

Lawrenceville-Wide Public Safety Meeting

Meeting Notes

Officer Davis: Thank you everyone for being in attendance. At the Block Watches each month I provide crime stats and safety tips as well as a Q&A. Very similar to tonight. Hope to see everyone at the Block Watches because we want to increase attendance and there's a lot of valuable information. Crime has no border – it can spread to any area. Something that happens in the 6th Ward could happen in the 9th Ward or 10th Ward.

Dr. Heath Johnson: These are not the finalized numbers, so want to make the caveat, but this gives a general sense. All comparisons are for the first 11 months of the year. Want to stress that these are not the finalized numbers. I'm Dr. Heath Johnson, I do the stats – not a police officer. Happy to answer any questions about numbers, but procedures should be covered by police or public safety director.

Will talk about Part 1 crimes and Part 2, split on severity. Part 1 are more serious and are split into violent and property crimes. Robbery is anytime something gets taken by force – a gun for instance. Burglary is when a property has been broken into. Combined all census tracts in Lawrenceville for the purposes of this presentation. Expecting a big increase in population in the next census. 10% increase in total crime in 2018 compared to 2017; however, compared to a 5 year average, it's a 11% decrease. There's been a steady decline over past 5 years but a slight uptick in 2018. 25% decrease in 2018 in violent crime compared to 2017, and 51% decrease compared to 5 year average. Property crimes however paint a different story. Burglaries and thefts were the big uptick. Most of the thefts were thefts from auto and is a big trend across the City, not just Lawrenceville. Something the police are well aware of and officers are making good arrests around, but it's a trend that continues.

Part 2 crimes have decreased again, slightly. Would've expected this to go up along with property crimes, but that didn't happen. Often property crimes and part 2 crimes occurs with a neighborhood improving, because there's more stuff worth stealing in the neighborhood.

In comparison with the rest of the City, Lawrenceville's Part 1 crime rate is 32 per 1,000, which is much lower than Zone 2 and about even with the City overall. The total crime rate per 1,000 is about half of Zone 2, and lower than City of Pittsburgh. Crime often occurs in business districts and follows where more people are. Heat map in Lawrenceville follows Butler Street – biggest heat area was around 40th and Butler, which isn't that surprising. 911 calls follow similar trend.

Slight detour to address opioid overdose crisis, which is affecting all communities. Lawrenceville had 11 known overdoses this year. City-wide, we saw exponential increase leading up to 2017. In 2018, saw less than half the previous year – still big, but it's lower even than 2016 as well. Too soon to say the reasons. Probably has a lot to do with availability of Narcan and it being administered more widely. Unfortunately, the fatal overdoses didn't drop as much as survivable overdoses.

In conclusion, violent crime is down. Property crime is up, and that caused the total crime to go up, but it's still lower than the 5 year average. Crime is located along the business corridor, which is no surprise. Overdoses are down by half.

Question: What is a burglary? – Breaking and entering with the intent to take something.

You mentioned vehicle thefts – saw this on my alley. Noticed with my surveillance that people continually check doors. Every time my neighbor had something stolen, they left the doors open. – Yes, this is definitely a crime of opportunity. Locking your doors is one of the easiest things to do to prevent these thefts. Theft of actual auto is same thing: it's cold out now and people warm up your car, but we see a lot of vehicle thefts from people driving away when a car is being warmed up while the person isn't there.

Det. Malloy: A lot of the thefts and burglaries, it's an unsecured residence or an unsecured vehicle. A lot of the residential burglaries, some of the houses were unsecured. Leaving windows open when it's nice out gives criminals an opportunity. Were able to get a confession from someone out of 4 burglaries, even though we know he did more. But we take all the evidence and drop it into the system in case anything else pops up, we can pin the DNA on the person – this is very time consuming and the funding isn't always there, but it takes time and the statute of limitations picks it up on the end, so we can often charge. Saw a lot of targeting of vacant houses that are under construction: taking contractor's tools. Contractors started getting smart and initialing or monogramming their tools, so we can check pawn sheets and communicate to other municipalities to see if it's turned up. Have wrapped up cases with joint efforts with other municipalities. In some of the residential burglaries, they were known actors where the homeowners knew who did it, so those made those cases fairly easy. 603: 6 businesses, 11 residential. One was an apartment with a community garage where he went in and took 3 bicycles. 3 were unoccupied. One residential was known actor and a couple were criminal intent – attempted to gain entrance but didn't. 901: 4 business, 1 residential. 902: 7 residential, 2 contractors – 2 known actors. 1011: 1 business, 2 residential (unoccupied), 3 residential with known actors. Made 5 separate arrests, some of them were for multiple burglaries – not 100% clear rate, but it's pretty good. Video surveillance is key for us. Can still give us video even if neighbor doesn't file a police report. All gets filed. Thefts from vehicles it's big. Hit and run, unattended – it's a tight neighborhood.

Question: Michael Linn – Regarding burglaries, best deterrence I've noticed is dogs, surveillance – gotta get a good camera, do your homework. I have a Lorex, which has a night vision. – motion detected is really helpful so you don't have to look through all the footage, can just lock in on it. Ring is not a bad picture either. Helped solve a case last month through it.

