



SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT
CHIEF OF POLICE
CRAIG N. MEIDL

Strategic Initiatives
August 2022 Report



Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing
August 1, 2022



Excerpts of Commendations
(Personal Identifying Information has been removed)

I'd like to give a special shout out and thank you to **Officer Neil Higgins #1435** who "rescued" two eighty-year-old ladies in distress on the evening of May 14th after my van was stolen in downtown Spokane. His care and concern went beyond my expectations! What a fine officer and gentleman!!!!

I want to say thank you and give some praise for the Spokane Police Department, specifically for **Officer Jeff McCollough**. I just wanted to thank the department and this officer specifically for their proactive nature in looking for my stolen car. I thought I would never get it back. Just wanted to say thank you so much.

I wanted to extend a kudos to **Officer [Andrew] Chappell** who responded to our agency when our medical team made a mandatory report after a young person made a disclosure of an unreported sexual assault that occurred approximately 2 years prior. This young person expressed concern and hesitancy of wanting to report due to not knowing how the process would work and not wanting to be alone in the process. She made the choice to remain at our agency for the patrol response and have Tori, our Courthouse Facility Dog present with her when it was her time to talk with the officer. I had the opportunity to be the handler for Tori during the interaction between the young person and Officer Chappell and saw, first-hand, the professional and trauma-informed approach that he had when talking to someone who had taken the courageous step in sharing a traumatic experience. I believe that this interaction with Officer Chappell not only helped this young person to feel seen and heard, but also helped in building confidence in her brave decision to report. I know that in the field of law enforcement, more often than not, patrol officers will interact with people who are experiencing acute distress, crises, and trauma. The job is not an easy one and I have so much respect for those who share their servant's heart with the community they have promised to respond to and protect. The response by Officer Chappell is a great example of the positive impact that patrol officers can have on those needing help not only in the moment, but also long-term as well. This young person has been able to walk away from this experience knowing that she was heard, that there are people who are here to support her, and that she was seen as an individual person with respect given to her choices in the moment, something that was stolen from her during her traumatic experience. I appreciate Officer Chappell's response to our agency that day!

Officer Marvin Cunningham has helped out numerous times for an ongoing issue at our apartment complex. He is professional and treats everyone with respect. He has always defused the situation.



Internal Affairs Unit Update

January 1 through June 30, 2022, Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received: **Total: 135**

Complaints Received: **Total: 38 (32 from community)**

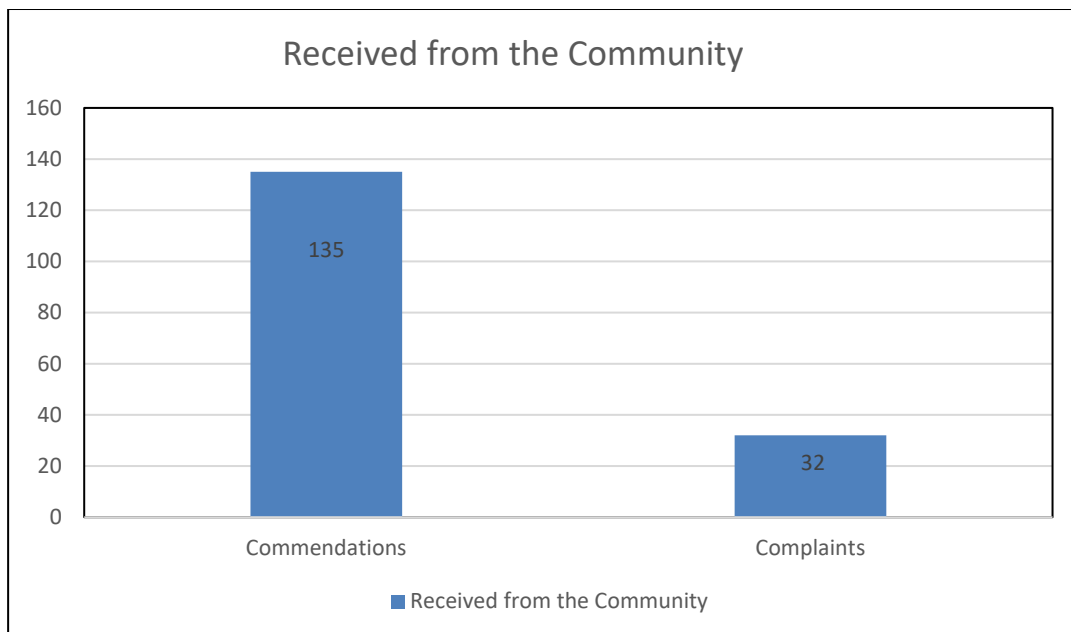
Closed Out as Inquiries: 0 (As of June 30, 2022)

