

Narragansett

FIRST TWO VISITS:

OCT. 17

NOV. 4

“ The Narragansett police were quite rude to me. When I asked to see the arrest and brutality reports, the receptionist questioned who I was and why I wanted them. She then got a uniformed officer who informed me she does not let just anyone into her police station. She asked to see some identification. I showed her my license, and she let me into the media room but kept my license. Once in the media room, I was given a book of recent arrest reports but no brutality reports. ‘They are not available,’ she said. She then went on to describe how annoying University of Rhode Island students are when they come into the station looking for information for classes. She told me students do not know that this information is not public, and they cannot see it. On the second visit to the Police Department, the officer on duty asked if I had been sent by my professor. He asked me countless questions about who I was and what I was looking for. He said that unless I gave him a specific request, he would not let me see it. I said I wanted to see today’s log, but this request was denied because, he said, it was not yet complete. I asked to see the log thus far, but again he asked questions about why I wanted to see it. He said, ‘No.’ I then asked to see yesterday’s log since it was complete. In an agitated voice, he snapped at me for changing my request and said, ‘No.’

The Narragansett School Department was the most helpful office I visited. The receptionist was pleasant and helpful. When I asked to look at the policy manual, she obliged willingly, despite the fact she was using it at the time. She even took time to explain how it was set up and how I could find whatever information I needed. She never asked who I was or why I wanted the information. ”

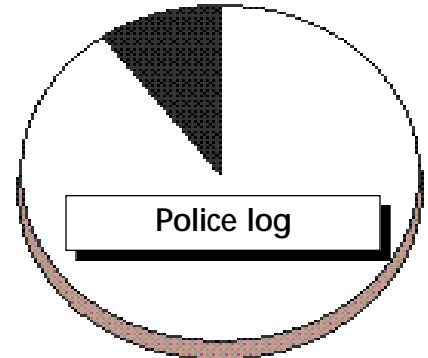
School Committee Minutes:

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

City/Town Council Minutes:

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

Documents Not Received

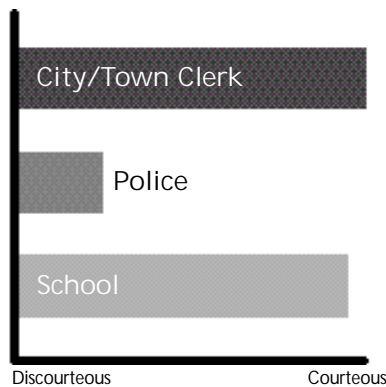


Ten percent of the records requested in Narragansett were not provided. All of the information obtained, with the exception of the school contract, was received on the first visit. All of the municipal employees encountered were quite courteous, except for the Police. The Police were also rather inquisitive, requesting the identity of the researcher in half the interactions and asking for a reason for the request in 70 percent of the cases.

The Narragansett Police Department was discourteous. The researcher was referred to a Lieutenant, who was needlessly ill mannered. The officer told the researcher that he did not want her “messing around with” the log. The officer asked the researcher numerous questions, eventually he dismissed her by walking away and saying, “Have a nice day”. The Police denied the request to view the police log.

The Attorney General found the Narragansett School Committee in violation of the Open Meetings Law twice in 1988 (“O’Neil: Open Meetings Law Violated Again,” Providence Journal-Bulletin, November 21, 1988: B1). None of the same problems were detected in this study. However, the School Committee minutes that we received did not indicate the members present or absent.

How We Were Treated



Comparison: Cities/Towns

