



# CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT

*BUREAU OF POLICE*

**Investigations Division Commander**

## **The Connection**

As work continues on the Williamsport Rental Ordinance it seems that opposition continues to grow. Much of the opposition is based on misinformation and sometimes even on hidden agendas. Due to the lack of a forum to get the truth out to the tax paying members of the public we have not been able to educate the public on the reasons why this ordinance is necessary and why it will work.

Some question whether we need an ordinance at all. The problem that we are seeing in our community is highly connected to drugs and their destructive cycle in decaying our neighborhoods. The drug world thrives on supply and demand. In order to truly address the drug problem one would have to either cut off the supply or cut off the demand. Law enforcement and Government officials have been trying to fix the supply versus demand equation for decades in the so called war on drugs to no avail.

We read articles every day regarding prisons being overcrowded and the financial impact of budgets as it becomes extremely costly to our taxpayers to build bigger jails and ship inmates to other jails due to lack of space. Part of the reason that our jails are full is due to the people who are incarcerated for drug related crimes. Drug related crimes would include things like burglary, robbery, and theft among others. The reason for this is that as a person gets caught up in addiction to their drug of choice their financial means to support their habit begins to slide. For example they may miss days of work, get fired from employment, begin to steal from vehicles looking for items to trade or sell for drugs, commit burglaries looking for valuables to exchange for money, or even holding up the pizza delivery guy to get enough money for their next fix. This cycle continues on as more and more people experiment with drugs.

As City leaders we are responsible to our tax payers to find ways to protect our residents and their quality of life. This ordinance is a way to accomplish that goal without building a bigger prison or mass incarcerating individuals with the Burden of paying for it resting on the shoulders of our taxpayers. This ordinance will attack both the supply and demand at minimal cost to the taxpayer.

We know that many persons who are selling drugs in our community are transient and flop here and there and everywhere. Many of them stay with acquaintances in low income or rental housing. This ordinance will allow city officials to protect our citizens by addressing owners and tenants who have knowledge of drug activity or criminal activity involving firearms on their properties. The goal of this ordinance is to remove tenants who allow drug related crime to flourish and ruin our neighborhoods and to also hold negligent landlords who allow their properties to harbor these individuals

responsible to our **citizens**. The goal is not to punish law abiding property owners but rather to protect innocent people who live within our community.

**Captain Timothy S. Miller**  
**Williamsport Bureau of Police**  
**Investigations Unit Commander**