



SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT
CHIEF OF POLICE
CRAIG N. MEIDL

Strategic Initiatives
September 2023 Report



Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing
August 28, 2023



Excerpts of Commendations
(Personal Identifying Information has been removed)

Community Outreach Officers,

Thank you for taking time out of your schedule and teaching us about your job and what you guys do to help people. One of the officers talked to me individually and asked me a few questions that made me think about things differently. I'm thankful for everything you guys do for us.

[Officer Micah Prim] Thank you, Officer Prim, and thank you to your colleagues at Spokane Police Department for all you do to keep our community safe! We will utilize this [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design] report to make recommendations and seek solutions with the building owner and agency headquarters.

I just wanted to take a minute and thank you for the opportunity to ride along on Friday. You have an outstanding team sir. A great group of guys, all very welcoming, friendly, and wanting to learn about C.O.P.S. **Sergeant Matt Rose** showed me around and allowed me to sit in on their meeting prior to going out. I was assigned to **Officer Joe Dunsmoor**. I joked with him that he must be on probation or something as he drew the short straw and got me! We had a great day together, and I think by the time we were done that he enjoyed having me around. Your team has a an incredibly difficult job, and they handle it with the utmost professionalism. They were great with the people that they stopped with drug concerns. They showed empathy, they showed humor, they remembered the names of those (and their dogs!) that they had dealt with before, and tightened things down when necessary. They also worked really well as a team.

Officer Brett Spring came to my house to inform me of the death of my brother. Officer Spring was compassionate and professional. My brother died unexpectedly. He informed me what steps would be taken and who would be calling. I just want to let you all know that your officers are caring, compassionate and professional.

SPD Academy

Thank you for having me at the police academy. It was the most favorite field trip I have ever taken in my life.



January 1 through July 31, 2023, Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received: **Total: 120**

Complaints Received: **Total: 56 (48 from community)**

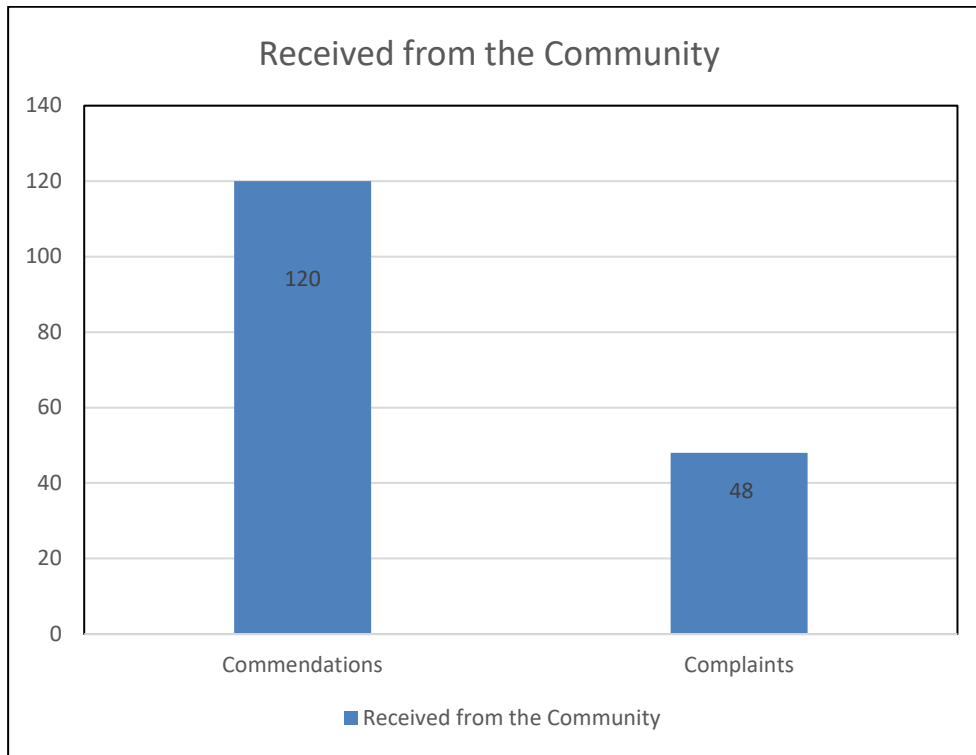
Closed Out as Inquiries: 0 (As of July 31, 2023)

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 July 31, 2023

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	Total: 27
Received by the Spokane Police Department	Total: 29
Internally Generated by the SPD	Total: 8
Generated by the Community	Total: 48

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



Use of Force Update

Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

2023

From January 1- July 31, 2023, there was one deadly force incident.

Incident 2023-20088146 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

Incident 2023-20088146 took place on May 10, 2023, in the area of 5th and Browne. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

2022

From January 1- December 31, 2022, there were five deadly force incidents.

Incident 2022-20012711 (Pending Deadly Force Review Board)

Incident 2022-20012711 took place on January 24, 2022, in the area of 2400 E. Desmet. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) completed the criminal investigation. The Spokane County Prosecutor's Office completed their review and found the shooting to be justified. The Administrative Investigation is complete and will be scheduled for a Deadly Force Review Board.

