

TOWN OF VERNON

Office of the Mayor

14 Park Place • Vernon, CT 06066

Tel: (860) 870-3600 • Fax: (860) 870-3580

www.Vernon-CT.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 14, 2023

Press Contact:

David Owens, Communications Specialist

Desk (860) 870-3574

Cell (860) 494-5973



Daniel A. Champagne
Mayor

Michael J. Purcaro
Town Administrator

Dawn R. Maselek
Assistant Town Administrator

Town of Vernon Awarded Grant from Gary Sinise Foundation to Equip Vernon Police with Electric Bikes

VERNON, CT – The Town of Vernon has won a grant from the Gary Sinise Foundation that will fund the purchase of four state-of-the-art eco-friendly electric mountain bikes for police officers to use for patrol and community policing.

The grant for \$21,523 was obtained by Nichole Greco, Vernon’s project and grant coordinator in administration, working with police Capt. Lucas Gallant. The grant covers 100 percent of the cost of the e-bikes. The Town Council approved the grant application in May.

“We are always looking for grants and other opportunities to enhance the services we offer our residents,” Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. “These e-bikes will enhance the police department’s ability to protect and serve our residents.”

The new electric mountain bikes will replace traditional mountain bikes. Officers receive special training to ride the bikes on patrol.

The Gary Sinise Foundation, established by the actor best known for his roles in the movies “Forest Gump” and “Apollo 13” and the TV show “CSI-NY,” aids veterans, first responders, severely wounded veterans and the families of fallen members of the military.

“We encourage our employees to be creative and innovative and this grant is a perfect example of that,” Town Administrator and Emergency and Risk Management Director Michael Purcaro said. “Capt. Gallant came up with an idea to enhance community policing and engagement efforts with e-bikes, then worked with administration to find a way to fund them at no cost to taxpayers. We are truly grateful to the Gary Sinise Foundation for its generosity and recognition of the good work our officers do for our community.”

Getting police officers out of patrol cars and onto bikes is ideal for community policing initiatives and for special events, such as July in the Sky and National Night Out, Gallant said.

“Officers on bikes can more readily stop to talk with residents to learn about their concerns, answer questions and build relationships,” Gallant said. “Bikes can also get into places patrol vehicles can’t, such as our trail network.”

About the Town of Vernon

The Town of Vernon is a celebrated place to live, work and visit. From its beautiful parks and lakes, to its vast trails and historic homes and buildings, Vernon is a resilient and thriving community that promotes the health and wellbeing of its residents and values the natural environment. With a resident population of more than 30,000 and occupying 18.03 square miles, Vernon combines a balanced appreciation of history, and a strong economic base for growth, both residential and commercial. Located 15 minutes east of the Connecticut capital of Hartford, and 25 miles from the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town of Vernon is strategically located in "New England's Knowledge Corridor" with close proximity to some of the top colleges and universities in the country.

Designated a certified Sustainable Community, the Town of Vernon offers a wide range of benefits and services to its residents. The Town of Vernon is a full-service municipality that practices a management philosophy of continuous quality improvement. To learn more about the Town of Vernon, please call (860) 870-3670 or visit www.vernon-ct.gov.



###