



SPD North Precinct Advisory Council

Expanding Communication between the Police and Community

MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

January 5, 2022

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: Rebecca Boatright, SPD Executive Director, Risk Management & Legal Affairs, on SPD public records requests
 - a. Public records requests have always been a concern for Seattle, and none of its departments are fully equipped to handle them with efficiency.
 - b. Most city departments average 50-350 a year.
 - c. In 2021 SPD had 9,620 requests, and completed 7,630 of them; currently there is a 2,751 backlog.
 - d. SPD has eight full time staff to work on them. They work on an average of 400-500 requests each, ten times the average number in other city departments.
 - e. The department will increase by eight more staff when hiring is complete.
 - f. SPD requests are more complex than other city departments. For instance, body camera videos take much longer to go through frame by frame to redact visual information protected from disclosure by state and/or federal law because technology doesn't exist to reliably do so. SPD has added one video specialist.
 - g. The DOJ consent decree has resulted in an increase in the level of data in SPD's databases, resulting in increased data to review during records requests.
 - h. There are penalties if SPD under-redacts or over-redacts.
 - i. Besides redaction, SPD has to comply with exemptions to disclosure, such as for those pertaining to juveniles. There are 160 exemptions between state and federal laws. SPD tends to err on ensuring individual privacy, such as for victims.
 - j. Records request process
 - i. SPD must respond to a request with either the records, a reason for denial, or acknowledgement of receipt, assignment and estimate for providing a full response.
 - ii. Requests cannot be prioritized; they go in a queue regardless of how easy they might be. But staff can work on multiple requests at a time and make incremental progress on them.
 - iii. When there are many requests by one entity/individual, they are grouped

together and by city rule treated as one request.

- k. Only relatives can get cause of death records. SPD does tabulate overdose deaths. Data on ODs can be seen on King Co's public health dashboard, but it is aggregated, not by individual. See <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/data.aspx>
 - l. Crime victims can get their incident records through Records Dept, not Public Records.
 - m. Body camera videos cost \$0.10 a minute if requested. SPD is very careful about providing videos, like for domestic violence. Most videos are taken inside homes where privacy needs to be ensured.
 - n. SPD and the city are taking corrective actions after many city leaders' text messages sent during the 2020 BLM demonstrations went missing. The law department has retained legal experts. Becca's unit is doing e-learning training, the IT department moved SPD's phone backups to a program. Becca doesn't know the backup interval.
2. Crime Prevention Coordinator: Joe Elenbaas, East Precinct CPC
- a. Our NP CPC has been vacant a couple years. Finally one was recruited, but the background check was still not complete after several months (backlog there) so the candidate took a different job. The position was reposted and candidates are being screened.
 - b. CPCs conduct, on request, free security assessments of buildings/homes, offering [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design](#) strategies.
 - c. CPCs also help start block watches, come to community and training meetings to discuss crime prevention.
 - d. While our position is vacant, feel free to contact Joe for either of these functions at Joseph.Elenbaas@Seattle.gov.
 - e. Attached to the minutes email is a North Precinct resource guide that lists many on-line resources, such as the crime dashboard and SPD Blotter.
3. City Attorney's Office (CAO): Meagan Westphal
- a. The new City Attorney Ann Davison has begun her tenure. Scott Lindsay has been hired as Deputy City Attorney and Natalie Walton-Anderson as Chief of the Criminal Division. The Civil Division Chief was let go and a nationwide search is being conducted.
 - b. The backlog of cases still exists and is in a holding pattern.
 - c. We may contact Meagan with concerns or questions at Meagan.Westphal@Seattle.gov.
4. King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (KCPAO): no report
5. City Council Reporter - Kevin Volkmann
- a. On January 4 City Council elected D5's Debora Juarez as President. She has expressed support for slowly redirecting funds from SPD to upstream programs to reform the police.
 - b. Sara Nelson has become the D9 representative; she advocates community-driven police reform.