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 June 30, 2022

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	Total: 11
Received by the Spokane Police Department	Total: 27
Internally Generated by the SPD	Total: 6
Generated by the Community	Total: 32

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- June 30, 2022, there were 42 non-deadly use of force incidents, including 14 K9 contacts and 28 other types of force (e.g., TASER). Four incidents involved both a K9 and other force.

2022 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

From January 1- June 30, 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.

Items of Interest

Hiring and Recruiting Update: New Hires

SPD welcomed ten new officers at the Swearing-In Ceremony on July 5, 2022. These entry-level officers will begin the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) and complete it in December.

Welcome new Officers Ryan Clark, Colton D'Agostino, Maison Edwards, Rick Ford, Noah Hansen, Brady Hooper, Nathaniel Medellin, Eli Sander, Kody Vaughn, and Drew Wilson.

Two of our new officers hail from our Volunteer Unit. Officer Drew Wilson has been a key member of the Spokane Police Department Cadets. Officer Ryan Clark is has volunteered as a SPD Co-Op and a Reserve Police Officer.

Officers Wilson and Clark are pictured with Chief Meidl, below.



Newer 2022 Hires:

Our newly hired officers from January graduated from the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA) in June and are currently in Field Training.



The entire graduating class of BLEA is pictured above. BLEA included officers from many agencies in Eastern Washington. Above, Chief Meidl and Officer Garrett Harris at the graduation ceremony.



Alexander Braatz M. German Johnson Garrett Harris Devon Hill Shane Holtshausen



Ricky LaBelle Will Mitchell Sally Richards Nathan Thompson Bryson Trautman

Reserve Academy

SPD is currently holding a five-month Reserve Academy to certify more Reserve Officers. These volunteers from our community provide incredible support to the department. A Reserve Officer is fully commissioned while on duty. Reserve Officers can continue their training with a mentoring program allowing them to progress to a Level II Reserve Officer, able to respond to calls as a solo officer.

After applicants pass a background check, physical ability test, a polygraph, oral board, psychological testing, medical screening and a review by the Chief of Police, applicants then attend a 290-hour Reserve Officer Academy on evenings and weekends. The program culminates with a certification examination administered by the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission prior to graduation. Reserve Officers continue monthly training and volunteering to maintain their status.

Reserve Academy Demographics:

The 2022 Reserve Academy is a diverse group of individuals, consisting of three females and six males. Racial/ethnic backgrounds include North African, Middle Eastern, Black, and White.

Reserve Officer Richardson is in dozens of photos, representing SPD at many community events. He is pictured below with Reserve Officer Nateewah. Officer “Big Ed” recently went to Northeast Youth Center to talk to youth about preventing and standing up to bullying and promoting respectful behavior.



In-Service Training Completed

The Spokane Police Department received certification as an Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) agency, making the department one of the first agencies in Washington to do so. Washington Senate Bill 5066, signed into law in July of 2021, requires the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (WSCJTC) to incorporate duty to intervene training in the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA). Further, all peace officers must receive the training by December 31, 2023. SPD chose to apply for

training certification and adopt ABLE ahead of the required date and completed initial training for officers in June.

Training with Advocates

On June 7, 2022, Partners with Families and the Special Victims Unit (SVU) finished up roll trainings for officers on what a Child Advocacy Center does. It was an opportunity to get one of our most important community partners in front of officers. Additional training was also provided on a new pocket card that will help Officers talk to children when an Officer may need to.

SVU Sergeant Schneider also met with staff and leadership at Mujeres in Action, Domestic Violence Advocates in Spokane. Mujeres in Action (MiA) is a nonprofit organization that provides culturally responsive life-saving services and resources (advocacy, legal, housing) to Latinx survivors and their families, as well as educating the community from a Latinx perspective to end family violence. See miaspokane.org. SPD will likely partner with this organization to conduct training for officers.

