



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION
CHIEF OF POLICE
CRAIG N. MEIDL

Strategic Initiatives
July 2020 Report

Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing
June 29, 2020

Public Safety Building • 1100 W. Mallon Avenue • Spokane, Washington 99260-0001





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Selected Excerpts of Officer Commendation Letters

I was going through a parenting challenge with my 16-year old son, when I came across **Officer Andrew Richmond**. I asked if my son could see the back of the cruiser and realize that his life choices were likely leading him to the cramped back seat. With little cue, Officer Richmond took the time to speak to my son about how his experiences with youth in the area and the contrast of parental involvement, but more importantly, the absence of love. He didn't need background or to be caught up; he saw it on both of our faces. I truly appreciate the time he took, his compassion and authenticity, and the wisdom of his words.

We were at Donna Hansen Haven assisting a female who was paranoid and delusional. The client immediately associated me with Frontier Behavioral Health and became verbally resistant and agitated about FBH harassing her, not needing mental health, etc. to the point if I was even visible the conversation would derail, which prompted me to step behind the gurney. The Behavioral Health Unit officers [**Officers Ron Voeller and Stacy Flynn**] did an amazing job interacting with the client over the course of 50-60 minutes and used her delusional beliefs to help her seek medical treatment. She would verbally escalate throughout the interaction and they did a great job of de-escalating and reminding her of the goals. Their patience and ability to slowly build rapport and communicate with the client was essential in a successful apprehension.

I just wanted to pass on the great work done by one of your officers, **Aaron Kirby**. He responded to Asotin County to search for a missing hiker who had been missing since the previous day. Aaron and the other flight crew members searched the suspected search area before eventually expanding their search. They eventually found the person six miles outside of the search area! They then landed and helped provide aid to the missing person, and helped her get back to safety. I want to commend Officer Kirby for his efforts in this rescue.

Thank you for all you are doing during the pandemic. The expertise, professionalism, courage, and dedication to duty is unsurpassed.

I had the opportunity to interact with your **SWAT** guys who were all very professional and subtle in their presence. They treated our staff and contractors with respect and dignity while making sure everyone was safe. Your **Traffic** team... wow. Just wanted you to know that your teams showed up, delivered exceptional community service, and made this guy very proud to be from Spokane.





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Internal Affairs Unit Update

January 1 through May 31, 2020 Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received: **Total: 104**

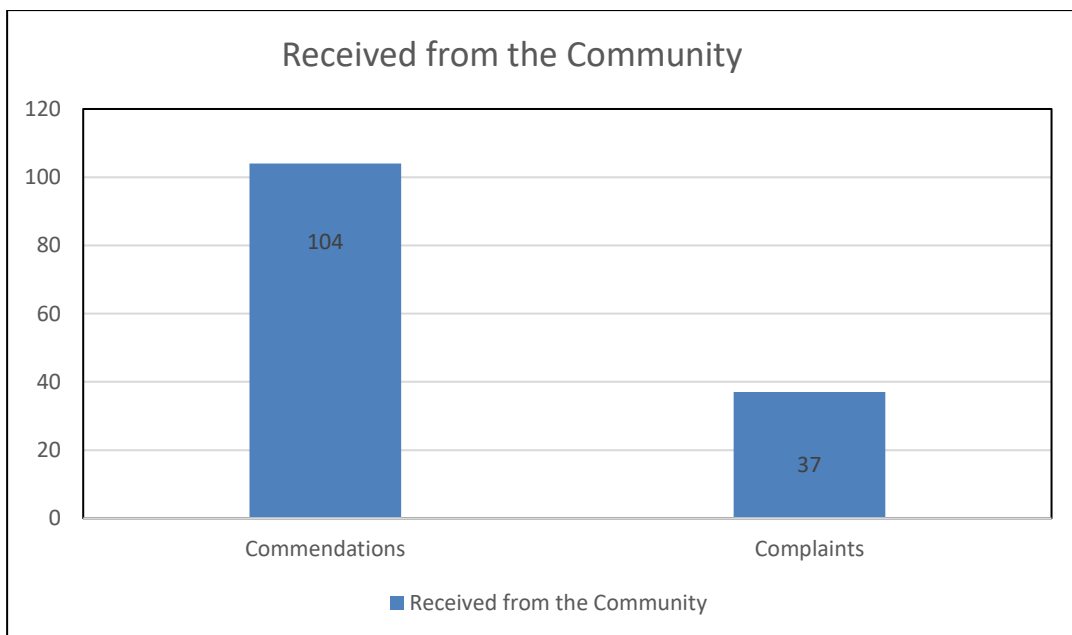
Complaints Received: **Total: 37 (30 from community)**

