

February 6, 2004

Licton Springs Community Council Report for February

North Precinct Advisory Council Report for February 4, 2004

The meeting was called to order by President Mary Hurly at 7:13 p.m. Since our featured speaker for the evening was running a little late, we started with a report from Lieutenant Roy Wedlund on some of the police activities in the North Precinct.

First up was a comment about the police chase down Interstate 5 and the subsequent containment and arrest of a person that tried to run from a traffic stop. Although traffic was brought to a standstill, there were no serious injuries to any of the parties involved. The driver who was the object of all the excitement has some mental problems.

The North Precinct has been moving officers from the University District back to Highway 99. In their absence, Aurora Avenue has become a haven for drugs and prostitution (again). This is a situation that is likely to continue as long as the Department has a limited number of officers available to patrol the north end of town. (If the officers target the University District, the pests go to Lake City or Aurora, the good guys go to Aurora and the pests go to the University District, etc.) It's a real merry-go-round!

Closer to home, the front area of the Precinct Office is currently being "hardened" with the installation of high impact resistant plexi-glass. This will shield those working the front desk from "drive-by-shootings" and some irate door crashers. (We hope. It's a sad commentary on the times we live in.)

The Major Crimes Unit continues to focus on the "Auto Thief." Auto thieves are frequently involved in more serious crimes and can lead to the resolution of several crimes with just one arrest. The penalties incurred from these other crimes tend to net a much longer jail sentence. (Hurrah!)

Recruiting. The Department has seen a shortfall of some 27 positions due to budget cuts. They are now looking to fill some of those positions, probably beginning in August of this year. Due to a large number of pending retirements, that number could jump to 80 in the near future.

The hunt is still on for the so-called "whispering bandit" (named by the news media, not law enforcement). So far he seems to be benign and has not produced a weapon that anyone has seen. (But he's still robbing stores.)

In the area of crime prevention, we are hearing that there has been a notable increase in the Greenwood area for drug sales and prostitution (they go hand in glove).

There has also been some concern expressed that the Fremont area is rapidly becoming another “Pioneer Square.” There has been a rise in the number of establishments selling beer and wine in that general location. The quirky area that was “Fremont” is being pushed aside and is looking more like an up-scale party neighborhood (bars, taverns, private clubs and all that goes with them). As a side note, it was pointed out that fully two-thirds of all the liquor licenses issued in the State are in Seattle. (3xxx state wide, 2xxx in Seattle.) That number is growing!

Our guest for the evening was the newly elected Seattle City Councilmember, David Della. Mr. Della gave us a rundown on some of the areas that the City Council is refocusing its attention. Among them were:

- (1) to pass a realistic budget (considering our estimated 29 million dollar shortfall, that won't be easy);
- (2) to do what it can to help alleviate our transportation headaches. And a “must do” is the problem with the Elliot Bay sea wall and the Alaska Way Viaduct (best guess is now around 3.6 Billion dollars);
- (3) another goal is to strengthen social services (?);
- (4) they will be looking to insure all our citizens have access to city government;
- (5) another noble goal stated is to increase the number of “living wage” jobs city-wide.

Since all of this is in the “look and see” stage, no specifics were given. Stand by.

Councilman Della has a position on three committees. They are:

1. He is the Chair of the Parks, Neighborhoods and Education;
2. Vice-Chair of Public Safety, Civil Rights and Arts;
3. Member of the Energy and Environmental Policy Committee; and
4. Serves as an Alternate on the Government Affairs and Labor.

This portion of this report is presented for your information and review.

Seattle Police Department Commission on Accreditation for Enforcement
(CALEA)
FACT SHEET

Two years ago the Seattle Police Department voluntarily undertook the daunting task of becoming accredited through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The CALEA accreditation process has 443 standards that accredited departments across the country must achieve and maintain. While not every standard is applicable to every agency, getting accredited is an extremely difficult and rigorous process. The larger the department, the more difficult the process is. Departments that exceed 300 employees must meet the highest level of standards. CALEA is a private, nonprofit corporation that was formed in 1979 through the combined efforts of four major law enforcement agencies, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Officers, National Sheriffs' Association, and Police Executive Research Forum.

