City Council

SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
Date: 7/29/2021
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Location: Zoom.us/join – ID# 997 7407 7462

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS, COVID-19, EMERGENCY ADVISORY NOTICE

On March 19, 2020, the Governor ordered a statewide stay-at-home order calling on all individuals living in the State of California to stay at home or at their place of residence to slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Additionally, the Governor has temporarily suspended certain requirements of the Brown Act. For the duration of the shelter in place order, the following public meeting protocols will apply.

Teleconference meeting: All members of the City Council, city staff, applicants, and members of the public will be participating by teleconference. To promote social distancing while allowing essential governmental functions to continue, the Governor has temporarily waived portions of the open meetings act and rules pertaining to teleconference meetings. This meeting is conducted in compliance with the Governor Executive Order N-25-20 issued March 12, 2020, and supplemental Executive Order N-29-20 issued March 17, 2020.

- How to participate in the meeting
  - Submit a written comment online up to 1-hour before the meeting start time:
    menlopark.org/publiccommentJuly29 *
  - Access the meeting real-time online at:
    Zoom.us/join – Meeting ID 997 7407 7462
  - Access the meeting real-time via telephone at:
    (669) 900-6833
    Meeting ID 997 7407 7462
    Press *9 to raise hand to speak

    *Written public comments are accepted up to 1-hour before the meeting start time. Written messages are provided to the City Council at the appropriate time in their meeting.

- Watch meeting:
  - Cable television subscriber in Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, Atherton, and Palo Alto:
    Channel 26
  - Online:
    menlopark.org/streaming

Note: City Council closed sessions are not broadcast online or on television and public participation is limited to the beginning of closed session.

Subject to Change: Given the current public health emergency and the rapidly evolving federal, state, county and local orders, the format of this meeting may be altered or the meeting may be canceled. You may check on the status of the meeting by visiting the City's website www.menlopark.org. The instructions for logging on to the webinar and/or the access code is subject to change. If you have difficulty accessing the webinar, please check the latest online edition of the posted agenda for updated information (menlopark.org/agenda).

According to City Council policy, all meetings of the City Council are to end by midnight unless there is a super majority vote taken by 11:00 p.m. to extend the meeting and identify the items to be considered after 11:00 p.m.

Special Session (Zoom.us/join – ID# 997 7407 7462)

A.   Call To Order

B.   Roll Call

C.   Study Session

C1.   Community conversation on reimagining police services (Presentation)

Web form public comment on item C1.

D.   Adjournment

At every regular meeting of the City Council, in addition to the public comment period where the public shall have the right to address the City Council on any matters of public interest not listed on the agenda, members of the public have the right to directly address the Council on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the chair, either before or during the City Council's consideration of the item.

At every special meeting of the City Council, members of the public have the right to directly address the City Council on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the chair, either before or during consideration of the item.
For appeal hearings, appellant and applicant shall each have 10 minutes for presentations.

If you challenge any of the items listed on this agenda in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park at, or prior to, the public hearing.
Any writing that is distributed to a majority of the City Council by any person in connection with an agenda item is a public record (subject to any exemption under the Public Records Act) and is available by request by emailing the city clerk at jaherren@menlopark.org. Persons with disabilities, who require auxiliary aids or services in attending or participating in City Council meetings, may call the City Clerk's Office at 650-330-6620.

Agendas are posted in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2(a) or Section 54956. Members of the public can view electronic agendas and staff reports by accessing the City website at menlopark.org/agenda and can receive email notification of agenda and staff report postings by subscribing to the "Notify Me" service at menlopark.org/notifyme. Agendas and staff reports may also be obtained by contacting City Clerk at 650-330-6620. (Posted: 7/22/2021)

RE-IMAGINING PUBLIC SAFETY

July 29, 2021 – City Council

OVERVIEW OF TONIGHT'S KICKOFF PRESENTATION

- Snapshot of today's Police Department
- Chief Norris's first 100 days
- Re-imagining Public Safety kickoff discussion
  - Questions generated from City Council and community in 2020
  - What is the Police Department doing now that speaks to reform and progressive policing?
  - What is in progress and within easy reach?
  - What does the future hold for progressive policing?
- Community conversations
  - Organization overview
  - Operational overview
  - Preparation, professional maintenance, and accountability
- Comments, questions, feedback

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE COUNT 2019 – 2021

Staffing Reductions 2019-2021
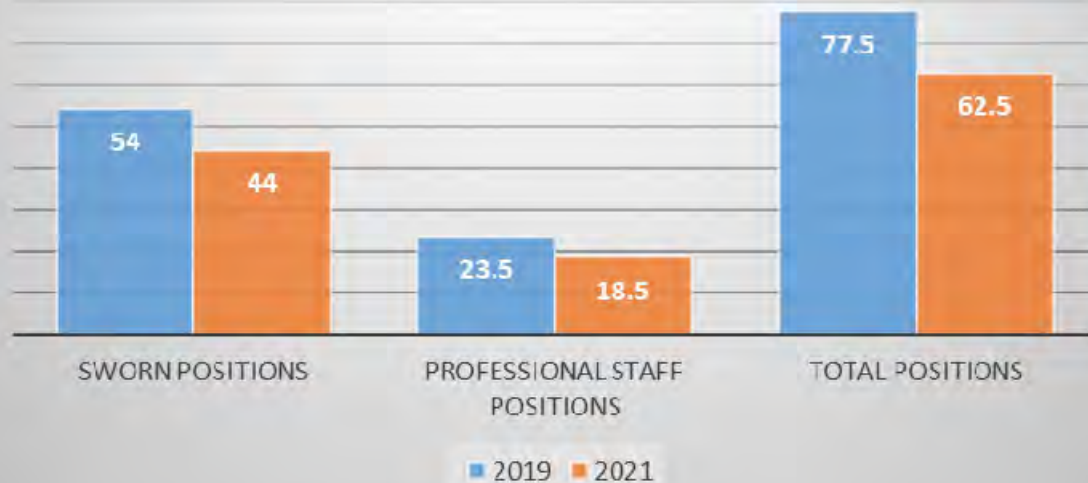
- **Sworn staff**
  Reduced 19% since 2020
  - Officers
  - Corporals
  - Sergeants
  - Commanders
  - Chief