Closed Out as Inquiries: 5 (As of May 31, 2020)

An inquiry is an initial complaint about employee conduct which, even if true, would not qualify as a personnel complaint and may be handled informally by a department supervisor and shall not be considered complaints.

Source of January 1 through May 31, 2020 Complaints

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	Total: 13
Received by the Spokane Police Department	Total: 24
Internally Generated by the SPD	Total: 7
Generated by the Community	Total: 30





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Use of Force Update

2020 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-May 31, 2020, there were 24 non-deadly use of force incidents- 3 K9 contacts and 21 other (e.g., TASER, neck restraint).

2020 Deadly Use of Force Incidents

From January 1-May 31, 2020, there were no deadly force incidents. See below for active cases from 2019.

2019 Officer-Involved Shooting Incidents Update (through May 31, 2020)

These incidents took place in 2019 but are still active cases.

Incident 2019-20004372 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board- delayed by COVID-19 protocols)

Incident 2019-20004372 occurred on January 7, 2019, in the 600 block of West Montgomery. The Spokane Investigative Regional Response Team's (SIRR) criminal investigation is complete. The County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force as justified. Internal Affairs completed the administrative investigation. The case will be reviewed by a Deadly Force Review Board.

Incident 2019-20124831 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board- delayed by COVID-19 protocols)

Incident 2019-20124831 occurred on July 6, 2019, in the 1400 block of West 9th. The Spokane Investigative Regional Response Team (SIRR) criminal investigation is complete. The County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force as justified. Internal Affairs completed the administrative investigation. The case will be reviewed by a Deadly Force Review Board.

Incident 2019-20201879 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board- delayed by COVID-19 protocols)

Incident 2019-20201879 occurred on October 23, 2019, in the 3400 block of East Garnet. The Spokane Investigative Regional Response Team (SIRR) criminal investigation is complete. The County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force as justified. Internal Affairs completed the administrative investigation. The case will be reviewed by a Deadly Force Review Board.





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Items of Interest

Rapid Response Bike Team at the June 7 Protest

Spokane Police Department's first deployment took place on June 7, 2020. Below, bike officers with Mr. Hamilton, who stopped to offer a prayer for their safety.



Excerpts from letters about the protests

I would like to thank your police department. In this time of crisis and chaos as people are standing up and begging for equality & fighting for rights long overdue. I just want to say as an African American woman, I would like to thank you for your service. For those who truly serve and protect, you are angels. I appreciate you so much and hope you all are staying safe.



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I wanted to say thank you for the way that the SPD handled the protests. Thank you for thanking the peaceful protesters and for acknowledging that later group that came to encourage violence. Thank you for supporting your citizens. Thank you for doing the right thing in a difficult situation. Your guy's jobs are hard and I wanted you to know that you have support as well.

Thank you for all you are doing to protect the citizens of our city and county. Your staff was amazing in how they reacted with the protesters on Sunday. Thank you for your leadership.

Very heartfelt thank you to the officers who represented SPD so well yesterday. It did not go unnoticed! My pastor said, "I was discouraged by the verbal abuse some of our police officers received; I was encouraged by their restraint in the face of provocation, and by the verbal support they also received from many."