The purpose of the Commission's accreditation program is to improve the delivery of law enforcement service by offering a body of standards developed by law enforcement practitioners. The standards prescribe "what" agencies should "be doing," but not "how" they should be doing it. The standards address nine areas: (1) role, responsibility and relationships with other agencies; (2) organization, management and administration; (3) personnel structure; (4) personnel process; (5) operations; (6) operational support; (7) traffic operations; (8) prisoner and court related activities; and (9) auxiliary and technical services.

The standards help law enforcement agencies: (1) strengthen crime prevention and control capabilities; (2) formalize essential management procedures; (3) establish fair and nondiscriminatory personnel practices; (4) improve service delivery; (5) solidify interagency cooperation, and coordination; and (6) boost citizen and staff confidence in the agency.

Of the largest 25* cities in the United States, only four, including Seattle, have been accredited. Of the largest 100* cities in the United States 35 (including Seattle) have been accredited. This means that less than 36% of comparably sized departments achieve this status.

For the next three years the department will be reviewed on an annual basis. After that, compliance with accreditation standards is reviewed every three years. Accreditation recognizes the number of programs that SPD employs in which police and citizens work together to prevent and control challenges confronting law enforcement and provides clear direction about community expectations.

Seattle Police Department Briefings:

National accreditation also increases the accountability of the organization. Accreditation requires rigorous recordkeeping and training requirements. Once a department passes the initial accreditation process, its records are reviewed every three years to ensure they are upholding the high standards required for this prestigious affiliation. The accountability measures address the entire department, from top management to line level service delivery. Accreditation standards give the Chief a proven management system of written directives, sound training, clearly defined lines of authority, inspections and reports that support decision making and resource allocation.

One of the potential economic benefits to departments that are accredited is the reduction in liability insurance rates. Departments who have become accredited report that increased confidence and trust from those who are the recipients of our services. Because of clear policies and procedures, as well as rigorous accountability processes, community members' confidence and trust in the integrity of the department increases.

In the process of becoming accredited the department's policies were reviewed and enhanced to ensure that "best practices" from across the country were reflected. This includes policies on; use of force, police pursuits, accountability, and training standards. In the long run, accreditation serves to establish practices that guarantee the citizens of Seattle are receiving the best police services possible.

Assessors highlighted several areas where Seattle was exceeding the national standards, including: use of force statistics that are significantly lower than national average (nationally 1% of all police contacts result in use of force, Seattle 0.17% result in use of force.); accessibility of the complaint process to citizens; a clearly defined disciplinary process that outlines the legal and ethical actions of all employees; the Domestic Violence Support Team; a model field-training program for new recruits; proactive approach to managing missing persons cases; outstanding use of crime analysis; the Seattle Team for Youth program; demonstration management techniques including an "Apparatus Removal Team"; the use of the World Wide Web as a communication tool; and collection and preservation of diverse forms of evidence.

SPD ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2003 (the short list)

PUBLIC SAFETY:

ACCREDITATION - The Seattle Police Department received national accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. Of the 25 largest cities in the nation Seattle is one of only four agencies to have been accredited. The process to become accredited took two years and means our policing, procedures and training are state-of-the-art.

RACIAL PROFILING - A telephone survey was completed to gauge citizen satisfaction regarding police practices and services. The Seattle Police Department received federal funding to place video cameras in police cars. As part of the Racial Profiling Accountability Plan, each precinct held Quarterly Forums to foster engagement with community members and precinct personnel.

OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY / INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS

Summaries of commendations, complaints and investigated cases are posted monthly on the Mayor's web page. The OPA produced simple, direct informational leaflets in English, Spanish, Arabic, Korean, Vietnamese, and four East African languages: Tigrigna, Oromo, Somalian, and Amharic. Distribution via trained representatives through centers serving these ethnic communities is underway to maximize opportunities for accessibility.

TOPOFF2 - The Seattle Police Department participated in the largest International Anti-terrorism exercise in history. The exercise simulated a radiological dispersal device or "dirty bomb" explosion in the SODO area. Over 1200 police, fire, executive and other city employees participated in this week long weapons of mass destruction exercise. This exercise was conducted while maintaining vital services and tested the communication capacity and effectiveness within city departments.