- **Professional staff**
  Reduced 21% since 2020
  - Administrative staff
  - Civilian managers
  - Records
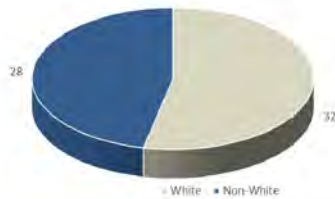 - Dispatch
  - Parking team
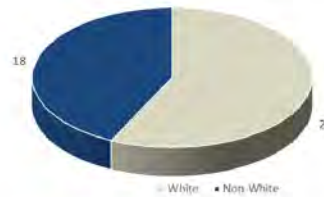
DEPARTMENT DIVERSITY SNAPSHOT

MENLO PARK COMMUNITY: WHITE 58%, OTHER ETHNICITIES (DIVERSE) 42%
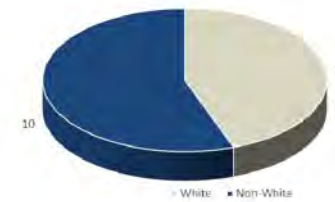
- US CENSUS BUREAU 2019

All MPPD Personnel
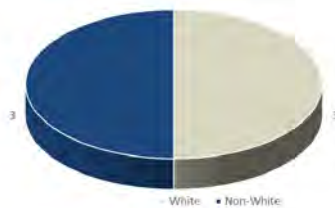47% Diverse, 30% Female
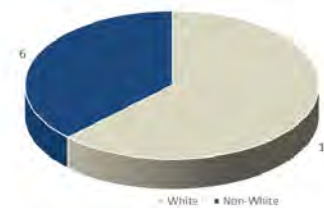
All Sworn
43% Diverse, 7% Female

Professional Staff
56% Diverse, 83% Female
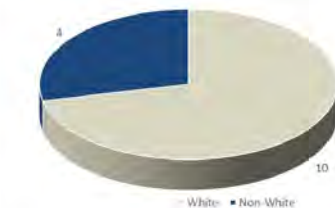
Command Staff
50% Diverse, 50% Female

Leadership Staff
38% Diverse, 38% Female

Ethnicity - Sergeants/Corporals
29% Diverse, 7% Female

WORKLOAD AT A GLANCE

	FY '16'-17	FY '17-'18	FY '18-19	FY '19-'20	FY '20-'21
Officer Initiated Calls	17,635	16,894	18,392	15,268	7,752
Public Initiated Calls	21,487	22,659	23,639	23,124	20,290
Total Incidents	39,122	39,553	42,031	38,392	28,042
Total Calls to Dispatch Center	44,076	42,261	42,708	43,432	48,899
911 Calls	10,179	10,580	11,110	10,468	8,749
Emergency Lines	5,040	4,577	4,608	3,978	3,225
Administrative Lines	28,857	27,104	26,990	28,986	36,925
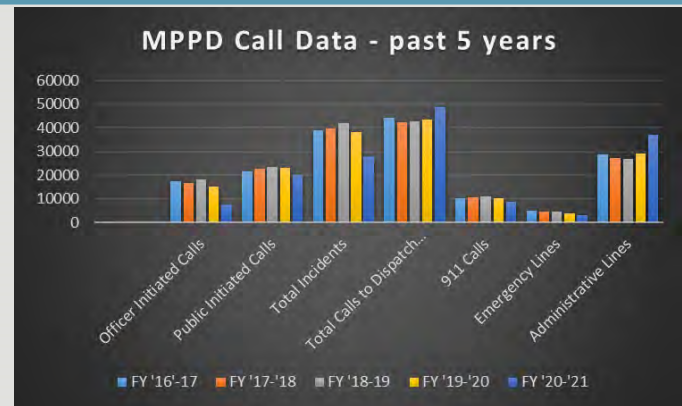
	FY '16'-17	FY '17-'18	FY '18-19	FY '19-'20	FY '20-'21
Total Reports Taken	3,985	3,677	3,596	3,411	2,440
Total Citations (Moving)	5,429	5,150	4,177	6,968	792
Total Arrests	1,298	1,097	1,122	1,051	583
Misdemeanor Arrests	1,096	927	938	873	449
Felony Arrests	202	173	184	178	134