Behavioral Health Unit (BHU)

The BHU continued to respond to calls involving people in crisis and successfully divert them from emergency rooms and jail. In May 2022, the BHU responded to a total of 454 calls for service, allowing other patrol units to take other calls. The unit responded to 87 BHU calls, 48 suicidal calls, and 96 welfare calls for service. They also contacted 76 individuals for follow-up. 18% of calls resulted in Involuntary Detentions. 1% of contacts resulted in an arrest.

What does a “diversion” from jail look like?

The BHU recently made a big impact on a young woman with co-occurring disorders. In March, she called the BHU after hearing about the unit from friends and the phone number from Compassionate Addiction Treatment. She was suffering from several disorders to include Bipolar 1, anxiety, depression, and PTSD. She used Heroin, Meth, and “Blue Mexis” (Fentanyl). She had used Heroin recently right before BHU contacted her because she was scared of withdrawals and also thought she may be arrested and going to jail. When the BHU contacted her, she was emaciated with her body covered in open sores. She was manic but wanted to get stable so she could work on getting on her feet for housing and work. She had a misdemeanor warrant that fell within the criteria to be diverted from our regional diversion center. BHU transported her to the stabilization facility, where she was admitted.

In late May, the BHU saw the individual and barely recognized her at all because she was well-nourished and healthy. The open sores on her face had disappeared. The young woman was thankful for having access to BHU and was also extremely thankful for getting her into treatment. She is stable, working for a local shelter, and is trying to move into the next step of independent housing. She stated without the help of BHU, she would not have been able to achieve her goals.



Hoopfest Impaired Driving Emphasis – A Multi-Agency Effort

Several agencies worked together to protect the community from impaired drivers. Washington State Patrol, Washington Traffic Safety Commission, and SPD worked together to apprehend impaired drivers and prevent collisions. They were supported by Spokane/ Spokane County Prosecutors office, Municipal / District Courts, Spokane County Detention Services, Naphcare nursing staff, the Spokane Convention Center, and all the support of the Chaplain Services with SPD, WSP, and SCSO.

There were no serious injury or fatal crashes in the Spokane area during this two-night emphasis. Officers heard great feedback from members of the community who thanked them for being out and keeping our roads and community safe during the event.

Lieutenant Jeff Leonard of the Washington State Patrol, Impaired Driving Section, stated, "On Friday night of Hoopfest weekend, the Mobile Impaired Driving Unit (MIDU) processed 12 Impaired Drivers. Drivers were arrested by three different agencies. On Saturday night, the MIDU processed 21 Impaired Drivers. Drivers were arrested by six different agencies. It is important to note, that 21 is the most processed in one night since pre-COVID. For the weekend – the high BAC was a .271.

"Other factors which made this weekend a success – jail transport of site, jail nurses on site (for medical screening and blood draws), food on site (provided by the Spokane chaplaincy programs) and the tremendous amount of prep work by Spokane PD to alert the courts, prosecutors, and public defender's office which results in most arrestees being booked. While there are many shout outs to give, much of the great work is attributed to Spokane PD Officer Mike Thomas who truly drove the success of this event.

Thank you for your continued support of IDS and the impaired driving programs, as stated in the beginning of this email, I believe this weekend was a HUGE success."

Captain Jeffrey M. Otis, District 4 Commander, Washington State Patrol, stated, "Chief Meidl – I just wanted you to be aware of the outstanding work Officer Mike Thomas did in setting up the traffic safety component of this year's Hoopfest law enforcement operations. Officer Thomas arranged for the WSP's Mobile Impaired Driving Unit to be present during the weekend which allowed officers in the field to focus on high volume traffic stops and DUI arrests with the DUI processing being handled by the MIDU. Officer Thomas also arranged for phlebotomists to be present for blood draws along with jail transport personnel to handle any required jail bookings thus freeing up officers to get back in the field. Finally Officer Thomas coordinated with the courts, prosecutors and public defenders offices to ensure everyone was aware of the potential increase in DUI arrests for the weekend.