SOUTHWEST PRECINCT OPENING - The Southwest Precinct opened in March 2003. The precinct operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and is open to the public Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. This facility is different from other city facilities because it is considered an "essential facility." Essential facilities have much stricter standards than other building for earthquake-resistive design and have stand-alone power for the entire building for a 72-hour period.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY - The Seattle Police Department continues to become more technologically sound. A new records management system has been chosen to replace the current antiquated system.

CRIME REVIEW - Police commanders, crime analysis officers, other key police department and city personnel meet monthly to discuss and evaluate crime trends and develop strategies to combat emerging and long-term crime problems.

FALSE ALARM ORDINANCE - Last year, Seattle police officers responded to 25,000 alarm calls: 98.7% (24,180) were false. This was a very large drain on patrol resources, creating an annual false alarm deficit of approximately \$1 Million. A permit-based cost recovery program was implemented via ordinance to reduce the numbers and recover the costs for response to false alarms.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS - A new computerized, standardized employee evaluation system was launched. All department supervisors were trained to use and implement the new evaluation system.

3rd WEED AND SEED SITE - Southwest Seattle has received official recognition from the Federal Executive Office of Weed and Seed. The contract for the third Seattle site includes a joint community-policing component with the King County Sheriffs Office. This will provide cross-jurisdictional support and enforcement in West Seattle and the White Center area. SPD Lt. Mike Washburn was a “visiting fellow” to the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. for six months.

LESS LETHAL PROGRAM - As part of the Seattle Police Department’s commitment to life - safety, a vendor for the less lethal beanbag shotgun was selected and training for officers to use the equipment is in progress. In addition, over 200 officers were certified or re-certified to carry tasers.

CRISIS INTERVENTION - Over 200 officers were either certified or re-certified as crisis intervention officers. These officers receive additional training that allows them to better stabilize situations involving mentally ill persons. Sgt. Liz Eddy was recognized by Good Housekeeping magazine for her work on this program.

NEW EQUIPMENT - Albertson’s and Milkbone jointly donated \$5,000.00 to the Seattle Police Department to purchase a K-9 dog.

CREATED A HOSPITAL RESPONSE TEAM - A group of volunteer officers respond to Harborview Medical Center when any officer from any agency is seriously injured. These officers assist by minimizing chaos and misinformation and allowing hospital staff to conduct, their work uninterrupted. They act as the designated liaison between staff and others and provide support to the officers and the officer’s family members.

CEASEFIRE’S ASK CAMPAIGN - The Seattle Police Department participated in Washington CeaseFire’s (handgun control) ”ASK” campaign to get adults to inquire whether a firearm is present (locked and secured) in homes where their children may play or visit.

MAJOR CASES SOLVED - Major National/International cases were broken by SPD detectives. Identity theft was one example. The department worked with Senator Cantwell to draft recently enacted federal laws on identity theft. Another was a major “ecstasy” distribution.

HOMELAND SECURITY - The Emergency Preparedness Bureau revised the City of Seattle’s “Disaster Readiness and Response Plan” to reflect homeland security issues.

Launched the Business Emergency Network (BEN) to provide two-way communication with the business community during a disaster;

Dive I Explosion Training: Harbor Unit trained with several other agencies regarding disabling underwater explosives;

Acquisition of an explosive sniffing (Bomb) dog;

Completion of Jurisdictional Assessments for the UASI Grants;

Completion of the 25 Cities Initiative Plan; and

Completion of the City's Disaster Preparedness Plan.

STATEWIDE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY - The department developed a comprehensive statewide Domestic Violence Policy that addresses procedures to follow when a law enforcement officer is accused of domestic violence, in cooperation with WASPC.

CANINE UNIT RE-CERTIFICATION - Members of the K-9 unit received annual re-certification from the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Center.

TRAFFIC STOP ACCOUNTABILITY - The department issue a form to each person stopped for a violation identifying the officer who made the stop.