Thank you and all you officers for keeping us safe. I hate what is going on downtown right now. I hate police brutality as well. My pastor was killed by a deputy in 2006. What we are seeing right now is not acceptable. It's inexcusable behavior on their part. I speak to condemn them in the strongest possible language. I appreciate the restraint your officers and deputies are showing. I also appreciate the numerous strides both SPD and SCSO are making to correct the wrongs of the past. Those strides have been significant. I appreciate you and your leadership. I stand with you and the peaceful protestors.

Chief Meidl, your reaching out to Kitara Johnson, and black leaders in our community since George Floyd's death was what was needed. The police response last night was firm and appropriate as needed to protect businesses and property. Seeing police officers, and other law enforcement professionals talking with protestors and taking a knee with them by the Federal Building was good. Spokane is a great city and I am proud of it. Carry on as you have been and best wishes in the coming year.

Seeing you address George Floyd and hearing you reach out to the black community here in Spokane lifted a weight off of me I didn't even realize was there. I cannot say thank you enough for just acknowledging what happened and showing the empathy and compassion. My dad saw it too and he smiled. It was a tired smile but I know he smiled because of you. Every time we see another POC dying at the hands of a poorly trained officer it's hard to not see my brother, my nephew, our family or even ourselves. An officer married into my family here locally too. It worries me that she also can be put in danger by the actions of these officers not doing what they're trained and hired to do. I feel much safer, more comfortable and more accepted in the only place I've called home after your words and actions with all that's going on. Please, stay safe and well. I wish that for the whole department.

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I just wanted to take a moment to write you all and tell you how much I appreciate you. All over social media people are bashing the police. They seem to have forgotten how special you are. Without the police, this world would be chaos. You deal with so much hate yet you wouldn't hesitate to turn around and save the person that hates you. That takes a special type of person. You all are heroes.

Thank you for stepping in, making tough decisions, prioritizing our safety and sending clear examples of right from wrong. I appreciate that you continue to make the choices you feel will best keep our families and city safe. You have never once downplayed the BLM, but have acknowledged its importance. As you know, defunding the police is not the solution. As a full-time single mother of two, who lives and works in our East Central community- feeling safe is key. Knowing that the police will be there, if I should ever need them, gives me a needed sense of security. One of my sons idealizes the police force; he would also like to someday HELP keep others safe.

I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for everything you are doing to keep this city safe. In our current climate I don't believe that the men and woman who put on that uniform every day and walk out into the street not knowing what they will encounter get enough credit for their dedication and bravery. I am pregnant right now and am thankful that because of all of you my child will grow up in a safer city.

I wanted to reach out to Chief Meidl and extend my appreciation for a job well done. I have some experience with crowd management and the manner in which you have deployed your resources in a non-threatening manner, and working with community activists is remarkable. You have become part of the voice rather than being viewed as a barrier. Well done and keep up the good work.

I watched the discussion on community and race last night on Q6. I just wanted to say I thought Craig Meidl did a really great job and it showed a lot of courage to go on T.V like that and have that hard discussion. Ultimately, I just wanted to say thank you to Chief Meidl. I will be praying for him and his officers every day. It must be really hard to be a police officer right now. And that needs to be an ok thing to say. WITH the fact that it has been a really hard time to be African American in our town (and country) FOREVER.

I just wanted to thank you for all you do for us as citizens. These last few weeks have been pretty rough for you all I can't even begin to imagine what you have been through and how poorly you have been treated. I truly have a lot of respect for you all and what you do to keep us safe on daily basis. Without you we wouldn't have the peaceful city that we live in. You have the courage to run towards danger when most of us flee and I feel that you all are good hearted folks who truly set out to do good and make a positive difference in our community and world.





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Crime Prevention Missions

SPD is deploying officers strategically to prevent commercial burglaries at closed businesses and to provide a sense of assurance by being highly visible at grocery stores, pharmacies, and high-traffic areas. Officers are conducting prowl checks and high presence patrols of vulnerable targets. Officers are asked to make proactive check-ins at every shift.

