



City of Cambridge Police Department

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Police Commissioner

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December 15, 1997

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*Planning, Budget
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Officer Frank Pasquarello
Public Information Officer

Mr. Robert W. Healy
City Manager

subject: City Council Order #45, dated 10/20/97

Sir:

Police Departments and cities across the country have struggled attempting to define "community policing". Some have defined the concept as a "philosophy", some as a "partnership with the community", others as a "way of doing business." All have shied away from referring to the concept as a program or a series of programs. The Cambridge Police Department strives to incorporate all of the above when defining and implementing community policing. The overall goal was, and is, to build a foundation for continued growth of a community policing strategy.

Recently, segments of the community have interpreted community policing as solely meaning deployment of foot patrol officers and/or bicycle patrol units throughout the City. Although the use of both forms of assignments can be considered as components in a community policing plan, the integrated approach of this Department encompasses much more.

Former Police Commissioner Perry Anderson was an advocate of having the police officer identify with the community and vice versa. The annual "open house", officers wearing name tags, youth/police programs, citizens police academy, bicycle patrols, the park & playgrounds initiative, the Community Leadership Council, and "park & walk" assignments were but some of the initiatives introduced in the past five years with the goal of fostering and enhancing police/community relations. In the past fifteen months, all of these initiatives have been continued, some have been expanded and new ones introduced.

The newest facet of the Department's community policing strategy is the launching of Police Department sponsored community meetings. These meetings will differ from other community meetings in that they will be held for the purpose of bringing residents of a neighborhood together with the supervisors and officers who regularly work the area. The initial purpose of these meetings is to allow officers and residents to become acquainted and to share information and concerns. At future meetings, residents and officers will conduct problem-solving sessions whereby all participants will have input in identifying problems and developing solutions. The main focus of the meetings will be open dialogue with true problem-solving and the development of feedback to the residents and community regarding the resolution of the problem(s).

In order to better manage this coordination with the individual neighborhoods, specific supervisors have been assigned: one lieutenant to each of the five patrol sectors and one sergeant to each of the thirteen neighborhoods. This allows for establishing stability of supervisor personnel assignments. The individuals are charged with knowing the neighborhood's problems and concerns and addressing them with the patrol officers assigned to the area. Supervisors are responsible for coordinating the meetings, to be held at least quarterly, in each of their neighborhoods. The sector lieutenant and neighborhood sergeant are empowered to coordinate the Department's response whether it be uniformed patrol, investigative services, or vice/narcotics activity.

Our current focus is introducing and integrating a problem-solving model in conjunction with the community. In other cities where models have been developed, police departments, working in concert with community members and other city agencies, have demonstrated that crime and disorder problems can be significantly reduced by implementing tailored responses directly linked to the findings of comprehensive problem analysis. The initial steps include the selection of a problem-solving model, training of Department staff, and community training. A popular approach is the SARA model which has four stages: Scanning (identifying and selecting a problem), Analysis (analyzing the selected problem), Respond (responding to the problem) and Assess (assessing the impact of the response to the selected problem). Some problem-solving efforts will address one particular problem in a specific neighborhood. Other problem-solving efforts will, hopefully, lead to systematic changes in the way the community as a whole responds to specific problems.

Staffing and deployment of personnel throughout the City is assessed daily and assignments are determined based on need, calls for service, crime reporting and neighborhood concerns. In 1993, the patrol sectors and routes were re-configured to conform to the thirteen designated neighborhoods of the City. A two-officer sector car covers two or three neighborhoods each. Each one-officer route car covers a specific neighborhood. For walking officer designations, each neighborhood is broken down into three or four smaller areas. (i.e., Neighborhood 1 has three walking officer designations: 1A, 1B, and 1C.) A walking officer can be assigned to any of the areas or switched between each area, in a neighborhood, during a tour of duty.