SEATTLE POLICE FOUNDATION - The Foundation awarded over \$130,000 to the department for a variety of projects:

Law Enforcement Service Enhancements: Specialized Dive equipment, the purchase of a Maxa-Beam Lighting System, Ballistic shields and shin guards to completely outfit the SWAT Unit, Sexual Assault Unit Electronic Filing System, purchase of a Police Dog and two Police horses, Drug Court - Portable PBT, and Digital Camera Event Capture
Employee Development and Recognition: Certificate in Police Administration Program, Women in Policing - The History of SPD Seminar, funding for the Hospital Response.

Team Community Partnerships: The Internet and Your Child, Seattle Police Department Community and Youth Outreach, translation for Korean Crime Prevention Pamphlet, Taxi Voucher & Bus Ticket Pilot Program, SPD Community Chaplaincy, and the purchase of new uniforms for the Seattle Police Department Honor Guard (members of the honor guard received the Red Cross "Hero" award for their work).

COLD CASE SQUAD - The Squad received national recognition for their success in clearing many unsolved homicides. One of the cases highlighted was the Sumstead Case where detectives used innovative means to collect DNA from a homicide suspect. Another case highlighted was solving the Mia Zapata homicide. An in-depth look into the efforts of the SPD Cold Case squad will also appear on Court TV and 20-20.

TRAFFIC UNIT COST SAVINGS - Transition to the Harley Davidson Motorcycles, resulting in significant cost savings to the Department.

DEMONSTRATION MANAGEMENT- The successful management of over 160 significant special events throughout the City.

EXECUTIVE LEVEL TRAINING - For the first time executive level training was provided systematically for department employees. The University of Washington provided the executive level training (two quarter course) to lieutenants, captains and civilian managers. Command personnel also attended executive programs in Los Angeles, Boston and Washington, D.C.

PUBLIC / PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP - Partnership with University of Washington both in terms of redevelopment of the University Avenue, which has been a center for problem activity in the past few years, and the public / private partnership to improve security

STREET SKILLS - Approximately 800 police officers and supervisors attended and completed the four-day street skills training. The department revised the pursuit policy to reduce the number of vehicle pursuits.

VICTIM SUPPORT - Hired two Domestic Violence Victim Advocates to provide support and assistance to victims of domestic violence. An SPD advocate was selected to meet with President Bush and explain the program.

BEST PRACTICES TRAINING - Establishment of best practices training for department personnel in the area of Stalking, Elder Abuse, and Domestic Violence Crime Scene Investigations.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUARTERLY INCIDENT COMMAND SEMINARS - Each seminar is topic specific and explores the issues that are present in terms of incident command and possible outcomes based on a variety of scenarios. Topics such as school shootings, abducted / missing children, and significant demonstrations / riots have all been explored in the seminars.

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY POLICE TEAM (CPT) SERGEANTS - Providing CPT units with first line supervision by restoring sergeants in each of the precincts. This resulted in increased efficiency in terms of resource deployment and a renewed commitment to working with communities on long term crime related problems.

AMBER ALERT - The department led 39 police agencies in launching the King County Regional AMBER Alert program, which is a collaborative effort between law enforcement agencies and local media. The goal of this program is the safe and swift return of children who are abducted or become missing under specific criteria.

BUILDING COMMUNITY:

NEWLY FORMED CITYWIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL - The Citywide Advisory Council is made up of representatives from the 11 demographic advisory councils, as well as the five precinct advisory councils. Additionally, several participants from the Community Policing Action Council have agreed to participate to help establish an “action arm” of the council. The focus of the council is to provide a forum for the Chief to meet to discuss issues that are impacting the various communities and to get feedback from those communities on how the SPD is doing in terms of service delivery.

LATINO ADVISORY COUNCIL REVITALIZATION - The Latino Advisory Council was revitalized this year with the help of Seattle based Mexican Counsel General, Jorge Madroza, who will be the Council chair. A commitment from him to bring additional participants to the group has proven to bring new life to the council.

NEWLY ESTABLISHED NATIVE AMERICAN ADVISORY COUNCIL - This newly formed council was recently established and reflects the department’s commitment to reach out to all cultures and create opportunities to build relationships.