Incident 2022-20134271 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

2022-20134271 took place on August 3, 2022, in the area of 2nd and Sheridan. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

Incident 2022-20156670 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

2022-20156670 took place on September 4, 2022, in the area of 2900 E. Wabash Avenue. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

Incident 2022-20184192 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

2022-20184192 took place on October 16, 2022, in the area of 100 S Cedar. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

Incident 2022-20214924 (Pending Prosecutor Review)

2022-20214924 took place on December 4, 2022, in the area of Morton and Illinois. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) completed the criminal investigation. The case is with the Prosecutor's Office.

Hiring and Recruiting

SPD Holds Third Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA)

2023 is the first year to have three BLEA sessions in Spokane. SPD has eight new hires who were sworn in on August 14, 2023. We welcome Jacob Collins, Andrew Willis, Kendall Stonebraker, Alexander Bishop, Keilah Martin, James Welty, Spencer Clouse, and Drew Helsper to the Spokane Police Department.





Recruiting

- SkillBridge Program: SPD is now participating in the Department of Defense’s SkillBridge program. SkillBridge provides SPD with direct access to a highly skilled applicant pool – volunteer/intern applicants who are transitioning from military service to civilian life. These applicants are paid full-time with entitlements from their military branch, while they are given an opportunity to train/job shadow, apply, and process with SPD for up to six months. SkillBridge will help SPD find qualified applicants for commissioned and non-commissioned positions.
- New Lateral Officer Package: For experienced officers coming from other departments, their total years of law enforcement experience will be used to calculate their vacation and sick time accruals once they join SPD. Laterals will accrue vacation, sick time and longevity pay at the rate of their experience upon joining the ranks of SPD. They will receive a 120-hour sick leave bank upon being hired.
- SPD updated its recruiting materials with the salary increases and incentives for laterals. The website now has more information to recruit potential officers.
- <https://my.spokanecity.org/police/officer/jobs/>

2023 Reserve Academy

The 2023 Reserve Academy is midway through the course. There are seven Reserve applicants in the Academy currently. Volunteers from our community complete a rigorous program to become a Reserve Officer. Applicants must 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 the 370-plus 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.

Drug Education for the Community



On July 11, SPD Officer Mike Thomas led school administrators, nurses, and resource officers in a Drug Impairment Training for Education Professionals (DITEP) at the Talbott Event Center, organized by Amy Lutz, NEWESD 101's Public Health Program Specialist.

The free workshop equipped attendees with knowledge for recognizing and evaluating students who are impaired by drugs and/or alcohol to aid in regional substance abuse prevention and treatment intervention efforts.

Noteworthy Arrests

SPD seizes multiple guns, thousands of drugs, and more than one hundred thousand dollars in cash, in a major drug distribution investigation

On 8/3/23, The Spokane Police Department's Violent Crimes Task Force and the Special Investigations Unit, with the assistance of SWAT, executed several search warrants at multiple locations in Northwest Spokane, resulting from an ongoing criminal investigation. Investigators seized six handguns including one stolen handgun, a large amount of ammunition, approximately 8 to 10 thousand illicit fentanyl pills, and approximately \$120,000 in cash.



Jonathan Smith (36) was arrested and booked into the Spokane County Jail for Possession of Controlled Substance with Intent to Sell and Possession of a Stolen Firearm. Additional arrests in this case are pending. The Spokane Police Department is committed to combating the fentanyl epidemic and the violence and devastation that accompany drug use and delivery.

Baker (Northeast) Sector – Coffee and Conversation put on by Cops & Communities



Officers enjoyed connecting with the community in North Spokane at Starbucks at the Cops and Conversation event on August 4, 2023.

Northeast Precinct Captain Steve Wohl served coffee in the drive-through during the event. He said, “Although many were surprised to see an SPD uniform as they came up to the window, I was overwhelmed by the amount of support for SPD that was shared with me as I handed out drinks. I often heard that they knew we were understaffed, but wanted to thank us for the job we do. These quick impromptu meetings resulted in great conversation.”

National Night Out Against Crime

National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. It provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances. SPD had a great time connecting with community members and talking about safety. SPD Leadership from each sector participated in the festivities. Spokane C.O.P.S. Staff and volunteers, Chief Meidl, Mayor Woodward, SPD officers and volunteers, Councilmember Cathcart, representatives from the U.S. Attorney's Office, and many more had a great time meeting with neighbors. Thank you to Spokane C.O.P.S. for carrying on this tradition.



People always enjoy meeting the horses with the C.O.P.S. Mounted Patrol Unit.