MPPD Call Data - past 5 years

MPPD Reports, Arrests, Cites - past 5 years

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Crime Stats - past 5 years
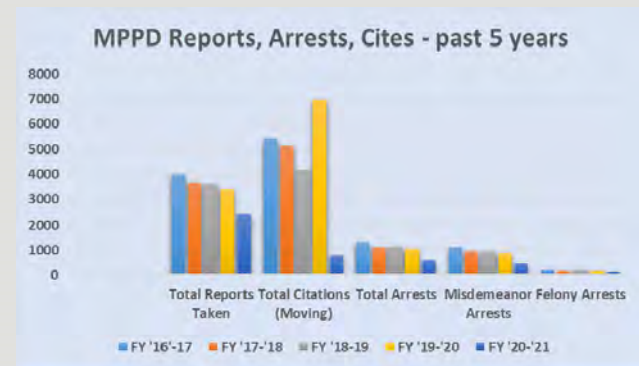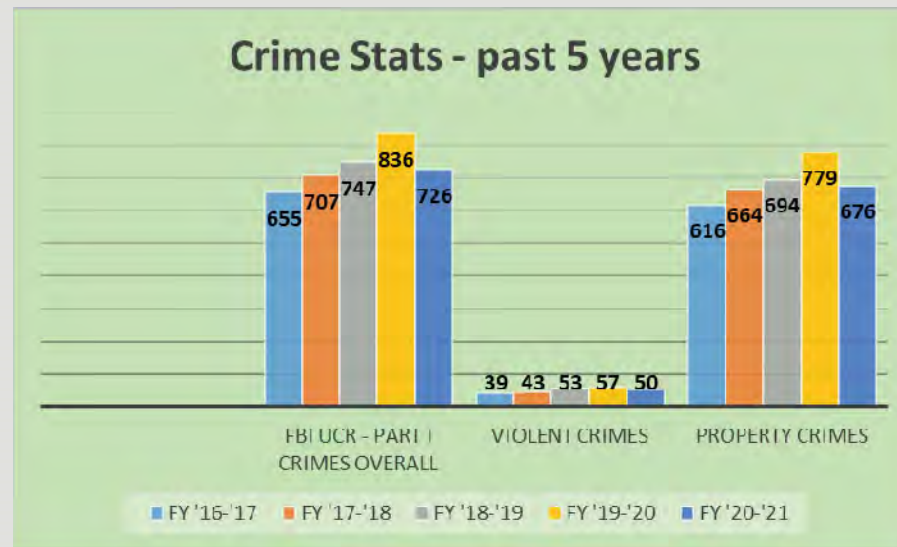
	FY '19-'20	FY '20-'21		% Change
Violent Crimes	57	50		-12.28%
Property Crimes	779	676		-13.22%
Totals	836	726		-13.16%

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CITY OF MENLO PARK

**USES OF FORCE TRACKED BY MPPD ARE THOSE MEETING THIS POLICY:**
300.5.1   NOTIFICATION TO SUPERVISORS
Supervisory notification shall be made as soon as practicable following the application of force in any of the following circumstances:
(a) The application caused a visible injury.
(b) The application would lead a reasonable officer to conclude that the individual may have experienced more than momentary discomfort.
(c) The individual subjected to the force complained of injury or continuing pain.
(d) The individual indicates intent to pursue litigation.
(e) Any application of a TASER device or control device.
(f) Any application of a restraint device other than handcuffs, shackles or belly chains.
(g) The individual subjected to the force was rendered unconscious.
(h) An individual was struck or kicked.
(i) An individual alleges any of the above has occurred.
*** Every use of force meeting this criteria <u>requires</u> a thorough review by Command Staff**

	2018	2019	2020
Taser	2	3	5
Physical Control	2	1	1
Pepper Spray	0	1	0
Total Uses of Force	4	5	6
Calls for Service	22,821	23,925	21,290

Uses of Force vs. Total Calls for Service

	2018	2019	2020
Total Uses of Force	4	5	6
Calls for Service	22,821	23,925	21,290

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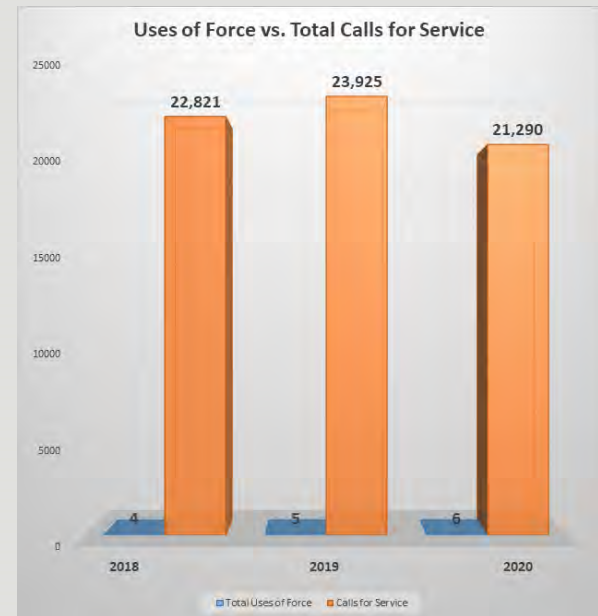
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Coffee with a Cop
- Meet the Chief
- Police Open House
- Friday Night Reads /
  Read with a Cop
- Paws for Paws
- Community Meetings / Town Halls
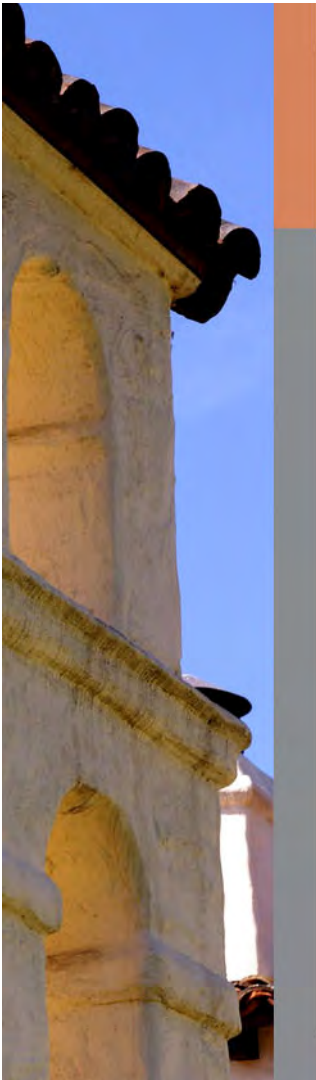- Special Olympics Torch Run
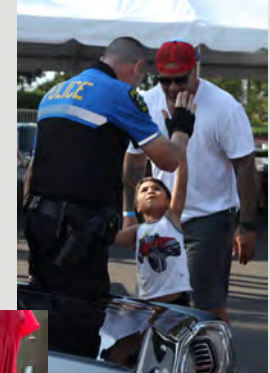
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Community Police Academy
- Neighborhood Watch / NNO
- K9 demonstrations
- Police Explorer Program
  - Annual Police Explorer Coat Drive
- Youth Police Academy
- School Resource Officer / Youth Engagement Programs