"For the weekend, the MIDU processed 33 DUI suspects with 21 occurring Saturday night which is the most processed by the MIDU at any event since the pandemic started. Overall, this was an extremely successful operation and Officer Thomas deserves a significant amount of credit for getting everything set up."

North Precinct

Collaboration with Neighborhood Residents and Businesses

- Neighborhood Resource Officer J. Pavlischak has been working on several chronic nuisance properties in West Central. Several abatement agreements have been signed, and multiple residences have also been cited for failure to enter into an abatement agreement. Multiple abandoned vehicles have been towed from these properties.
- NRO Deanna Storch has been working with a property owner of a vacant lot that has been the target of criminal activity. “No Trespassing” signs have been posted and SPD is authorized to trespass people. Trespassers have significantly reduced during June 2022.
- Vehicle prowling and vehicle thefts have been the highest property/person crimes in the Nevawood area. NRO Storch says, “Please remember to take all belongings inside with you even if you are only going inside for a few moments. Purses, wallets, and electronics are being taken often. Never leave spare keys in your vehicle to that vehicle or the vehicle it parks next to at night.”
- NRO Jeremy Howe has been working on trespassers at Andrew Rypien Field, in response to neighbors making complaints about people making campfires overnight. He made several contacts with trespassers in June. SYSA responded to all of them and trespassed the individuals. NRO Howe arrested individuals with warrants. SYSA has been a great partner and is looking at ways to reduce overnight trespassers.

South Precinct

Collaboration with Neighborhood Residents and Businesses

- The South Precinct has been focusing on Camp Hope. Neighborhood Resource Officers are contacting people and asking them to remove their vehicles from various No Parking Zones. Several victims of car thefts came by camp to talk to officers, hoping to find their stolen vehicles at camp.
- NROs made several referrals to the Homeless Outreach Team, based on neighbor complaints.

Neighborhood Resource Officer Mark Brownell

NRO Brownell joined the South Precinct team recently and was recognized by Peyton Smith and Karen Ssebanikitta.

“Dear Police Chief Meidl,

We want to thank you for your recent appointment of Officer Mark Brownell as Browne’s Addition Neighborhood Resource Officer. We are so pleased with his interaction with our neighborhood council and safety officer in helping to keep our neighborhood safe. Officer Brownell also responds extremely fast to emails showing that he cares and wants to be of service. As we volunteer both for the local C.O.P.S. Shop and the Browne’s Addition Neighborhood Council, we have been active in working to keep our neighborhood and community safe, clean and welcoming. As such, we couldn’t be happier with your appointment of Officer Brownell. Thank you so very much.”

Downtown Precinct

Crime Prevention Missions

- During May and June 2022, the Downtown Precinct has been focusing on Pacific-2nd/Division-Spokane, which was experiencing high rates of vehicle prowling and Part 1 crimes, especially near some apartment complexes and businesses. The Precinct experienced success with their emphasis. As of June 28, the area has experienced significantly fewer calls for service and Part 1 crimes. The hot spot started with there were 201 calls for service, 20 arrests, and 14 Part I crimes. On June 22 there were 122 calls for service, 14 arrests, and 6 Part I crimes. By June 28, there were 65 calls for service, 3 arrests, and 5 Part 1 crimes for that week.
- During June and July 2022, the Precinct is focusing on Sprague-2nd Ave/Post-Monroe. From June 16-June 27, there were 79 calls for service and 11 Part 1 crimes. From June 28 to July 6, there were 22 calls for service, zero reports of vehicle prowling, 3 arrests, and zero Part 1 crimes.
- Bike Patrols reported a successful experience with the Pride Parade. There was a large turnout of people and no major issues.

Precinct Outreach

- Downtown Community Court triage meeting
- Hot spotters meeting
- Downtown security group meeting
- Business Improvement District Board meeting
- Washington State Public Safety Review Panel meeting
- Riverside Neighborhood Council meeting
- Coffee with a Cop on June 13, 2022, at the Starbucks on Main Street.
- Coffee with a Cop July 13, noon-2pm, at the 2nd/Division Starbucks.



Above: Downtown Precinct leadership, Mayor Woodward, Behavioral Health Unit, and Starbucks employees at Coffee with a Cop.