Director Hissrich: We had a press conference yesterday with the Chief, Assistant Chiefs, Commanders. Violent crimes as far as shootings fatal and non-fatal went down considerably. Credit that to several things: staffing of police officers over the last 3 years progressively gone up (running between 850 and 900 – goal is to have 900 on the street) – provides more detectives, more neighborhood resource officers that are consistent day to day within the community that the public can go to and is a familiar face and can trust that officer; second thing is downtown substation – just opened a Northview Heights sub-station as well; most importantly is to get public to help us and establish relationships where people

will come forward with information. Please call 911 for any kind of crime – if you see something, say something. On EMS, we settled with the medics and EMTs with a new contract – going from 8 hour shift to 12 hour shift – means our units will be 24 hours per day to gain increased units at night to allow quicker response time and improved morale. Working more hours but have more days off. Finally, in regards to technology, the Shot Spotter system has increased from 3 sq miles to 18 sq miles. Cameras have almost doubled – Dan Shak handles this. We don't call them surveillance cameras, we call them security cameras because we're not spying on people. When we inherited, more than 35% were inoperable or useless. Dan Shak helped lead to 89% cameras are operable. Cameras will automatically move in response to Shot Spotter. Shot Spotter has helped us identify where shots are happening but that we didn't know about it because there weren't 911 calls – has saved a lot of lives to get medics out immediately when 911 isn't called. Have a long way to go, even in Lawrenceville with the property crime increase. Turn over now to Dan Shak to improve technology in Lawrenceville.

Dan Shak: Good evening, I'm the public safety technology officer for the City of Pittsburgh. Will talk tonight about the public safety camera system and the Shot Spotter system. Shot Spotter: acoustic technology that detects gunfire. Within 45 seconds, notice is given to police agency to respond faster. Went live November 26th with 15 additional square miles. Had 2 gun arrests out of the Shot Spotter. 6 incidents where they got there and there was an actual casualty and there was never a 911 call. 18 sq mile deployment area covers 80.5% of shots fired calls with 87.2% of gun-related homicides.

Next project is the city-wide camera project. Dave came to us to ask for help with cameras in Lawrenceville neighborhoods in response to burglaries and thefts. Worked with the Police and LU on a private-public partnership. System that LU provided was a huge help. Helps us put together evidence from a variety of sources. Picked 12 strategic locations throughout Lawrenceville – first project slated for 2019 when Dave brought it to us at the end of October. 3 of the 12 locations are already installed. The others will be installed this week if the weather cooperates.

Couple takeaways: technology doesn't replace human eyes and ears. Please dial 911 and don't assume that technology or someone else is covering it. Public safety is a shared responsibility. Technology has become part of the daily routine.

Question: Owen Lampe – Years ago, there were old cameras, are they integrated with the system? – Dave did bring that to our attention, but they are not integrated.

Vince: Shot Spotter system – does it have cameras? – Acoustic system. Human interaction disqualifies backfires, etc. City cameras are integrated via software with the Shot Spotter system – bookmarks the time and then they can look at the cameras in that area. That integration has been really successful and helped solve cases.

Michael Linn: The 12 cameras that you're going to install. How did you gather the data to identify the spots? – Looked at the map that Dave provided of private cameras. We looked at the Part 1 crime data. Worked with the officers in Zone 2, pretty much followed the Butler Street corridor. / Michael: off the beaten path beyond Butler? – We looked at it. There are some off Butler Street. Nothing to prevent us from growing it later if we get additional feedback from Zone 2 or the community. We can also move cameras and honor those requests as they come in. / Michael: would like to see it grow off the beaten

path. – Dan: we have someone check it 3 times a day and we do proactive monitoring to make sure they're all working. Sometimes wires are just down, but make sure we're on top of it to get service if a camera goes down. / Michael: going to do maintenance? – Dan: was an issue with maintenance before it was turned over to Public Safety. Have a 5 year contract now on maintenance and that's been working great so far. / Built in flare system? – Yes, they have infrared for nighttime as well.

Commander Zett: Thank you to all of you. You give us information, you provide video. We have a phenomenal working relationship with Lawrenceville. Very blessed that Lawrenceville stands out for how you all step up. LU is instrumental in helping us keep organized and staying in front of things in Lawrenceville. My plainclothes detectives do a tremendous job working with the intelligence unit to work together to ID hot spots – wish we could solve things quicker, but they did a tremendous job when we saw that spike in burglaries. Det. Malloy was not the only detective but instrumental in a couple cases. Thanks to the Director and Dan Shak for their support as well. Lawrenceville has built up a residential and commercial district and that's causing some challenges in how I'm allocating my resources. Reallocating some resources for 2019 to concentrate officers at some key times when we're seeing more issues in Lawrenceville. Hoping that will translate to you seeing more officers when it matters. Have a few new bike officers and they love coming to Lawrenceville so you should be seeing more of them once they're through with training. Goals for 2019 are to reduce crime – reallocating resources to do that and make police more present. Also increasing community engagement. Neighborhood Resource Officers have been allocated to other neighborhoods because of the strong role of LU and the community, but that frees up Officer Davis and Kimbrough to be in Lawrenceville. Looking to do more youth engagement. Ofc Davis has done that at Arsenal but want to grow that. When we engage more, we get more information – how we ID issues. Please feel free to interact with our officers, contact me if you need anything. Primarily out of the Hill District station, also spend a good bit of time on the road as well. Nights are difficult for me because I'm a parent.