FIRST 100 DAYS
LEARNING THE ORGANIZATION

- Initial department staff meetings
  - One on One with every member of the organization
  - Review of budget and personnel
- Friday emails – communication
- Meetings with City Councilmembers
- Getting to know City Executive Team
- One-on-ones with community members
- Set structure for public meetings and Re-Imagining Public Safety conversations

First 100 Days 4/11/21 – 7/20/21
Organization-Wide 1:1's
Councilmember 1:1's
Coffee with Chief – All Districts
Begin connections with key community members and organizations
Review of Lexipol for Chief's Endorsement
Tasers Replaced with Taser 7s
ALPRs updated
Plan/Schedule Community Conversations – Re-Imagining Public Safety
Return of Traffic Unit – Revised Mission
Revise Mission of CRT
Review/Revise Min. Staffing in Patrol
Revise Corporal Job Description with added development outline
Apply to POST for TBW - Approved
Property Room Audit
Commit to 30x30 Campaign

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FIRST 100 DAYS
ASSESSMENT AND EARLY ADJUSTMENTS

- Policy Manual – committee
- Organization adjustments
- Identifying short-term needs
  - Return to normal workload post-pandemic
  - Data and web presence
  - Traffic
  - Promotional process
  - Staffing vacancies (immediate and near future)
  - Officer wellness and support

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# RE-IMAGINING PUBLIC SAFETY:
FOUR PARTS TO THE CONVERSATION

1. What City Council questions remain from the previous administration?

2. What is the Police Department doing now that meets some of these concerns, and what is planned for the immediate future?

3. What are some elements of progressive policing and police reform that are realistic in the near future?

4. What are some elements of progressive policing and police reform that bear further study and review, but may be implemented further into the future?

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QUESTIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL

- Data tracking – especially on stops, detentions, and use of force
- Trust concerns – profiling and over-policing
- Scope of reported racial bias – unreported issues?
- Complaint tracking and early warning systems
- Level of community engagement (by the City and Police Dept.)
- "Chief's Advisory Board" – accountability and transparency
- Body worn cameras – use, accountability and transparency
- Resource deployment and industry standards for police staffing
- Review / analysis of service delivery and alternatives – with quality assurance

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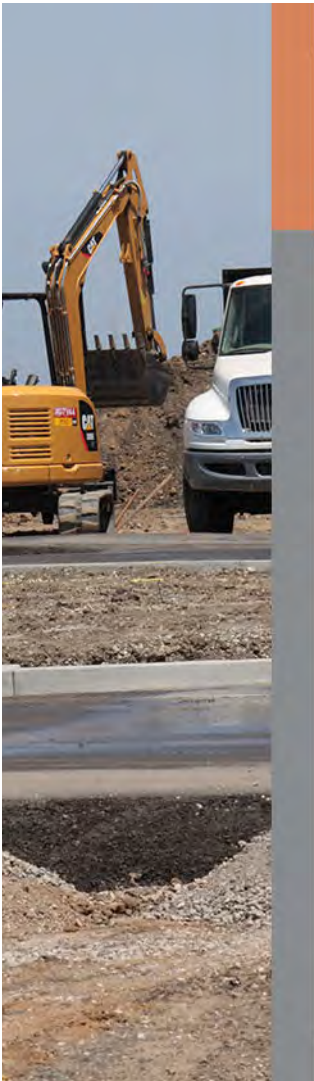
WHAT IS THE POLICE DEPARTMENT DOING RIGHT NOW?

- Publicly available policy manual – On the City Website
- Use of Force Policy - compliant with SB 230
  1. De-escalation, crisis intervention, alternatives to deadly force whenever feasible
  2. Use of Force must be proportional to seriousness of offense or perceived threat
  3. Requirement for officers to report perceived use of excessive force by other officers
  4. Clear and specific guidelines on drawing, pointing firearm
  5. Consider surroundings and bystanders to the extent possible
  6. Disclosure of public records in accordance with 832.7 PC (video release, etc.)
  7. Specific procedures for filing, investigation, and reporting of complaints regarding use of force
  8. Requirement and duty of officers to intercede when observing excessive use of force
  9. Comprehensive and specific guidelines for deadly force methods and devices
  10. Explicit instructions for officers to carry out duties (including use of force) in a fair, unbiased manner
  11. Comprehensive guidelines for the application of deadly force
  12. Detailed requirements for prompt internal reporting and notification in the agency and to the state as required
  13. Policy detailing the role of supervisors in the review of use of force
  14. Requirement for officers to promptly provide or facilitate medical aid when safe, following injurious uses of force
  15. Specific training standards and requirements for use of force for understanding and knowledge of officers, supervisors, and investigators
  16. Specific training and guidelines for vulnerable populations – children, elderly, disabled
  17. Specific guidelines regarding shooting at or from moving vehicles
  18. Factors for reviewing and evaluating all use of force events
  19. Minimum training standards required to fulfill objectives of the use of force policy
  20. Required regular periodic review and update of the policy

