



SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT
CHIEF OF POLICE
CRAIG N. MEIDL

Strategic Initiatives
April 2022 Report



Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing
April 11, 2022



Selected Excerpts of Officer Commendations
(Personal Identifying Information has been removed)

Officer [Derek] Jones is an awesome and caring officer. My son has a mental illness, and Officer D. Jones came in and handled the job amazingly. I just wanted to give props to D. Jones. He is awesome. A very good person I can tell. You should give him an award. The way he handled my disabled son, a lot of cops couldn't do it. And I just want you to tell him thank you for me.

Thank you for your prompt and professional kindness in doing a wellness check for our family on New Year's Day. We were unable to reach our sister in Spokane for three months by phone or text, and then not getting a Christmas card and checking with other family members, we knew something wasn't right. You were able to get back to us in 15 minutes and handled the situation with thoughtfulness and caring. Kind deed appreciated. Please pass on our appreciation.

[Officers Jordan Schott, Kolton McKittrick, Ben Manning]

Kudos to your Spokane patrol who responded to my friend's home when their son had a very violent reaction to Oxycodone after returning home from the hospital following surgery for a shattered shin. She was very impressed with how the officers handled and deescalated the situation with a very out of control violent 16-year-old who was saying horrible things to and about law enforcement in general. The officers convinced the teen to calm down enough to transfer him back to children's hospital. If you are able to pass along the kudos that would be great! I'm also happy to report that since the Oxy has been out of his system he is now back to his usual angsty teenage self.

The Riverview Retirement Community Village Council wanted to express on behalf of the residents our appreciation of Neighborhood Resource **Officer Todd Brownlee's** presentation at our February 9, 2022, Resident Meeting. He was very informative about issues in the Logan Neighborhood and patiently answered many questions. His explanation of the challenges that your department has been facing in addressing the many social and criminal problems in our community in the middle of a pandemic was sobering. He represents the best of a public service officer with his dedication and professionalism. Please extend our thanks to Officer Brownlee for meeting with us.



Internal Affairs Unit Update

January 1 through February 28, 2022, Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received: **Total: 42**

Complaints Received: **Total: 9 (6 from community)**

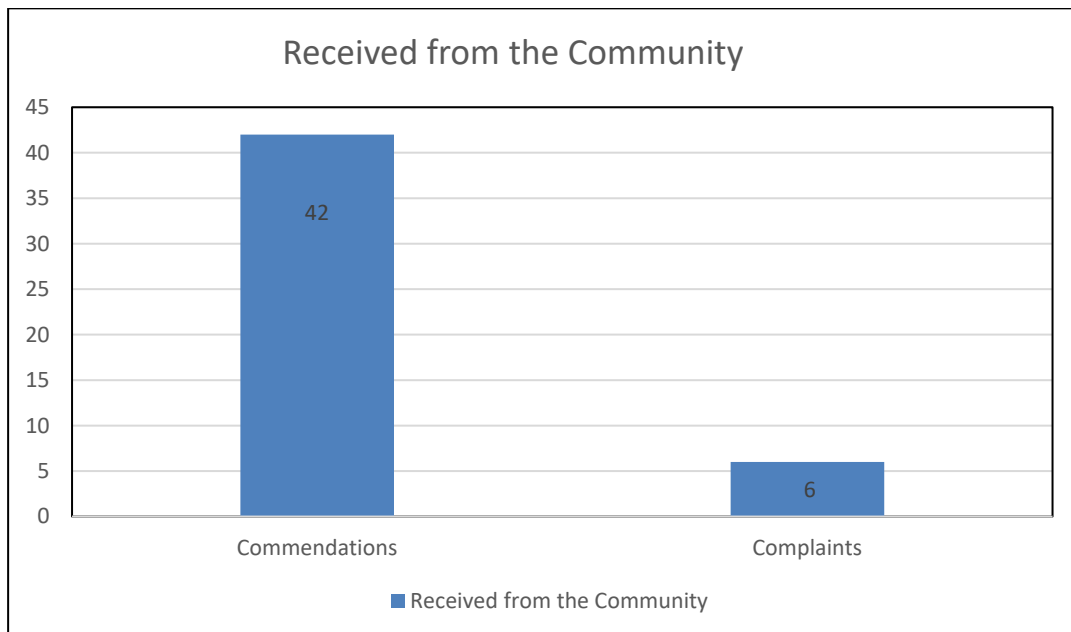
Closed Out as Inquiries: 0 (As of February 28, 2022)

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 Complaints—January 1 through February 28, 2022

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	Total: 1
Received by the Spokane Police Department	Total: 7
Internally Generated by the SPD	Total: 3
Generated by the Community	Total: 6

The department consistently receives more commendations from the community than complaints.



Use of Force Update

2022 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents

From January 1- February 28, 2022, there were 10 non-deadly use of force incidents, including K9 contacts and other types of force (e.g., TASER).

