

# Cumberland

FIRST TWO VISITS:

OCT. 30

NOV. 25

“ I had a difficult time with the Cumberland Police. The first time I visited the headquarters, I was told the record keeper was out sick. On the second visit, I was told that the record keeper was on vacation. The third visit, I came after 4 PM and the record keeper had gone for the day. I kept seeing the same front desk officer who eventually suggested I submit a written request and he would pass it along to the record keeper. The record keeper eventually called me, told me that Cumberland did not have any brutality reports that she knew of and that she would send me three arrest reports. A week later I received three arrest reports of motor vehicle incidents. ”

### School Committee Minutes:

- Readability: Good
- Thoroughness: Good
- Layout: Good
- Legal Compliance: Partial

### City/Town Council Minutes:

- Readability: Average
- Thoroughness: Poor
- Layout: Average
- Legal Compliance: Full

## Documents Not Received

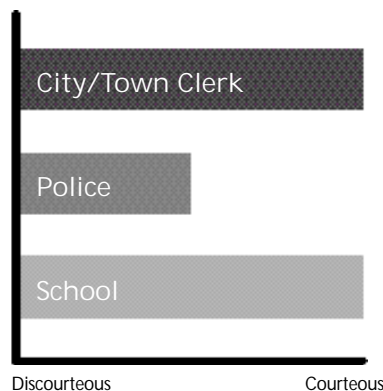


Cumberland complied with all of the requests for the ten indexed items, but there was a mixed reaction to the employees. On the positive side, the Cumberland Police Department is one of only nine in the state that complied with both of the indexed requests, viewing the log and copying three recent arrest reports. (In Cumberland, the log is combined with the arrest reports in one computer program.) All five of the requests at the Town Clerk’s office were fulfilled, and none required more than one trip.

Although the School Department complied with all the requests, the documents were more difficult to obtain than in other jurisdictions. The School Department required a written request for three of the five items; only one other school department required as much. A written request was required by the Police Department in response to the request for arrest and brutality reports. Eight weeks after the letter was submitted - about twice the statutory limit, assuming an extension - three arrest reports were received, but the brutality reports were not included.

Across the town as a whole, the researchers were asked for the reason for request in 90 percent of the interactions. These local practices - requiring a written request and nearly always asking for a reason - may act as impediments to public access. Despite the inquisitiveness of the employees, Cumberland was one of the few towns that complied with all of the indexed requests.

## How We Were Treated



## Comparison: Cities/Towns