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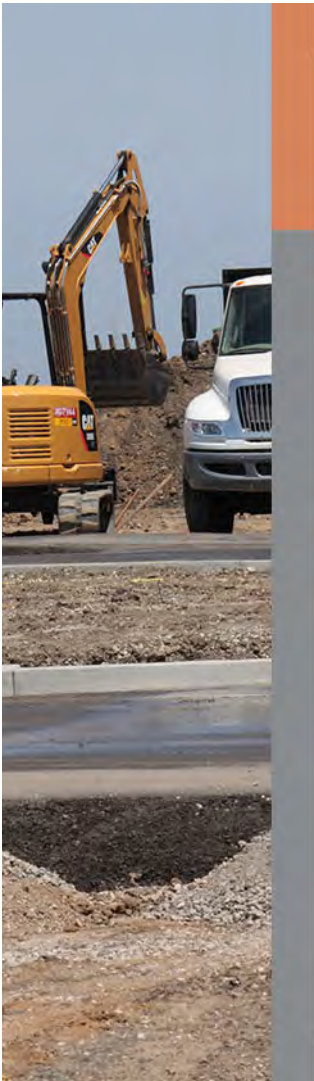
WHAT IS THE POLICE DEPARTMENT DOING RIGHT NOW?

- Perspective meetings with community
- Public records transparency
  - Open data portal
  - Daily activity log
  - Finding the right fit for the community…
- Community engagement – reinstating pre-pandemic practices
  - Community Conversations
- Workload study – staffing
- Transparency/website review

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PROGRESSIVE PUBLIC SAFETY - REALISTIC AND WITHIN REACH

- Transparency – Daily Activity, Public Dashboard
- Mitigating police response: mental health, homelessness calls
- Measures to reduce the need for police armed response
  - Community Service Officers and Code Enforcement
  - Online reporting
- Community-Police Advisory Team
  - Community centered, partnered with police
  - Transparent, Accountable

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PROGRESSIVE PUBLIC SAFETY – WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

- True alternative service delivery
- Alternatives to some traffic enforcement
- Alternative interventions (instead of arrest)
- Use of technology

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PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

> **SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND, THEN TO BE UNDERSTOOD.**
> STEPHEN COVEY

- Series of community conversations over the upcoming months
  - Provide you and our community with a department overview
  - Provide a forum for questions about current public safety strategies, and stimulate ideas about the future of public safety in Menlo Park

- Three sessions - covering our organization, operations, and accountability
  - Provide a better view of how the Police Department serves our community
  - Generate good questions from the public
  - Identify common goals

- Formation of Community-Police Advisory Team
  - Collaborative – Accountable – Transparent

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ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

- Staffing overview – Organization chart
- Operations – What each section of the department does - Mission
- Budget – how the budget addresses the department needs
  - Salaries
  - Operational costs
  - Training
- Workload
  - Calls for service
  - Proactive activity
  - Workload proportions and how they compare to the standards (ICMA)

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OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

- Traffic and parking
- Crime trends and crime control approach
- Public engagement and communications
- Special relationships (schools, institutions)
- Emergency planning / emergency operations
- Public transparency

PREPARATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Recruiting and hiring
- Training
  - From hiring to off probation
  - Continuous professional training
- Policy and oversight
- Complaint process
- Investigation of complaints and discipline

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THANK YOU

Agenda item   C1
Catherine Milton, resident

https://www.lawfareblog.com/measurement-matters-key-police-reform
The simple fact is that measurement affects performance, as it signals to the rank and file what the system values. Hence, what gets measured gets improved. What doesn't get measured, doesn't count. We all—citizens and police alike—need to understand that and then, together, choose new performance measures that reflect today's needs and aspirations. With that, when police fail, the public will know it is of the police officers' own doing and not because of a corruptible performance measurement system. And when the police succeed, the entire community can feel a part of it.

What might those measures be? If community values are to inform the answer, states and localities need the conversation they have long avoided. To help them come first to understanding and later to consensus on key issues, we suggest each community start with these questions:

What role does the community want the police to perform in today's society?
Are there roles being currently performed by the police that could be done better by others? If so, who would take on those roles?
Can the community experiment with different approaches before making operational decisions? Perhaps have social workers in some precincts and not in others to see if one approach serves the public better than another? Can these approaches be set up and monitored to produce evidence-based results?
As the police role becomes clearer, how can police departments recruit, select, train, assign and promote officers so that they meet society's revamped needs?
How are police departments going to measure police performance and support the results?
Can police departments create a system to identify officers who, with help, will become effective members of the department and provide them with additional coaching or training, therapeutic services, disability "time-outs" and the like, so that each officer who wants to improve has the chance to do so?
Can policymakers and police departments create a system to identify officers who have made clear by their conduct and approach to the community that policing is not their calling? Can policymakers and police departments also make it easy for these officers to leave policing totally without precluding another career for them? Can the community also agree on clear rules for behaviors that absolutely, if proved, will lead to dismissal?
What can police unions do to increase respect for policing and the officers who do it?
In addition to measuring police officer performance, what will be the measures of police department success? Do the two measurement systems reinforce each other?
How can government managers support police efforts to coordinate with other agencies to build on those agencies' skills?
How are government managers going to measure and report on the effectiveness of this coordination so that the community knows how well the police and other agencies are providing the services the community wants?

