



SPD North Precinct Advisory Council

Expanding Communication between the Police and Community

MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES November 3, 2021

Recorded by Nancy Rauhauser

Please share this information with your neighbors, neighborhood organizations and business organizations.

The monthly NPAC meeting began at 7:02 p.m. with Andrea Perr presiding.

Topics covered:

1. Special Presentation Speaker: Nicole Macri, Deputy Director for Strategy, Downtown Emergency Services Center (DESC), and 43rd District Representative in the WA State Legislature
 - a. Nicole has been in the legislature 5.5 years, and 19 years at DESC.
 - b. DESC website: <https://www.desc.org/>, Nicole's contact info:
 - i. At DESC: nmacri@desc.org
 - ii. In legislature: nicole.macri@leg.wa.gov
 - c. DESC's mission is to help people with the complex needs of homelessness, substance use disorders, and serious mental illness achieve their highest potential for health and well-being through comprehensive services, treatment, and housing.
 - d. It has state-licensed mental health & substance use disorder treatment programs, does street outreach & crisis response, operates emergency shelters & permanent supportive housing apartments, outpatient mental health care & more.
 - e. Several sites provide emergency, temporary housing that is not as transient as emergency shelters. They provide a stable environment, on-site 24 hour services, case management, meals, mental health services, etc. for a couple weeks or months until permanent supportive housing available.
 - f. Bought 8-9 hotels in Seattle for its Health Through Housing, 2 of them in North Precinct, 141st & Aurora and 130th & Stone Way, to provide permanent supportive housing.
 - g. Mobile Crisis Team upon referrals by crisis responders, first responders (SPD & SFD) help people experiencing a behavioral health crisis, including mental health &/or substance use crisis.
 - h. Seattle is working to open more housing in 2022, but it is in very short supply right now.
 - i. DESC intersects with SPD a lot, but some unclear legislation this summer regarding police accountability has reduced the interactions

- i. SPD used to respond to crisis calls, and would help get people experiencing mental health crises involuntarily to a facility.
- ii. HB 1310 constrains SPD's use of force unless there's imminent threat of harm to self or others.
- iii. SB 5051 sets up an officer certification process and lays out cause for decertification.
- iv. Officers feel they can't force people (touching them) because in many cases the aforesaid threat doesn't exist. SPD 1310 is unclear and officers don't want to risk decertification by being disciplined for excessive use of force.
- v. SPD agrees that crisis calls are better handled by mental health providers.
- vi. WA legislature in 2022 will clarify the intent of the laws and push for more robust efforts to respond to behavioral health crises.

- j. Only two entities can involuntarily commit people - SPD and King Co. crisis responders, both of which are understaffed. There are talks of letting other types of professionals do this, such as EMTs, fire dept, etc.
 - i. Currently there is a lack of resources for involuntary (civil) commitment.
 - ii. It is governed by the WA Involuntary Treatment Act (ITA).
 - iii. There's a backlog of 100-120 referrals for assessment in King County. The backlog, making response to a crisis inadequate, results in some people in crisis escalating and then committing crimes, which can result in criminal commitment.
- k. Until more resources are brought on board for behavioral health issues:
 - i. Continue calling 911 any time, or 211 daytime.
 - ii. Also officers can refer people to the DESC Mobile Crisis Team.
 - iii. WA is setting up a 988 crisis response phone line. It should be up and running in 2023.
- l. The whole system of responses to behavioral health needs reform, including who responds to what and increasing resources. What is NOT wanted is a system that broadens government's ability to take away civil rights - getting care earlier in a crisis will help avoid involuntary commitment.
- m. People in crisis on meth are challenging. When providers contact them, they are sometimes not responsive, or uncooperative. Treatments are not as clear as opioids, and there is no medication to treat this addiction.
- n. Legislative solutions -
 - i. Need strategic investment in behavioral health, and reforms to the crisis response system.
 - ii. State money is given to King Co in a lump sum to fund everything and there's little left over for crisis response.
 - iii. Medicaid needs to be resourced better so it can provide ongoing care so people don't fall into crisis.

2. Crime Prevention Coordinator: vacant

- a. Selected candidate is still awaiting a background check. The background unit has a big backlog and is prioritizing sworn officer background checks.