End of Watch Ride to Remember



Spokane Police and County Sheriff's deputies provided a Motor escort on June 1, 2020, to a cross country motorcycle ride honoring law enforcement officers who lost their lives in the line of duty in 2019.

The first annual End of Watch Ride to Remember rolled out of Spokane to begin a two-month memorial tour across the U.S. The motorcycle riders will stop in 30 states at law enforcement agencies across the county where each of the 146 fallen officers served.

The riders work for Phoenix Protective Corporation and most are current or former law enforcement. The company is covering the cost of the ride and supporting team member's time off the job as a way to give back to the community. A truck and trailer covered with graphics of each fallen officer and their agency followed the riders. A celebration of life will be held at each agency. The Ride to Remember will collect donations to be given to the families of the fallen officers. Agencies will be presented safety equipment or a check for their department as donations are raised in remembrance of their fallen officer.





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Memorial Day Observance for Fallen Officers

On Memorial Day weekend, 2020, nineteen city, county, and state officers who died while serving our community were remembered and honored.

The officers are among 23 who served in Spokane County and were killed in the line of duty since 1886. Nineteen are laid to rest in the county at Waverly, Cheney, Greenwood/Riverside, Fairmont, and Holy Cross cemeteries.





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Members of the local Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Committee and volunteers placed roses and a blue line flag at the graves of the officers.

The memorial committee worked diligently to collect each officer's story, picture, badge and patch. Those pieces of history are now displayed on the new permanent memorial flags.

The last time roses were collectively placed on the graves of local fallen officers was on Memorial Day weekend in the early 1900's when Captain John Sullivan of the SPD saw to it. The rose memorial ended when Cpt. Sullivan was assassinated in 1911.

Spokane Police Department is proud that the tradition begins again, Memorial Day 2020. From here forward the committee plans to return to the gravesites each Memorial Day weekend and place a rose and a flag at each officers resting place. We encourage the public to take a moment today in remembrance of the officers who died while serving and protecting their communities.





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Precinct Highlights

Precincts and Community Policing

Precincts are embedded in their communities, actively involved with community groups, neighborhood councils, community centers, businesses, and schools.

Precinct staff (including Neighborhood Resource Officers, Detectives, and Leadership):

- Host the **Coffee with a Cop** program in local coffee shops and grocery stores.
- Staff the **Community Court**, an alternative court model for cases arising out of low-level criminal violations or quality of life crimes, connecting individuals with community resources.
- Meet with **homelessness service providers** on a regular basis.
- Collaborate with the **Downtown Spokane Partnership**.
- Participate in **Youth & Police Initiative** programs in schools within the precinct area and the Crosswalk Youth Shelter.
- Attend **Neighborhood Council** meetings and brainstorm on quality of life issues.
- Monitor **NextDoor** posts in the neighborhood for crime trends and neighborhood communications.
- **Collaborate with businesses**, such as grocery stores experiencing high numbers of calls, on the creation of safety plans.
- Participate in **National Night Out** and “**Get to Know Your NRO**” programs.
- Conduct **Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)** assessments and make recommendations to increase safety.
- Work with **neighborhood parks** experiencing increased drug activity and violence to do special emphasis patrols.
- Coach youth in the **Police Activities League** program held in their area.
- Work with **C.O.P.S. volunteers** on programs like Neighborhood Watch, Business Watch, Crime Free Rental Properties, Bicycle Registration, Paws on Patrol, Latent fingerprinting, etc.
- Attend **community meetings** like the NAACP.
- Conduct **foot patrols near agencies** asking for assistance, such as the House of Charity.
- Hold **Crime Prevention/Situational Awareness trainings** for area businesses and social service agencies.
- Work with the **Behavioral Health Unit** to refer individuals to mental health services.
- Train businesses about **loss prevention**.
- Attend **neighborhood events** such as Garland Street Fair.
- Partner with the Civil Enforcement Unit to identify and investigate **nuisance properties**.
- Collaborate with **Code Enforcement** to remove thousands of pounds of debris from downtown, parks, and the Spokane River bank.