Agenda item   C1
Anonymous, resident

I'm writing over a concern about the fact that the baseball field has been locked up in Nealon park for a while now (at least a month). The park has restricted the field's access to the public, except for a few baseball coaches that are utilizing it for their own personal activities - just the other day we ran into a person who was practicing with his daughter. We believe this is very unfair to the residents, who pay taxes to access and use the public spaces. It is a bit ridiculous to have a big, open space sitting empty all day when it can be enjoyed by others.

Agenda item   C1
Soody Tronson, resident

Comments re Public Safety-7/29/2021
Dear Council and Chief Norris.
Thank you for holding this session which has long been overdue. Chief Norris welcome to Menlo Park and we eagerly look forward to your progressive reforms.
I offer the following comments/questions in the interest of moving forward as a community.
1.   City Council Questions. Can you please provide these questions before the meeting so we can all be better prepared?
2.   Police Reform
2.1.   What current police reforms being discussed by our legislative bodies does Menlo Park support, e.g., AB-655, SB2, AB 392, AB 230
2.2.   Timeline for implementation. If some of the reform cannot be implemented now, please provide reasoning as to why not?
3.   Police Department Size.
3.1.   What police to resident ratio ("service population") does Menlo Park believes to be the best the city, given its demographics and data? Please elaborate.
3.2.   Factors in determining ratio. In determining the police to 'service population' ratio, what comparable data can be offered, beyond population size (e.g., demographics, "crime" rate, and nature of "crime.")
3.3.   Police Budget. How can we find out the breakdown of police budget? What portion of the budget is spent on military-style gear? Do you think, even if it were given for "free" there is a need for military gear in Menlo Park?
4.   Data.
4.1.   Public Initiated Calls. Can you please provide a breakdown by type of calls and the nature of their seriousness, and resolution?
4.2.   To decrease the live time spent for non-serious calls, can some of these calls be triaged via a web-portal based on urgency?
4.3.   As to moving citations, and in particular, data regarding late night DUI related accidents, how many are linked to drivers coming from local and newly built hotels?
4.4.   Total Arrests. For these reports, it'd be most helpful if the same data also included a breakdown of sub-categories of misdemeanor and felony arrests?
4.5.   It would be more useful for analysis, if the arrest numbers were linked to demographics of the arrestee and the neighborhood in which the arrests were made?
4.6.   Crime Type. Can you please breakdown by type of crime for each of violent or property?
4.7.   Studies on the effectiveness of police at reducing crime are limited by the fact that crime rates: (1) do not necessarily measure what we care about directly (violence or harm); and (2) are measured by police departments who can — and do — have a vested interest in reporting the crime data.
4.8.   Crime trends. To understand crime trends, we need to understand the definition of "crime"?
4.9.   How many of each crime type is related to a mental health crisis? And if available, was it an organic mental health or situational?
4.10.   Traffic Stops. Having reviewed the MPPD data (Excel sheet) on stops, only a very small percentage have resulted in any action (I'm not complaining about that aspect). It does, however, raise a question as to why these stops are happening, where are they happening, and to whom they are happening? Are we looking to make stops? This will provide a better profile for these stops.
4.11.   Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory (RIPA) Board 2021 Annual Report. Menlo Park was not included in the Wave 1 and Wave 2 of the list of the cities. I understand that pursuant to the Racial and Identity Profiling Act in 2015 (RIPA, Assembly Bill 953), as of January 2022, San Mateo County Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) must be ready to collect and report the RIPA.
4.12.   In July 2020 (Staff Report 20-150-CC), Menlo Park approved the purchase of the software. Has this program been started already? Will this data be provided to the public real time as it is collected?
4.13.   Separate and distinct from the bias in policing, there is bigger underlying problem. Crime stats only reflect what is defined as a "crime" which is a political decision. Who is policed and punished for crime is both a political and police decision. Not all crime is violence, not all violence is crime. Will Menlo Park commit to a deeper review of this issue?
5.   stop data Definitions
5.1.   "Reasonable Officer" standard can be quite biased. In particular, since this is after the fact, should this standard for reporting not be based on a "Reasonable Person" (not officer)?
5.2.   Momentary Discomfort. While a "discomfort" may be momentarily, the consequence may not be. From whose perspective is this momentarily discomfort is being analyzed: the actor or the subject?
6.   Bias
6.1.   According to the MPPD, 3 "technologies" are used for Surveillance: Automated License Plate Readers, Public Safety Camera System, Body Worn Cameras. In the first two cases, reference is made to their use to "combat crime and specifically address residents' concern over gang violence." Can the City provide data on how many residents have expressed concerns over gang violence and what is the level of gang violence in Menlo Park?
6.2.   Are the above, the only 3 technologies used by Menlo Park? According to a 2013 article in the Almanac, the City planned to add "ShotSpotter" to its surveillance tools. In a recently published investigative report, ShotSpotter has been caught altering evidence from gunshot-detecting AI. Is Menlo Park using "ShotSpotter"?

6.3.   Some cities, like Portola Valley, are using license plate readers from Vigilant Solutions which reports the data to ICE. What company does Menlo Park use for its license plate readers and does that company provide that data to ICE?
7.   Public records transparency
7.1.   Will Menlo Park provide transparency as to complaints and also not hiring people with bad records in other cities and jurisdictions?
7.2.   What does "Finding the right fit for the community" mean?
8.   Community-Police Advisory Team
8.1.   What are the criteria and selection process for this Advisory Team?
8.2.   Have they ever produced any reports or advice? Where can we find their reports?
9.   Community engagement
9.1.   To help the food-insecured and the un-housed, can the City work with restaurants to provide safe means of distributing the surplus food to the people in need in a dignified manner? This type of work will create a lot more good will than any community coffee session.

