

City of Palos Heights



Public Safety Committee
Tuesday, February 25, 2020
Minutes

Call to Order/ Roll Call

The Public Safety Committee was held on February 25, 2020 at the Palos Heights City Hall. Chairman McGovern called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm. In attendance were Chairman McGovern, Alderman Clifford, Alderman Kramarski and Alderman Key. Also in attendance were Chief Yott, City Administrator Dan Nisavic, Recording Secretary Liz Gutierrez, and Officer Joel Carlson.

Approval of Minutes

Alderman McGovern moved to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2020 Public Safety meeting, seconded by Alderman Key. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

Police Chief Yott reported as follows:

POLICE ACTIVITY REPORT

Total calls for service Jan: 623

TRAFFIC CRASH REPORT

Hit & Run	Jan:	2	
Property Damage	Jan:	24	
Personal Injury	Jan:	6	
TOTAL			32

MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS

- a) Police Department Budget Report
- b) SafeSpeed Report – Jan: 115 violations printed
- c) MSI Report – Jan: 14 citations issued
- d) Training Report
- e) DUI Summary - 3 arrests

Alderman McGovern inquired about a fatal accident that occurred in Palos Heights. Chief Yott confirmed that it was a fatal accident of an intoxicated person that crashed into a tree.

Old Business

At the request of the committee from last meeting, Officer Joel Carlson prepared a presentation for the committee.

Officer Joel Carlson stepped forward and addressed the committee. He is the founder of the Palos Heights Police Crisis Intervention Team. He outlined the purpose and who utilizes this service. The crisis team works with consumers who experiencing behavior health and/or severe substance use issues. A consumer is someone who uses a behavioral health service. The crisis intervention team works to streamline wrap around services with areas of social service providers and nonprofit organizations. The department identified that people at times do not know where to turn to for assistance in times of crisis.

and call 911 for help. This service is able to put the two together in order to help the person in need. A team member follows up with families after the crisis and can also put the family members in touch with services to benefit them so they can best handle the situation through council. There is value in this because the family can have a lower stress and anxiety which creates an overall better environment as well as less service calls to the police department. Officer Carlson continued by stating that all of this ideally leads to less calls for repeat service and decrease crime caused by mental health issues and substance use. The second benefit is that a less adversarial environment is created for officers and the consumer can see the officers in a different light.

Officer Carlson continued explaining the process by which the program works. When answering a call, the officer identifies whether the Crisis Intervention Team is needed, if so, and there is an CIT officer available, that officer takes care of the call. Otherwise, the reporting officer forwards the incident to the CIT to follow up. Within 3-4 days, the CIT officer reaches out to the consumer or family member and discuss what areas are in need of service and gives a point of contact. There are a number of contacts they have already and the list is growing. The areas of which officers can refer consumers is also growing to other communities including the City of Chicago. The officers reach out a total of three separate times to the family.

The team is constantly looking to grow and get the message out to the public about the services they can provide. They have had meet and greet events at the Starbucks in Palos Heights for the public to come and ask questions and see what services are partnering with this aspect of the Police Department.

New in the year 2020, the Crisis Intervention Team will be partnering with Sertoma and the Palos Heights Recreation Center. Sertoma will be providing class at the Rec Center for the community with the goal being to raise awareness and reduce the stigma regarding mental health issues.

Since May 5th, 2019, the team has worked with over 120 consumers and their families. They have also received numerous letters and calls of thanks.

Officer Carlson closed by reading a letter from Families Anonymous.

Alderman Kramarski asked if Officer Carlson was the officer who initiated this program. He stated he was.

Alderman McGovern asked how it was initiated. Officer Carlson stated that years ago, an officer had taken his own life, and he was very affected by this and simultaneously was noticing the number of mental health and substance use calls the department was receiving was increasing. He wanted to do something about that.

Alderman Key commended Officer Carlson for starting this team and is very proud this is part of the Police Department. He added that it makes so much sense as a department and community to have this as a resource. Alderman Key additionally stated that Officer Carlson has also learned another language to help other issues.

Alderman Kramarski invited Officer Carlson to a City Council meeting to address the entire council and residents.

Alderman Clifford also extended his thanks and appreciation for the Police Department and this team. More discussion ensued.

New Business

None

Correspondence/Employee Recognition

- Officer Darcy Birkmeier was commended by her fellow officer for an outstanding job she did dealing with a female, suicidal, emotion unstable, pregnant, DUI/DWLS arrestee. Darcy was able to establish a rapport with her while she was - 2 - being processed and helped her get admitted to Palos Community Hospital Psychiatric ward for an evaluation, where Darcy also completed the involuntary paperwork. Officers, Forrest Marcinowski and Kevin Apostol also assisted in getting the arrestee the help she needed.
- R. Sean Fitzgerald, from Homeland Security Investigations was very complimentary of Palos Heights Police Officers Bill Moritz, Joel Evans, and Todd Hutchinson who all applied for an opening as a Task Force officer. He stated all 3 candidates were very professional, competent and well qualified. The offer went to Officer Joel Evans who accepted the position.
- A resident expressed their appreciation to Officers, Kevin Apostle and Jim Jedinak for being able to track down a relative who was considered, suicidal and help assist him to Palos Community Hospital E.R. for evaluation.
- A resident called to express her gratitude towards Sgt. Wodka, Sgt. Dreger and Officer Zambrano who all assisted in changing her flat tire.
- Alderman Jerry McGovern was very impressed and thankful to Officer Walter Droba and Officer Forrest Marcinowski for their diligent police work in arresting 2 dangerous criminals regarding the Unlawful Use of Weapon, during a traffic stop
- Deputy Chief Czajkowski commended Officers Walter Droba, Anthony Delaney and Forrest Marcinowski on their officer safety skills after watching a video related to a U UW Arrest.
- A resident wanted to compliment Zach Erdmann, a C.S.O. on his professionalism and exemplary service he provided while conducting a house watch and locating an unsecured door. The resident appreciated Zach's dedication and attentiveness.
- A resident called and wanted to commend Officer Todd Hutchinson on his exemplary service he provided with regards to a suspicious vehicle call.
- Officer Mike Mathis did a nice job in turning a routine stop into a nice arrest. He stopped a car for one headlight, did a probable cause search based on the odor of cannabis. The search yielded around 125.5 grams of cannabis, 5.5 grams of cocaine and a loaded handgun between the driver's seat and front console. The driver was then charged with many offenses all considered to be Felony.
- Officer Kevin Pomper and crew did a nice job of handling a 4-car crash that came in as an injury crash. One of the driver's was charged with suspended license and had dumped a wallet in the Wendy's bathroom, which was recovered and was found to contain a female's D/L, credit cards, etc. The owner of the wallet was contacted and was able to pick up her wallet; she was very appreciative.

Questions/Comments from the Audience

None

Aldermen's Comments

None

Adjourn

There being no further business, Alderman McGovern made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alderman Key. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:59pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Gutierrez, Recording Secretary