has inadequate high water response vehicles. The VBPD has only 1 pickup truck and not even a 4x4. In fact, on Friday (Day 3) the truck wasn’t even at the station since an Administrator took it home for the weekend, this leaving the COVB asset unusable for shift officers. One officer used his personal truck to respond to calls for service- UNACCEPTABLE in 2024 by a city with our resource potential I’d like to read the After-Action Report by the department (as required by policy) that I heard was conducted by Administrators to see if there is a differing opinion of the preparation and response. To my knowledge, nobody asked the officers on duty during this event to take part in a critique of this event. We tell citizens to prepare for the worst and pray for the best, yet the COVB chose to not prepare for what our city and citizens ultimately faced and then were short-handed in areas, such as dispatch and road patrol. Sebastian Police Department, the IRSCO and several surrounding agencies had all essential personnel on.

Comment 14: No. There is lack of preparation and lack of equipment. Officers stuck at work while their families are at home should at the least be served decent meals, but the sheriff’s office filled that role for the officers working at night.

Comment 15: I believe our agency has poorly planned for natural disasters and it finally caught up to them during the last incident involving the tornadoes. Our agency had only one truck available to use during the storm and when it was needed it was being used to take the city clerk home. Which caused a police officer to use his personal vehicle to assist with rescue efforts. We had no equipment available to use effort any type of rescue efforts such chainsaws to help entrapped citizens. When it came time to conduct a search and rescue effort several officers were willing to immediately respond with undue delay which was led by Lieutenant Kennesky. I believe had it not been for his leadership the response would not have been as effective. This is due to the poor leadership showing by the deputy chief during this critical incident as he appeared flustered and having a lack of confidence immediately after the tomatoes. It also appeared that the administration was more concerned with trying to reduce overtime costs than ensuring the city was properly married during the storm.

Comment 16: I'm not answering this questions as some employees did an excellent job and some employees didn't.

Comment 17: No. During Hurricane Milton the administration didn't seem to know what to do they were out of the loop of the county while they were coming up with a game plan and just seemed ver4y lost even though they had plenty of time to prepare and come up with a plan. Nothing was done.

Comment 18: No. I think that was evident during the tornados that spanned off from Hurricane. This department isn't even prepared for a water leak inside the building and that happens every time there is a storm. The hallways flood and they can't even handle that disaster.

Comment 19: No. Our department is not equipped to handle a natural disaster. We would have to look towards the IRC SO for their assets, manpower and leadership/Guidance. Same goes for any large critical incident.

Comment 20: No. The administration was not prepared and did not have necessary equipment available during the hurricane/tornadoes. The administration also could not make a decision in the moment which required a sheriffs' office Sergeant to take over incident and command of the initial tornado response from our top administration due to them "freezing up" on the scene. The police department does not have any high water, vehicles or proper tools or equipment available, and also did not have full alpha bravo available or attempt to start calling more personnel into work when natural disasters became more prevalent and the possibility becoming more apparent.

Comment 21: no. Planning an equipment needed or lacking.

**Q15: If you're able to improve the agency in any way. What changes would you implement?**

Answered	Skipped
27	13

Comment 1: Change in leadership

Comment 2: Stop IAs for stupid complaints. Stop making officers job harder by adding extra duties and redundant paperwork. Keep administration accurate and ensure they move on those they supervise rather than other units.

Comment 3: I believe the chief needs to hold his command staff accountable but in ways that won't put pressure back onto subordinates. This is a sensitive topic as the chief could easily cause turmoil if it is not delivered correctly.

Comment 4: Better allocation of resources and better decisions in all aspects.

Comment 5: Bring salaries up so that officers don't leave to other competitive departments. Improving in technology and equipment in order to stay current and relevant.



Comment 6: Culture change by instilling faith and respect back with command staff. The chief needs to meet the everyone one on one and needs to restrain his command staff.

Comment 7: updated payroll system.

Comment 8: I would improve the way disciplinary actions are handled. I would also update technology/equipment within the organization. The VBPD leadership needs to work closely with the sheriffs office more effectively.

Comment 9: Strong effective leadership at the top that backs their officers.

Comment 10: A new administration that isn't more worried about fighting amongst itself and pissing the other one off and actually leading the people they are supposed to be leading. Also, an administration that doesn't think it's funny and appropriate to bully and yell and scream at people just because they are in the position of authority.

Comment 11: Better pay, (Specifically for officers that have 3 or more years with the agency) you should be rewarded for your commitment to this community. Proactive policing techniques and better training. A renewed discipline procedure that focuses on growth and improvement rather than limiting officers and making them fearful of taking any action. Our local agencies can support us in progressing into new methods.

Comment 12: Entertain ideas of the officers that bring forward ways to improve morale and improve everyday functions of the department ups and afraid of change.

Comment 13: We need new leadership because we don't currently have any. We have two LT's who are trying so hard to become a captain that they will do things that negatively affect guys on the road just to spite each other. We have another LT who had to file a lawsuit because the chief and deputy chief retaliated against him for speaking up. These dudes couldn't run a Burger King and now that it's in the public eye it is embarrassing. I've never seen people as incapable of making a good decision as the people who make decisions on behalf of VBPD.

Comment 14: If you look at the years of service of the administration the bottom three have less than 5 years as Lieutenants. The top four have probably 15-25 years in the rank of Lt or higher above. If there's an internal problem in the agency it's not the new officers that are setting the course of the department.

Comment 15: Start at the top two leaders. The paranoia and self-preservation have led to poor ramifications. A fear to ask council for what we need has led to officers driving high mileage cards seemingly always in for service as an example. Another example is a CAD system that should have been replaced years ago resulting now in an outdated system which the company went defunct. This was foreseeable and unacceptable to not have been replaced long ago. There are other issues that the entire staff may need to be replaced as the mindset towards officers is so ingrained it may be unfavorable since it is the only leadership style most of them know.

Comment 16: I would prioritize officer morale. I feel that it is too low amongst the officers and not a concern for the administration.

Comment 17: New Police Department building with a bigger gym.

Comment 18: Less concern about optics of others and worrying about being too aggressive. We are the Police we're meant to get bad guys no matter how unpretty it is.

Comment 19: A new Chief. New Administration. Strong leadership and strong union.

Comment 20: Better equipment. Better vehicles that are more comfortable being better prepared for natural disasters. Maybe a chief that's sticks up for the officers do not drag them through the mud.

Comment 21: Procedures for testing for supervisory positions.

Comment 22: Update on training, physical standards and more appreciation/proper support from administration. There is a divide/lack of understanding between administration and its officers. Administration is not trusted because of their decisions.

Comment 23: better software programs and equipment also train our dispatchers more and have them articulate their transmissions better so they can be understood. Certain dispatchers do not articulate their words and speak softly while transmitting over the radio dispatchers. Also have issues spelling words correctly, causing confusion while reading call notes have more relevant training during the training cycles. ASP training is not as necessary as no officers use their ASPs. Training cycles need to cover high liability, scenarios officers encounter, but have not had proper or recent training on (high risk, traffic stops, defensive tactics, take downs, etc.) the active shooter training scenarios are conveniently done for schools in session, but never at other locations or school special events, forcibly entry training for gaining access to different doors, windows, etc. Find a way to not use vacation time to take training classes. Most newer officers do not have a vacation time of care to take adequate vacation and also take training classes to advance in the step plan.

Comment 24: better pay, review the promotional process and other procedural policies.