Thank you
Soody Tronson
Menlo Park Resident.

LINKS

https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/ripa/ripa-board-report-2021.pdf

http://www.sanmateocourt.org/documents/grand_jury/2020/RIPA.pdf

https://menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/View/25679/F2-20200714-CC-Institutionalized-bias-reform

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Agenda item   C1
Anonymous, resident

I wanted to voice my support for the work that the Council is doing to further progressivise the police force. I do feel, however, that we should be careful to not get complacent, progressive police forces can still enforce bad law or enact abuse. I encourage the City to reduce the number of officers and offset it with increased mental health professionals, while maintaining an effective bureaucratic law enforcement system. I also encourage the disarming of sworn officers wherever possible, to prevent dangerous and negative situations where people can get hurt. Traffic officers, in particular, are good candidates for disarmament. Finally, I very strongly encourage the investigation and implementation of non-arrest interventions, which can have significant positive effects on the lives of people who interact with the justice system. I also encourage increased focus and spending on evidence-based crime prevention models, such as drug treatment, education, and opportunity. I know our city is small, but I hope we can set an example for a healthy and happy community with a minimal police force, that serves as a good opportunity for all. Thank you.

Agenda item   C1
Soody Tronson, resident

Dear Council –

Following up to my previously-submitted questions, I would like to offer some comments as the City imagines strategies and budget allocations. The comments are not offered because of Menlo Park specifically, rather as they relate to the general trend and future action.

Warm regards

Soody Tronson

Menlo Park Resident

_____

It's time to recognize that decades of pouring more money, resources, and legitimacy into policing in an effort to increase safety have failed — because policing is functioning as it is intended to: to contain, control, and criminalize Black and Brown, and the economically disadvantaged communities rather than to prevent and reduce violence. It's time to invest in meeting community needs and building non-police community safety strategies. It's time to invest in just recovery.

As police budgets and legitimacy are being challenged by movements to defund police and invest in community safety, police and politicians are predictably pulling out their biggest guns: crime statistics that they create, control, and conflate with threats to our wellbeing.

Rather than focusing on the root causes of increased violence — an unprecedented global pandemic and economic crisis, skyrocketing gun sales, and increased pressure on communities already pushed to the brink of survival, the symptoms are being used to justify pouring more and more resources into policing instead of into community-based safety strategies and ensuring a just recovery.

Yet the stats and studies don't show that police prevent, stop, or resolve violence. They also don't support the claim that community demands to divest from policing and invest in community safety through campaigns to defund the police are responsible for any increase in violence. They also conveniently fail to account for the violence police contribute. They certainly don't prove that police address violence more effectively than other less violent and expensive approaches.

5 EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES TO STOP VIOLENCE, drawn from John Jay Research Advisory Group on Preventing and Reducing Community Violence, Reducing Violence Without Police: A Review of Research Evidence.[i]

1) IMPROVE THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Place-based interventions that are structural, scalable, and sustainable have been shown to reduce violence and many strategies are economically viable. Increasing the prevalence of green space in a neighborhood, improving the quality of neighborhood buildings and housing, and creating public spaces with ample lighting suitable for pedestrian traffic can be cost-effective ways of decreasing community violence.

2) STRENGTHEN ANTI-VIOLENCE NORMS AND PEER RELATIONSHIP

Programs such as Cure Violence and Advance Peace view violence as a consequence of social norms spread by peer networks and social relationships. Outreach workers, a key part of these interventions, form supportive and confidential relationships with individuals at the highest risk of becoming perpetrators or victims of violence, connecting them with social resources and working to shift their behavior and attitudes toward non-violence. Evaluations suggest these programs may help reduce neighborhood violence.

3) ENGAGE AND SUPPORT YOUTH

Violence prevention and reduction strategies must include a priority on young people, focusing on protective factors as well as risk factors. Strategies that add structure and opportunities for youth have been shown to decrease their involvement in violent crime. Youth employment, job mentorship and training, educational supports, and behavioral interventions can improve youth outcomes and reduce violence. Some of these strategies require relatively costly individualized therapeutic interventions, but others focused on work and school have been associated with cost- efficient reductions in violence.

4) DECRIMINALIZATION AND TREATMENT

Numerous studies show that interventions to reduce harmful substance abuse are associated with lower rates of community violence, and not all strategies involve treatment. One study found that decriminalization reduced sexual assault, robbery, and burglary, another that a dollar spent on (civilian) drug treatment may cut crime by almost $4, gains that far exceed those of policing without the attendant social costs, and with a host of other social benefits. Violence prevention must include a focus on drug decriminalization, and treatment.

5) MITIGATE FINANCIAL STRESS

Violence is more prevalent where residents face severe and chronic financial stress. Timely, direct, and targeted financial assistance can help to reduce rates of violence. Financial stability and economic opportunities help to reduce crime. People experiencing negative income shocks are less inclined to behave violently when they receive timely financial assistance.

WHO STOPS VIOLENCE? VIOLENCE INTERRUPTERS

Violence interrupters are credible messengers and respected community members who conduct daily outreach to their communities, de-escalate, prevent and intervene in potentially violent situations, and respond after the fact to prevent escalation and retaliation.