2021 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents

From January 1- December 31, 2021, there were 66 non-deadly use of force incidents, including K9 contacts and other types of force (e.g., TASER).

2022 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

From January 1- February 28, 2022, there was one deadly force incident.

Incident 2022-20012711 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

Incident 2022-20012711 took place on January 24, 2022, in the area of 2400 E. Desmet. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

2021 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

From January 1- December 31, 2021, there were two deadly force incidents.

Incident 2021-20002320 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board)

Incident 2021-20002320 took place on January 5, 2021, in the area of 5100 N. Ash. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) conducted the criminal investigation. The Spokane County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force justified. SPD conducted an administrative investigation and found the incident to be within policy. A Deadly Force Review Board will be convened for a secondary review.

Incident 2021-20059960 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board)

Incident 2021-20059960 took place on April 17, 2021, in the area of 500 S. Cannon. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) conducted the criminal investigation. The Spokane County Prosecutor ruled the use of deadly force justified. SPD conducted an administrative investigation and found the incident to be within policy. A Deadly Force Review Board will be convened for a secondary review.



Items of Interest

Hiring and Recruiting Update

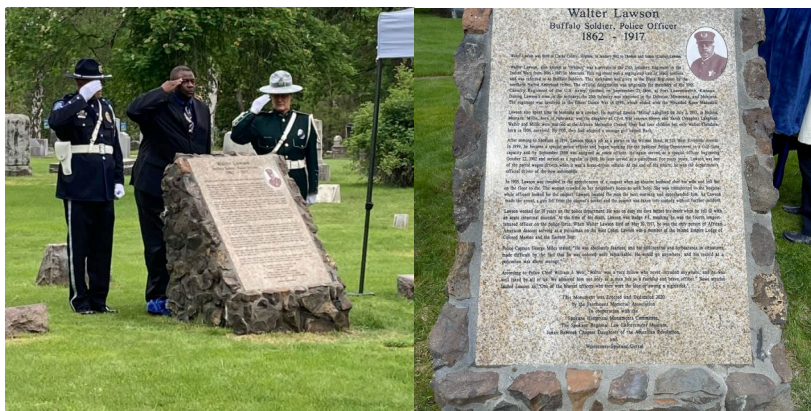
On March 19, SPD hosted a free public safety testing event. If the potential employee applies to SPD, the fee to test is waived. At the Public Safety Tests, SPD has officers available to meet potential applicants and explain why SPD is a quality organization. Officers can have one-on-one conversations with individual applicants and can offer to meet with them in person or by phone to discuss interview strategies and prepare them to put their best foot forward in the application process. 46 potential applicants took the test.

Officer Walter Lawson



Officer Walter Lawson is a Spokane Police Officer who served more than 120 years ago. At the time of his death, Walter Lawson was the only commissioned police officer of African American descent serving on the West Coast. Lawson was a private in the 25th infantry regiment from 1886-1891 before becoming a Spokane Police Officer. After his military service he spent time in Montana as a cowboy, where he married his wife Emelia “Millie” Langford in 1893. When the 1900 United States Census was taken, there were 376 black residents in Spokane, making up slightly more than one percent of the city’s total population. One of those residents, Walter Lawson, had moved to Spokane in 1894 where he became an officer for the Spokane Police Department. He held positions including special police officer, mounted officer, and patrolman driving the horse-drawn patrol wagon.

Lawson worked for SPD for 18 years. He was on duty six days before his death when he fell ill with an acute intestinal disorder. At the time, Lawson was Badge #4, meaning he was the fourth longest tenured officer on the police force. Lawson died on May 30, 1917. Walter's memorial can be found at Greenwood Memorial Terrace, Lawn 14, Section 56, Space 439. It was dedicated on May 20, 2021, by the Spokane Regional Law Enforcement Museum.



2021 Employee of the Year Award



Chief Meidl, with Mayor Woodward and City Administrator Perkins in attendance, presented Officer Tim Schwering with the much-deserved award.

Officer Schwering is known for his work ethic and ingenuity. As a Neighborhood Resource Officer (NRO), Officer Schwering uses his problem-solving ability to help alleviate perpetual issues that jeopardize the safety and tranquility of the areas he serves. In one example, Officer Schwering applied a variety of tools to address an area which had 45 police calls for service in a one-month period. Thanks to Officer Schwering's efforts, that number was reduced to zero!

In his role as an NRO, Officer Schwering coordinates with various city and community entities to determine and implement the most effective strategies for solving a particular problem. Officer Schwering's communication and organizational skills make him extremely effective at managing all the moving parts, and people in his service area have seen the benefits.

Precinct Highlights

North Precinct

Collaboration with Neighborhood Residents Addressing Quality of Life Issues

- Chronic Nuisance Properties: The North Precinct is currently managing 65 Pre-Chronic Nuisance or CN properties.
- New Issues: February has shown a large increase in catalytic converter thefts, from 5 in January to 31 in February. Many are taking place in commercial lots.

