



Three Good Reasons

Another question from the campaign trail: “You spoke out about how you would not take commissions. But it is a perfectly legal practice. So why do you not want to take the money?” I appreciate the interest in this topic. Like we have discussed before, it is perfectly legal for Vermont Sheriffs to accept up to 5% of the value of the contract as compensation for administering said contract (24 VSA 291ac). Other people can do as they wish, but if elected, I would use all the funds I can for the department and employees. (the regular salary of \$109,627 is substantial enough). I can easily think of several reasons why I made this choice, and here are three:

1. Twenty, thirty or fifty years from the time I leave office, nobody will remember me. I would be another photograph on the wall in the courthouse of prior sheriffs. I see myself as only a temporary steward of that office and it is my duty to use every resource I can to leave behind a strong department for the years and decades to come.
2. It is simple math. Up to five percent may not seem like a large amount of money immediately, but even a few percentage points annualized over the course of years to decades compounds to an even larger figure when invested properly (in the department's progress or growth instead of my pocket).
3. I am asking employees to do a dangerous job, one that has a risk of injury or death. Therefore, as their leader I feel the employees deserve the funds to be spent on better equipment, more resources or better compensation instead of going to me. (This reason resonates the strongest with me).

At my request, the sheriff's department was kind enough to share copies of the payment records of commission checks paid out to the incumbent.

These amounted to four payments from October 2025 to July 2026 totaling about \$9288.44 in pre-tax dollars. Again, taking up to 5% of the value of town patrol, court security, fair security, mental health transports and construction detail contracts, etc is perfectly legal. **But I think I would have found a different way to spend \$9288.44.**

So let's go shopping.

\$9288.44 would have bought:

14 sets of CaliberX Soft Body Armor + Patrol Vests (Size L/XL), NIJ Level IIIA
(Sku 19-CALX-PV-C3-BK)

OR:

Equip 2 Police cars with in car Laptops (Toughbook 56/) + 2 Brother Pocket Jet 8
In Car Printers AND 2 ZOLL Automated External Defibrillators

OR:

The employer portion of contributions for about \$106,153 in employee wages into the
Vermont Municipal Retirement System (Group C – FY 2025 rates)

OR:

123 hours of extra patrols to address community issues (Calculated at the \$75/hr rate the
Department charges the Town of Newbury in 2026).

OR:

Pay down loans early to save on interest in the years to come.

OR:

Create a stockpile of supplies to sustain deputies and essential workers in the event of
another crisis such as: Pallets of water, gloves/masks.

OR:

Raise employee compensation rates in some way.

Or... something else?

What do you think? How would you have spent the money?

Image credit: St. Johnsbury, Vt. , ca. 1884. Jun. 26. Photograph.

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/pga.00163/>