For example, evaluation studies in cities across the country showed promising results for the CURE Violence model, which combines violence interruption strategies rooted in public health and support to individuals.[ii]

BRIEF BACKGROUND

In the face of decades-long evidence confirms that police are not particularly effective at preventing, interrupting or solving crime — because that has never been their true function — police departments have focused on "improving police-community relations" in an effort to boost their ever-increasing budget. They have also worked to increase the status and legitimacy of tasks unrelated to preventing or intervening in or resolving violence — like "order maintenance, social service and general assistance duties" and "educational, recreational, and even counseling services." [iii]

This explains why police are reluctant to let go of functions such as responding to mental health crises, homeless "outreach," and youth engagement programs — because they know that retaining control of these functions is key to keeping their jobs and their budgets.

According to the John Jay Research Advisory Group on Preventing and Reducing Community Violence, "Community violence is more prevalent in neighborhoods where residents face severe and chronic financial stress."[iv] As outlined in the recommendations of the COVID19 Policing Project's latest report, investment of funds in direct support and community-based safety strategies, toward a just recovery, instead of doubling down on policing, is more likely to produce lasting public safety.[v]

For example, politicians invested only $160 million of funds cut from police budgets in community-based safety strategies, falling far short of what is needed to relieve economic and social pressures on communities that drive both violence and increases in criminalized activities.15 Addressing rising rates of violence requires deep investments in meeting our communities' economic and social needs and in community-based violence prevention and interruption programs — NOT more policing.[vi]

THE BIGGER CONVERSATION

It is also important to note that politicians are loose with the language, conflating homicides, "violent crime," and crime – which are not the same things. Homicides represent the number of people killed by another person — and do not include deaths resulting from poverty, corporate neglect or climate catastrophes, for instance. "Violent crime" is a subjective term that can include acts of violence against people or property. Additionally, statistics on rates of "violent crime" often don't include police violence, or the significant amount of violence that is never reported to police. And, what is deemed a "crime" is a product of social, political and police decisions, and doesn't necessarily involve violence of any kind. In cases where harm or violence do occur, crime data can still distort. For example, homicide statistics include shootings but also deaths by other means, such as someone killed in a car accident by a reckless driver. Yet when we hear that homicides are going up, we think only of intentional killings by a stranger. And, homicide statistics don't include other preventable deaths caused by things like lack of access to medical treatment, pollution, evictions and foreclosures.

Even within what is defined as crime, police focus on certain types of "crimes" while ignoring other criminalized activity — such as tax evasion, financial fraud, and drug use and distribution by wealthy people and white college students.

Crime rates usually only reflect violations of the law that: (1) people have reported to police; (2) that police choose to report; and (3) that resulted in an arrest.[vii] So the vast majority of violence is not counted as crime — because most people who experience violence don't report it, because police don't act on or report it, and because a great deal of violence, including police violence, is not criminalized. According to the Vera Institute, less than 5% of the 10 million arrests made annually are for what are described as "violent crime."[viii]

[i] John Jay College Research Advisory Group on Preventing and Reducing Community Violence (2020). Reducing Violence Without Police: A Review of Research Evidence. New York, NY: Research and Evaluation Center, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York. The authors of this document do not support the recommendations made in the John Jay report focused on increasing surveillance, involuntary demolition of public housing, partnerships between violence interrupters and law enforcement, mandated treatment or enforced sobriety, "workfare" (imposing work requirements as a condition of receiving social entitlements), or increasing "trust" and legitimacy of systems of policing and punishment.

[ii] Butts JA, Roman CG, Bostwick L, Porter JR. Cure violence: a public health model to reduce gun violence. Annu Rev Public Health. 2015 Mar 18;36:39-53. doi: 10.1146/annurev-publhealth-031914-122509. Epub 2015 Jan 7. PMID: 25581151.

[iii] Kenneth Novak, Brad Smith, Gary Cordner and Roy Roberg, Police & Society, 7th ed. (Oxford University Press 2017), 110, 111

[iv] John Jay College Research Advisory Group on Preventing and Reducing Community Violence (2020). Reducing Violence Without Police: A Review of Research Evidence. New York, NY: Research and Evaluation Center, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, City University of New York

[v] Michael D. Shear and Zolan Kanno-Youngs, "Walking a fine line, Biden balances confronting crime and supporting police reform," New York Times, July 12, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/07/12/us/joe-biden-news/biden-gun-violence; Community Resource Hub COVID19 Policing Project, Divesting from Pandemic Policing and Investing in a Just Recovery, May 2021, available at: https://communityresourcehub.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Unmasked_Up- date.pdf

[vi] Interrupting Criminalization, The Demand is Still Defund the Police, Fund the People, Defend Black Lives, January 2021, available at bit.ly/DefundPoliceUpdate; BYP100, Center for Popular Democracy, Law for Black Lives, Freedom to Thrive: Reimagining Safety & Security in Our Communities, available at: https://static1. squarespace.com/static/5500a55ae4b05a69b3350e23/t/595cf69b1b631b031e0542a5/1499264677929/Freedom+to+Thrive+Web.pdf

[vii] Andrea J. Ritchie and Beth E. Richie, The Crisis of Criminalization: A Call for a Comprehensive Philanthropic Response, available at: http://bcrw.barnard.edu/ wp-content/nfs/reports/NFS9-Challenging-Criminalization-Funding-Perspectives.pdf

[viii] Vera Institute, Arrest Trends, 2018, available at: https://arresttrends.vera.org/arrests

Agenda item   C1
Douglas Bui, resident

Please define "progressive policing" not only by definition but also by examples.

Agenda item   C1
Douglas Bui, resident

Please define "progressive policing" including examples of the definition.

Thank You