Part of community policing implementation mandates pushing decision making down and administrative fluidity in the ability to assign personnel to allow this to occur. Current collective bargaining obligations restrict these tenets. Patrol Officers are entitled to "bid", by seniority, assignments every six months. Officers assigned to night patrol make four selections for each shift worked in a rotation; officers assigned to day patrol make two selections per rotation. Supervisors and command staff determine daily staffing needs with the caveat that if an assignment is to be covered on a particular shift and the officer who bid that assignment is working, that officer will be so assigned. The collective bargaining agreement restricts the ability of the Department to place specific officers in specific assignments. Although the assignment bidding requirements contained in the collective bargaining agreement may restrict total autonomy in making assignments, a number of officers do in fact bid the same assignment for most, if not all of their shifts. Within the current cycle, of the 75 night patrol officers who bid assignments, 12 selected the same assignment all four shifts, 6 selected the same assignment three of the four shifts, and 40 selected the same assignment two of the four shifts.

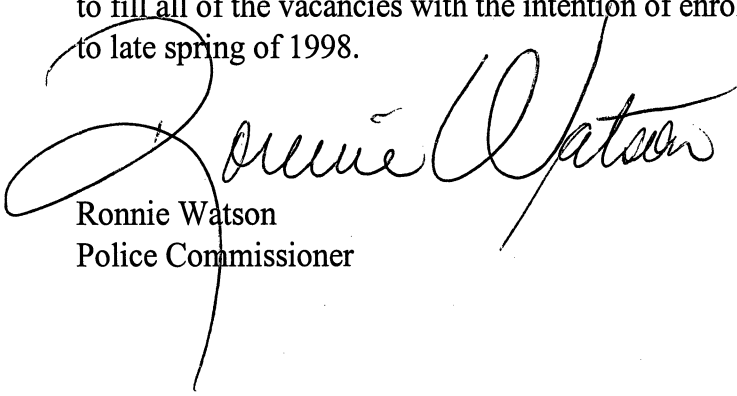
Uniformed patrol officers are assigned to walking routes daily in Neighborhood 1, Central Square, Harvard Square, Porter Square, Neighborhood 6 (weekdays during high school hours), and Neighborhood 7 (during the evening hours). Other walking assignments are staffed based on the factors listed above or as needed.

The Department's "park & walk" program is specifically designed to ensure that officers assigned to a motor vehicle are dispatched to walk a specific area of their route during their shift for visibility purposes. For the past month, 38 such assignments are dispatched, on average, daily for a total of 13 additional hours of walking patrol. Directed "park & walk" assignments are also dispatched for specific purposes such as selective enforcement, truck restriction enforcement and bicycle enforcement. In addition, from late spring to early fall, officers are designated to walk all of the City's parks and playgrounds for visibility purposes and to address specific concerns.

The Department's Bicycle Patrol Unit is primarily charged with the enforcement of bicycles in all locations where banned. The Unit, part of the Community Relations Section, is also responsible for training and education programs in the schools regarding bicycle use. Originally, the Unit consisted of six (6) officers assigned during the Day Shift, seven days per week. Four of these individuals recently asked for re-assignment for various reasons. Two of the officers have been replaced. It is the Department's intention, beginning in the spring of 1998, to staff the unit with a total of nine (9) officers: six during the day shift and three during the evening shift.

Staffing for the Police Department is authorized at a budgeted level of 271 sworn officers. This includes 6 command staff, 2 captains, 12 lieutenants, 34 sergeants, and 217 patrol officers. As of this date, 13 officers are on extended medical absence (greater than 30 days), two officers are on authorized leaves of absence, one officer is absent without leave, and two officers are on limited duty. Nine recruits will complete their training and be sworn in as police officers on January 6th

leaving 15 patrol officer vacancies. This past week, the Department began the screening process to fill all of the vacancies with the intention of enrolling the recruits in a police academy by mid to late spring of 1998.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronnie Watson". The signature is written over the printed name and title.

Ronnie Watson
Police Commissioner

cc., Superintendent Harold Murphy, Operations Division
Superintendent David Degou, Support Services Division



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3.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

December 22, 1997

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 18, regarding a further report on increasing Police foot and bicycle patrols, received from Police Commissioner Ronnie Watson.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

Consent Agenda #3

S-784

Relative to Awaiting Report Item Number
Eighteen, regarding a report on
increasing Police foot and bicycle patrols.

In City Council December 22, 1997

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