Traffic Concerns

The North Precinct is collaborating with Patrol and traffic for a series of Patrol/Traffic/NRO/OT traffic enforcement specials in April/May to address the North Division cruising/speeding/racing that tends to increase in the spring. We have seen a number of accidents involving pedestrians already this year, and we have experienced an increase in traffic fatalities over the past two years.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Traffic Fatalities</u>
2018	9 fatalities/9 cases
2019	7 fatalities/7 cases
2020	17 fatalities/16 cases
2021	25 fatalities/24 cases

Crime Prevention Missions

The North Precinct has been focusing on the area around the Northpointe Shopping Plaza. Between February 16 and March 1, 2022, the plaza experienced 129 calls for service. Patrol is using heavy enforcement and high-visibility tactics in the area.

Downtown Precinct

Crime Prevention Missions

The Downtown Precinct has been focusing on the area around the Browne Street viaduct. Officers are trying to combat the drug dealing in the area. Emphasis patrols have resulted in reductions in calls for service. Calls for service at the viaduct reduced from 24 before the fencing was installed to 9 calls in the two weeks after the fencing was installed.

Precinct Outreach

- Mental Health Stabilization Project team meeting
- Downtown Community Court triage meeting
- Hot spotters meeting
- Downtown security group meeting
- Spokane Treatment and Recovery Services Board meeting
- Business Improvement District Board meeting
- Salvation Army Board meeting
- Continuum of Care Board meeting
- Washington State Public Safety Review Panel meeting
- Riverside Neighborhood Council meeting

South Precinct

The South Precinct received 129 new referrals of problem addresses during February 2022.

Crime Prevention Missions

- The South Precinct has been focusing on the 5th to Sprague/Freya to Smith area in the East Central neighborhood, due to recent assaults, shootings, arson, drugs, stolen vehicles, and vehicle prowling. The South Precinct is teaming up with patrol to look for suspicious behavior. Officers report their activities, contacts, and arrests at the end of each shift to their supervisor. Neighborhood Resource Officers have been meeting with nearby businesses who have been affected by people urinating and defecating around the business doors and parking lot, and focusing on gas stations, Fred Meyer, and the Tapio Center.

Precinct Meetings and Partnerships

Precincts regularly collaborate with various Neighborhood Councils, and attend a variety of meetings, including Mental Health Stabilization Project team, Downtown Community Court triage, Hot Spotters, Downtown Security Group, Spokane Treatment and Recovery Services Board, Business Improvement



District Board, Salvation Army Board, Continuum of Care Board, Washington State Public Safety Review Panel, YWCA, Homeless Coalition, and the East Spokane Business Association.

Outreach Update

Recent Outreach Activities

Spokane Juvenile Court Coordination of Services

PAL Boxing

Refugee Connections

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Northeast Community Center Coalition

Juvenile Training

Officer Graig Butler taught a class to youth with Juvenile Court and Probation. We have had an ongoing partnership with Juvenile Court for several years and this class gave him the opportunity to teach the youth about criminal law.

Youth & Police Initiative (YPI) Session with Excelsior Wellness Center

SPD held a YPI session at Excelsior, March 7, 8, 10, 14 & 15, 2022. The Youth & Police Initiative (YPI) is a prevention program for at-risk high school and middle school youth, designed to meet them where they are and help them prepare for their future. YPI curriculum involves an honest discussion about peer pressure and positive decision-making relating to school, gangs, and drugs. SPD officers were so pleased with the quality discussions with participating youth. The experience at Excelsior was rewarding for all, with such responsive students and staff.



Refugee Training

Community Outreach met with staff from Refugee Connections and World Relief to collaborate on future training for refugees coming to the Spokane area.

PAL Boxing

PAL Boxing meets every Tuesday at the Spokane Boxing Club (115 S. Jefferson) from 3:00-4:30 pm. We welcome youth between the ages of 12-17. We'd love to have them down to get a workout in with our officers! Please reach out to spdcommunityoutreach@spokanepolice.org for more information.



The Hoodie Project

SPD Community Outreach Officers enjoyed participating in The Hoodie Project, a partnership between Spokane Public Schools and Eastern Washington University. The Hoodie Project aims to inspire students and families from Title I schools to pursue college or some form of higher education. 5th graders visit with college alumni and receive college hoodies.

The Spokane Police Foundation donated \$1500.00, which is matched by EWU, to provide hoodies for kids. SPD officers met with children from Lidgerwood Elementary. The hoodies have EWU's logo on the front and the PAL (Police Activities League) logo on the right shoulder. Sergeant Greg Rogan and Officer Jen Kerns participated in the distribution of the hoodies to students at Linwood and Arlington.



Visit with Hamblen Park Pre-School