Police Activities League 2023

The 10th season of the Police Activities League (PAL) program took place at A.M. Cannon Park, Friendship Park, and Grant Park in July and August 2023. The PAL program was created in 2013 to help build trusting relationships between at-risk youth and local law enforcement. PAL offers positive programs such as soccer, football, basketball, lawn games, art activities, and educational activities. Youth enjoyed presentations from various Spokane Police specialty units (K9, SWAT, Drone Unit), Spokane C.O.P.S. Mounted Patrol Unit (horses), and nutrition education and fresh fruit. PAL is made possible by partnerships with many organizations. PAL allows police officers and community leaders the opportunity to mentor youth and provide education (e.g., drug and alcohol education, STEM, safety education).

The PAL program is made possible by the Spokane Police Foundation.

Safety Education



Mounted Patrol



Educational Games



Sports



The drug/alcohol/tobacco education the PAL program provides is needed more than ever, as we are experiencing an increase of drug overdoses in our community. The federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) selected Spokane County as one of 11 locations across the nation with enough fentanyl overdose deaths to warrant special attention. The DEA joined PAL as a partner in 2023 and is enhancing the education component. The DEA funded the martial arts portion of PAL. Below left, SPD officers and volunteers with Marcus Pickett from the DEA. Below center, Master Kim provides instruction. Below right, a youth is given a T shirt by Marcus and Master Kim.



Throughout the season, students focus on five core values: honesty, integrity, leadership, sportsmanship, and respect. Officers and community leaders identify youth modeling the core values, as do their peers, and nominate those youth for recognition at the end of each session.



Longtime partners such as YMCA and West Central Community Center have brought participants to PAL for years, but SPD has new partners bringing participants this year – Thrive International and Ukrainian Closet are bringing youth. Below left, participants from Thrive International. Below right, participants from Ukrainian Closet.



2023 SPD Police Activities League (PAL) Statistics

<p>405 Unduplicated youth</p>		<p>97% Youth surveyed agreed that PAL helped them trust officers</p>
	<p>Core Values Respect Honesty Leadership Sportsmanship Integrity</p>	
<p>56 SPD staff & volunteers</p>		
	<p>51 Community volunteers, including 38 volunteers from Numerica Credit Union</p>	
	<p>303 Community volunteer hours</p>	
<p>92% Effectiveness in drug education, according to youth surveys</p>		<p>New Partners DEA, ESD 101, Ukrainian Closet, Thrive International</p>

Building relationships: At PAL, officers and volunteers serve as coaches, and it allows people of all ages to connect.



Numerica Credit Union brought community volunteers once again. ESD 101 also provided community volunteers. Below left, Numerica volunteers. Below center and right, ESD 101 volunteers with SPD folks.



The Spokane Parks Foundation, Spokane Police Foundation, and many other organizations provide support to PAL. Here, SPD officers stand with community volunteers and SPD volunteers.



Explorers (high school), Cadets (college), Citizen Volunteers, Reserve Officers, and Chaplains all help at PAL.



SPD Volunteers

2023 Explorer Academy

The Spokane Police Department had 8 participants in the Summer Explorer Academy in Yakima. This is a 6 day Academy. There were 125 Explorers (ages 14-21) from throughout WA State and 58 staff members, from over 20 departments in attendance. SPD had 7 Explorers and one Cadet participating in their 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th Explorer Academies. They are tested on Academics, Physical Agility, and Firearms. We are super proud of our volunteers for their hard work and dedication.



- Cadet Koleton Vaughn was in the Advanced level, participating in his 3rd Explorer Academy. He earned the following awards: 1st Place Male Physical Agility, 3rd Place Firearms, 2nd Place Overall.
- Explorer Derek Schweigert was in the Intermediate level, participating in his 2nd Explorer Academy. He earned the following awards: 1st Place Male Physical Agility, 3rd Place Academics, 1st Place Overall.
- Explorer Emma LaRue was an Academy Assistant, participating in her 4th Explorer Academy. She earned the award for: Best Academy Assistant.

SPD is heavily involved in WA Law Enforcement Explorers Association (WLEEA). Officer Deanna Storch is the Vice President of WLEEA and Officer John Yen is the Secretary. Captain Dave Richards has been part

of WLEEA for 40 years. Officers Storch and Yen are in red polo shirts, and Captain Richards is in the first row on the right.



To learn more about the Explorer/Cadet programs, see:

Police Explorer & Police Cadet Programs – <https://my.spokanecity.org/.../volunteers/explorers-cadets/>

Chaplains – Making a Difference



SPD employee and volunteer Chaplain Maria Arguinzi is fluent in English and Spanish. She enjoys being able to help, not only in her role as a chaplain, but also helping with language barriers.

“Hi, my name is Maria Arguinzi and I have worked for the Spokane Police Department for 30 years and I am also a volunteer chaplain. I felt in my heart that this is the best way for me to serve my community. It has truly blessed me.”

“Hola, mi nombre es Maria Aguinzi y he trabajado para el Departamento de Policía de Spokane durante 30 años y también soy capellán voluntario. Sentí en mi corazón que esta es la mejor manera de servir a mi comunidad. Realmente me ha bendecido.”