School Activities

- Officers attended Stevens Elementary School Cultural Night. It was fantastic!
- Officer John Yen went to Northwest Christian Schools 6th Grade Drug education day. He gave a 2 hour class on the different types of drugs and their effects.
- Officers were invited to Mt. Spokane High School for the end of year assembly. During the event, there was a teddy bear toss. Officers collected the stuffed animals for a donation to Deaconess Children's Hospital, Sally's House, and Union Gospel Mission Crisis Center for Women and Children.
- Officers attended Trinity Catholic Schools end of year celebration called "Cow Plop." There were games and events for the kids to participate in with officers.
- Officers were invited to Scott Elementary School to participate in the end of the year "Field Day" celebration. Officers played games (Disk Golf, basketball) with kids. The school provided a petting zoo and bouncy castles for the kids to celebrate the end of the year.



Recent Outreach Activities

Neighborhood Block Party
Spokane Juvenile Court Coordination of Services
Big Brothers Big Sisters
Northeast Community Center Coalition
Shadle Prevention & Wellness Coalition
Hoopfest

At the World Refugee Day Celebration, an officer set up a booth and handed out swag to the kids. They spoke with people in the park about the Spokane Police Department and the resources that they could access within SPD and the City of Spokane. Refugee Connections put this event on with other partners from the community.

Safety Classes

Officers were invited to Pacific Northwest Behavior to teach a class to students with special needs about safety and what to do when they need a police officer. The social skills class was designed knowing that to sensory issues can complicate students' interactions with law enforcement. Pacific Northwest Behavior staff wanted students to learn how to advocate for themselves, be aware of safety, and how to get help when needed.



Safety Talks were also given at a lunch with teens at Passages Family Support and at Northeast Youth Center. NEYC invited SPD to observe their lock down procedure for an emergency inside the building. Afterwards officers spoke to the kid's ages 6 to 12 about why the drills were important. Officers also spoke to the kids about general safety issues.

Law Enforcement Appreciation BBQ to kick off Hoopfest Weekend



Kris White with Colonial Life Insurance donated 250 BBQ lunches to be handed out at the Public Safety Building. He hired the owner of Zona Blanca, Chef Chad White, to put together the lunches. The lunches were handed out to any local law enforcement employees in the area.

The SPD Community Outreach Unit contacted the other agencies and help hand out the lunches.

Hoopfest Team



The Spokane Police Guild sponsored a team from Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center for Hoopfest. The team of three 13-year-olds wore Police Activities League (PAL) jerseys. The team took second place, losing in the Championship game. Officers were there to cheer on the team during all their games. SPD is so proud of this team, who was continually recognized for their great sportsmanship as well as basketball skills.

The team is pictured with Coach Bryan Hall and Community Outreach staff.

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. On June 17, two of the PAL Boxers participated in a boxing match.

Police Activities League (PAL)

The Police Activities League (PAL) is an outreach program created in 2013 to help build trusting relationships between at-risk youth and local law enforcement. Each summer, the PAL program offers fun, structured activities for youth, with opportunities to make friends and memories at their local parks. PAL engages youth with positive academic and athletic programs, such as flag football, basketball, running, soccer, swimming, and baseball. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) enrichment activities and lunch are provided at every session. Throughout the season, youth participants focus on five core values: honesty, integrity, leadership, sportsmanship and respect. PAL program takes a holistic approach to crime prevention, focusing on reducing drug and gang involvement, as well as making positive decisions. PAL is a collaborative program of Spokane Police Department, Spokane Police Foundation, Spokane Parks Department, and many other organizations working together to supply a myriad of resources in a central location.



The 2022 PAL summer program kicked off in July at neighborhood parks in West Central, East Central, and North Spokane and will continue through August. We have a lot of fun with our participants from the YMCA, West Central Community Center, Martin Luther King Jr Center, and Northeast Youth Center. SPD is so thankful to our many volunteers from the SPD Chaplaincy and Volunteer Services programs, Numerica Credit Union, and the community. Zip 2 Water donated a water filtration system to us. RESCU brought popsicles for the kids. Grants from Spokane Parks Foundation and Numerica Credit Union help the program succeed. Below, a few photos from the first week of PAL.