3. City Attorney's Office (CAO): Meagan Westphal
 - a. The City of Seattle v. Long case was heard by the WA Supreme Court and it was ruled that vehicles being lived in, while they can still be impounded, they cannot be auctioned off if the owner can't pay. This is leading to few impoundments. SDOT enforces parking, so if you have complaints about parked vehicles, contact SDOT via the FindIt-FixIt app.
 - b. Everspring Motel has been open since September and has virtually no 911 calls. SPD patrols there as it's able. It is subject to a 2 year correction agreement, and is being monitored by SPD, SFD, Construction Dept and Health Dept.
 - c. Municipal Court is still dealing with a big backlog of misdemeanor cases due to the pandemic closures. It's back to 75% capacity, and jury trials have resumed, but it will take a long time to get through the backlog. Currently being heard are cases from early 2020. At this time, the city is not hiring attorneys or judges to help clear the backlog. The City Attorney elected on Nov 2 could possibly make some direction changes.
4. King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (KCPAO): Nami Kim
 - a. KC felony trials are now running after stoppages during the pandemic. KC got some Covid funding to hire professional staff and judges to help clear the backlog. There are 20 felony trials going now, and these are for people in custody for the most serious crimes, such as homicide and child abuse
 - b. The therapy dog has been taken over by Homicide, and a new dog is being procured for Child Abuse.
5. Business
 - a. NPAC board is looking for a volunteer to keep an eye on City Council meetings/legislation related to SPD/public safety and report back to NPAC so we can decide whether to write advocacy letters, send someone to comment at a meeting, etc. If you are interested, please write spd.npac@gmail.com
 - b. NPAC is collecting socks for SPD's Community Service Officers to take to some organizations and to give out on service calls. Please consider donating new socks (hats and gloves ok, too) by November 16. *Please see attached flyer for dropoff locations.*
6. North Precinct's new Captain Kevin Grossman introduces himself:
 - a. Been in SPD 25 years, 6 years North Precinct (NP) patrol, in 2017 was NP watch captain, lived in NP 2 decades, glad to be back in NP.
 - b. He agrees with Nicole Macri's explanation of the SPD dilemma in crisis responses. Officers want to do the right thing, but not sure how to do it and also avoid decertification. Even with more social services outside SPD, SPD officers will always need to be trained in handling behavioral crises, but in the future shouldn't be needed in non-violent calls.
 - c. NP's immediate concern is 25% reduction in staff from a year ago. Role of SPD in different types of public service calls is under discussion by city council, etc. but for now SPD continues to respond to all the types it traditionally has.
 - d. Another NP concern is the number of 911 calls having to be put on hold for

dispatching due to staffing issues. The non-emergency phone line now has a recording. Captain is very concerned about this collapse of the public safety net.

- e. Also concerned about the national and local skyrocketing trend of gun and violent crimes. In NP shots fired are up 47% in the last 12 months.
- f. Captain will be pushing for NP to be divided into two, to make 2 smaller precincts, and 2 precinct buildings. Traffic makes it hard to respond quickly in the large precinct. The current building is inadequate, even with staffing down 25%.

7. North Precinct Update: Lt. Joe Osborne

- a. North Precinct crime stats (all year-to-date compared to 2020 year-to-date):
 - i. NP crime is down 3% (citywide crime is up 7%)
 - ii. Aggravated assault up 33%
 - iii. Arson up over 50%
 - iv. Robbery up 2%
 - v. Vehicle theft is down 2% (1476 stolen ytd)
 - vi. Burglary down 14%
 - vii. All theft up 2%
- b. Emphasis patrols being deployed for shots fired to increase visibility of SPD as a deterrent. Side effect on Aurora corridor is less prostitution.
- c. A recent death in Ballard Commons was natural, not criminal. SPD is investigating the death near Interbay; looks like it is not a threat to the community. Hit and run accident in Greenlake is being investigated.

8. Open Forum/Questions

- a. Rudy invites anyone who wants to, to join him to meet with SPD Chief Diaz in the Aurora Corridor. Meet Monday, November 15, 3:00 pm at Emerald City Smoothie, 9881 Aurora Ave N.
- b. Since NP's new Crime Prevention Coordinator is not on board yet, we can contact CPC Jennifer.Danner@seattle.gov, for the time being. Hopefully in the next couple months our CPC will begin work. And NP is authorized to get a second CPC; the job description has been published.
- c. There is no word of the Community Service Officer teams being moved out of SPD and into the new Community Safety and Communications Center.

9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 1, 2021, 7:00 pm

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.