- c. The City's 2022 budget includes six new positions in SPD for Community Service Officers (CSOs), civilian employees who engage with communities and neighborhoods, helping residents and businesses navigate services.
- d. In December, the City Council increased the budget of the City Attorney by 9% and added the requirement that the City Attorney increase its reporting on diversion programs each quarter.
- e. The Federal Consent Decree Monitor, Antonio Oftelie, criticized the Council's Ordinance 126422 passed in August, banning and restricting the police use of less lethal weapons as redundant or superfluous to Crowd Management and Use of Force policies developed earlier in 2021 by the monitoring team. The Council bill ordered SPD to redraft its use of force policies within 60 days, but the department has not yet done so, leaving policies in a state of uncertainty for the time being.
- f. The Consent Decree Monitor will hold three Community Engagement Sessions via Zoom. If interested in attending, contact Felicia.Cross@Seattle.gov.
 - i. January 11 6-8 pm - Reporting on SPD Crisis Intervention
 - ii. February 8 - Reporting on SPD Stops and Detentions
 - iii. March 8 - Reporting on SPD Use of Force

6. Business - none

7. North Precinct Update: Lt Joe Osborne

- a. Crime statistics
 - i. Overall, Citywide crime is up about 7% in 2021 compared to 2020.
 - ii. North Precinct is down 8% compared to 2020.
 - 1. Motor Vehicle Theft is up 2% from this time last year, with a total of 1836 cars stolen compared to 1805 last year.
 - 2. Robbery is up 2% from last year, showing 457 incidents compared to 446 last year.
 - 3. Others: Aggravated Assaults are up 37%, 848 compared to 620; Rape up 7%, 75 compared to 70; Arson up 46%, 60 incidents compared to 41 last year; Burglary down 16%, 3265 compared to 3871; and Theft down 7%, 8405 compared to 9024.
- b. Due to budget issues, the Aurora corridor shots fired emphasis ended in December, but after 2 weeks, it is being started up again soon for 8pm to 2 am Thursday through Monday.
- c. One of the special platoons that drew patrol officers from the precincts has disbanded and the officers have returned to patrol. In NP 8 additional officers are responding to 911 calls, 1-2 per shift.
- d. Asked if SPD has an estimate for what percentage of crimes are NOT reported, Lt Osborne says if a crime isn't reported, from SPD's view it doesn't exist. It's very important to report crimes; SPD is reactive - it goes where crimes are reported. For instance, patrol cars are sent to drive around areas with a lot of crime reports, their visibility is a deterrent to more crime. Crimes can be reported after they happen, and though they might not be solved, the data helps determine patrolling.
- e. People notice prostitution on Aurora, especially around Lowe's. Per City Council,

patrols can't make probable cause stops. City has a harm-reduction model that sees prostitutes as victims of sexual predators, not criminals. The emphasis patrols in that area reduce the number of prostitutes, but the patrols' hours become known.

f. Drugs

- i. Overdoses continue to be a problem. Kids don't equate fentanyl with heroin. It's easier to take a fentanyl pill than to shoot up heroin.
- ii. Q: Though Ballard Commons encampment has been cleared, the drug dealers are reorganizing. What can be done? A: SPD's Narcotics Unit handles that, not the precinct patrols, except to drive around to provide disincentive through visibility.
- iii. Q: Marijuana dispensaries in Ballard and Fremont were robbed. Any news? A: Photos show the same people also hit in the south end, doing a 4-5 hour robbery spree around the city. SPD Robbery Unit is investigating; when individuals are IDed, bulletins will be sent out to the patrols.

8. Open Forum/Questions

- a. Kudos to North Precinct patrols on their handling of crisis calls.
- b. Kudos to CPC Joe Elenbaas for providing information about Seattle Night Out to the Bitter Lake community.

9. Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 2, with Lisa Judge, Inspector General of the Seattle Office of the Inspector General, dedicated to SPD oversight

Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.