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South Precinct

Crime Prevention and Notable Arrests

South Precinct Staff have been working on a commercial burglary case involving Lewis and Clark High School. At this point, preliminary damage is estimated at \$20,000.00 but could damages could reach \$80,000.00. Detective Bob Mosman arrested four juveniles for the damage.

Nuisance Properties

South Precinct staff are working on four nuisance properties on the South Hill, all involving drug activity.

North Precinct

Crime Prevention

The North Precinct is gearing up for the City's re-opening. They will be focusing on the North Town crime prevention project and retail theft emphasis. Officer Deanna Storch is developing a 2-4 hour class that we will offer North Town Loss Prevention on reporting and investigations.

Downtown Precinct

Crime Prevention

NROs are conducting regular patrols on foot downtown with the hope of providing a calm presence.

Below, South Precinct Captain Tracie Meidl at Coffee with a Cop





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Outreach Update

Shift of Community Outreach Unit during COVID-19 Pandemic

COU Officers are working the front desk at the Public Safety Building and are checking messages from community members.

If you or your loved ones have concerns regarding police enforcement of COVID-19 restrictions or simply have a question or rumor you'd like to have cleared up, please reach out to officers via the email address below:

spdcommunityoutreach@spokanepolice.org.

Recent Outreach during COVID-19

- Online meetings continue for several organizations such as World Relief, Shadle Wellness Coalition, West Central Wellness Coalition, and NE Partners.
- Community Outreach Officers are connecting with youth at Crosswalk Youth Shelter, skate parks, and the STA plaza.
- Officers have been coordinating with SPD Investigations to do outreach with youth who frequently run away from home.
- Officers will continue our participation of handing out lunches at Ferris on Thursdays and have been looking into adding locations to attend.
- Officers have been handing out food at many community locations. At right, food delivery at the Richard Allen Court Apartments.





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At left, Officer Graig Butler hands out meals and STEM learning kits to students.

On June 3, officers attended the Husky Celebration for Grant Elementary Huskies. Teachers, staff, and officers greeted kids from their cars to say hello and celebrate while social distancing.

Below, photos from the Husky Celebration with Officer Jenn DeRuwe and Reserve Officer Ed Richardson.



- Community Outreach Officers have been meeting with Black Lives Matter organizers.
- Officers are reaching out to people who had complaints about the property damage from the protests.

Spokane Police officers join demonstrators for push-up challenge following youth event on June 3, 2020.

https://www.khq.com/news/spokane-police-officers-join-demonstrators-for-push-up-challenge-following-youth-event/article_d782a30e-a698-11ea-83a5-c38a4e765efa.html





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Police Activities League (PAL)



SPD is tentatively planning on a condensed Summer PAL session for 2020 due to COVID-19 concerns. PAL will be a shorter session with fewer hours. The Community Outreach Unit had originally planned on starting PAL the last week of June, but are now planning to start PAL the week of July 12. PAL will begin July 14. The final celebration is tentatively planned for August 6, 2020. PAL runs from approximately Noon to 3:00 pm at AM Cannon Park, Harmon Park, and Liberty Park.

If PAL is not able to proceed in the traditional fashion, then Community Outreach will work with the partner organizations at community centers to be involved in their summer youth programs.

Below, SPD Community Outreach officers with School Resource Officers and staff from Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center.





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Notable News

'Both sides of the badge': Spokane police chief, NAACP chapter president talk race, protesting, policing, progress

<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2020/jun/07/both-sides-of-the-badge-spokane-police-chief-naACP/>

The Spokane Police Department is starting two new programs to take a more proactive approach

A Whitworth University student recently spoke with Officer Graig Butler about Community Outreach. Although her original intent was to write about some of the department's current youth programs, she found the COP TALK program to be the most compelling. Here's a link to her write-up on the COP TALK program.

<https://medium.com/@cmgossen/the-spokane-police-department-is-starting-two-new-programs-to-take-a-more-proactive-approach-in-2e7e31b0eb09>