YOUTH OUTREACH - An updated version of the RESPECT handbook that provides information to young people about their rights and responsibilities, as well as resource referral and the Mayor’s commitment to working with youth was completed. A program was developed to provide a safe and secure environment for youth that seeks to improve the relationship between police officers and young people. It also attempts to reduce at-risk behavior by developing neighborhood-based crime prevention, intervention and enforcement strategies between police, school, juvenile court, and social service agencies.

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL - Formed a ten member youth council to provide guidance and recommendation on communication efforts and programs, and strengthen relationships between youth and police officers to further support the department’s mission of preventing crime, enforcing the law and supporting public safety services.

COPS, CULTURES, & CONVERSATIONS (Latino Version) - A show produced entirely in Spanish and marketed throughout the Spanish speaking community. The show was dedicated to explaining various police procedures and policies, as well as informing community members how to become involved in making their neighborhoods safe.

EAST AFRICAN WORKSHOP - An eight hour workshop directed at the growing East African community in Seattle. The topics explored included parental rights and responsibilities in the United States, and various police procedures. Each workshop was presented in four different languages spoken in this community.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIM SUPPORT TEAM - Providing expanded resources to victims of domestic violence at crime scenes through crisis intervention and support such as information about the criminal justice system, domestic violence counseling, locating shelter, and other crisis needs.

INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN - Developed in March of 2000, this program counters the emerging threat of offenders who use the Internet to sexually exploit children. A regional law enforcement task force led by the Seattle Police Department oversees the program for Alaska, Idaho and Washington. The Mayor accepted the award from the Department of Justice as a "Cyber Safe City."

ALCOHOL IMPACT AREA - Managed law enforcement initiatives in the new Alcohol Impact Area legislation to reduce public inebriation in Pioneer Square. This measure was implemented to reduce chronic public inebriation in the area by restricting alcohol sales.

AUDITING & RISK MANAGEMENT - Established an internal audit system (with training provided by City and State audit personnel) to ensure that policies, procedures, and internal controls for the Seattle Police Department's operations are effective in minimizing risk and provide for proper management.

BIAS CRIME - Department personnel participated in several programs to educate people about bias crimes, including an all-day seminar hosted by the Organization of Chinese Americans.

CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN - The department partnered with the Refugees Women's Alliance to produce informational videos on sexual assault. The videos were produced in several different languages including Russian, Cambodian, Somalian, and Vietnamese.

DECENTRALIZATION IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY - PRECINCT BASED POLICING - The department decentralized Burglary, Juvenile, Youth Outreach, Pawn Shop and Gang Unit detectives to each of the five precincts as part of our overarching goal to enhance neighborhood-based response and public safety coordination. This significant redeployment is part of the department's long-range plan to focus policing at the community level to the greatest practical extent, by making each precinct a full-service, stand alone and generalist resource to all.

CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM - Expanding the capacity of the Chaplaincy services to community members who have experienced trauma and would like to meet with a faith based support person. Thirty-two volunteers are available, with seven of those being from local African American Churches and nine representing non-Christian denominations. Previously the department had one volunteer Chaplain.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS ON ORAL BOARDS - Inclusion of community members on the interview portion of hiring new police officers. The community member is partnered with SPD personnel and has an equal voice in recommending the applicant to be a Seattle Police officer.

LEADERSHIP TOMORROW - The department hosted one of the “Leadership Tomorrow” programs and Lieutenant John Hayes graduated from the class and was named class speaker.

CHARITY PARTICIPATION - Sponsored over 300 foster care children for Christmas. Along with the Police Officers Guild sponsored “Toys for Tots from Cops” with the United States Marine Corps. Sponsored the SEAFAIR “Race Against Drugs.” Raised over \$10,000 for Special Olympics for the second year in a row. Raised funds for Junior Achievement. Led a national public relations and information effort to get predominately Asian-Americans to register as bone marrow donors. Supported initiatives for the Salvation Army. Supported efforts by Girl Scouts to engage girls, whose mothers are incarcerated, in scouting.

IMMIGRATION - The department reiterated its long standing “don’t ask” policy so immigrants will not be afraid to come to the police for help, protection, or to report a crime. Chief Kerlikowske was invited to speak at the Ramadan services at the Idris Mosque and to over 5,000 Muslims at the Convention Center.

(and now I have to go watch CSI)

Ken Thompson