



RICHMOND POLICE DEPARTMENT



Interim Police Chief Benjamin Herrick
203 Bridge Street
Richmond, Vermont 05477

To: Richmond Vermont Select board
From: Interim Chief Benjamin Herrick
Re: Review of Police Cruisers
Date: 28 OCT 2022

The following is a list of the police cruisers that are owned by the town of Richmond and their assignment status.

<u>Car #</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Make</u>	<u>Model</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
1	2017	Ford	Explorer	Line car for part time officers
2	2021	Tesla	Model 3	Unassigned
3	2017	Ford	Explorer	Officer A. Dengler
4	2022	Dodge	Durango	Currently at Hardwired for equipment installation
5	2019	Ford	Explorer	Officer K. Wilson
6	2020	Dodge	Durango	Interim Chief B. Herrick
N/A	2016	Ford	Explorer	Scheduled for auction

In order to prevent cars from sitting stationary for extended periods, we have begun having officers drive the Tesla and the line car home once a week to prevent maintenance issues. When Car 4 returns from Hardwired Electronics that car will replace Car 3 as an assigned car, and the replaced vehicle will become a line car and will be included in this rotation. This will continue until new personnel are hired and the cars can be assigned.

My recommendation for new cruiser purchases at this time is the Dodge Durango. Although the Tesla has many positive qualities, I do not believe they outweigh drawbacks.

The Model 3 is not purpose built to be a police car and therefore it is difficult or impossible to find all of the standard police equipment that will fit in the car. As a result there is no safety partition in the vehicle to separate a combative person in custody from the officer driving the car. This is a safety concern for both the officer and the subject in custody. Because we do not often have multiple officers working at a time, if a combative subject is taken into custody the officer driving the Tesla must rely on an officer from another agency to transport the subject.

There are no locking rifle and shotgun racks that I am aware of that will mount inside the Tesla, and therefore any weapons stored in the car do not have a secondary security measure after locking the trunk or doors. This is another safety issue.

The Tesla is a very small car and when an officer is wearing their duty gear it is uncomfortable to sit in and difficult to enter and exit. There are larger models of Tesla, but the larger models have a substantially larger cost and are therefore cost prohibitive at this time. There are other models of electric vehicles available, but none are purpose built for law enforcement and will have many of the same issues.



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Lastly, the charging station in Richmond is not a supercharger and therefore takes an extended period of time to charge the vehicle. In a day to day patrol assignment this is not a reliable solution as the vehicle is often not able to be plugged in for extended periods of time. This creates a situation where the officer driving the car must leave Richmond to go to a supercharger to maintain enough of a charge during their shift. Although the range of the Tesla with a full charge is roughly 300 miles, the additional equipment in the car drains the battery faster reducing that range. Just as we do not allow a gas powered vehicle to get to an empty tank before refilling it, we do not allow the charge level in the Tesla to get low because we do not know what situations may arise that will require a longer time period before the car can be driven to a charger. Recent use of the vehicle has shown that the need to recharge can occur at least twice in a shift, and each trip can take up to an hour to get to the supercharger, charge the vehicle, and then return to Richmond. That is two hours out of the shift that Richmond is not being covered by an officer in town.

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benjamin Herrick". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Interim Chief Benjamin Herrick