

TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER DEPARTMENT: POLICE

DATE: AUGUST 3, 2009 CMR:339:09

REPORT TYPE: INFORMATIONAL

SUBJECT: Update on Police Department Action Plan for Outreach to Diverse Communities

This is an informational report and no Council action is required.

BACKGROUND

This report is an update on the detailed action plan that was developed by the Police Chief and command staff to improve relations between the Police Department and members of diverse communities. This plan was prepared in coordination with representatives of the faith community, Stanford African-American students, the Executive Director of the San Jose NAACP and other members of the community. The plan calls for the Police Department to make enhancements to various facets of police training, enhance communications through various community meetings, the formation of a Chief's Community Advisory Committee, and work with the Independent Police Auditor to review current policies and procedures and to make adjustments as necessary.

DISCUSSION

To adequately engage the community, the Police Department has initiated several community activities both within the City of Palo Alto, as well as in neighboring cities. The plan calls for enhanced communications with the schools, the community and faith-based organizations. Additionally, the command staff has enhanced training and policies to ensure Department personnel are policing in a fair and impartial manner. Staff has included this plan as a sub-set of the Police Department Strategic Plan. This is the first update since the plan's inception in December 2008.

Meetings with the Chief: Beginning in February, the Police Department has held five meetings open to the public to give the community an opportunity to meet with their Police Department. Staff have publicized the meeting dates and locations in advance and invited the public to attend and participate. Staff has made presentations on crime trends as well developments within the community and Police Department. These meetings have taken place in community centers and at

local restaurants. Staff intends to continue these meetings as an ongoing outreach effort. A total of approximately 125 community members have attended these five meetings. A number of issues have been discussed including police policy, crime statistics/trends, as well as fair and impartial policing.

Community Advisory Group: A subcommittee of the Human Relations Commission (HRC) was identified to assist the Police Department in developing the Community Advisory Group. The HRC subcommittee and command staff has identified the mission, vision, objectives, meeting frequency, selection criteria and selection process for the Community Advisory Group. The role of this group will be to advise the Chief on police practices and race relations in order to strengthen police-community trust and to report back to constituents about activities in which the Police Department is involved. It is intended that a diverse cross-section of the community will be selected to meet with the Police Chief and members of the Department on a regular basis. The Police Department sent out press releases seeking applicants for this civic engagement opportunity and has obtained a number of suitable candidates. The HRC subcommittee and Police Chief will be interviewing applicants and making selections within the next two months.

Tools for Tolerance Executive Leadership Course: The Police Department intends to send all of the command staff to the Tools for Tolerance Executive Leadership Course at the Simon Wiesenthal Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. This two-day course examines the dimensions of diversity and leadership focusing on the unique challenges in an increasingly democratic and diverse society. As of today's date, the Police Department has sent four of its command staff and will send the remaining managers during the summer and fall of this year. We intend to send additional members of our staff to other courses that the Wiesenthal Museum hosts.

Briefing Training: The Police Department has begun implementation of a state-of-the-art Daily Training Program that focuses on Constitutional issues, case law decisions and Department policy. This program will ensure that all patrol personnel receive a block of instruction during briefing each day that they are assigned to work. ~~This training will include a lecture and discussion followed by a test ensuring that the officers demonstrate an understanding of the material.~~ The Police Department will maintain records of the training each officer completes and test scores in the Personnel and Training Division Training Management System. To date, patrol supervisors have been trained in the process and staff anticipates full implementation will occur later this summer.

Field Training Officer Training: The Police Department has made enhancements to its existing Field Training Officer Program. These enhancements include additional training in the areas of race relations, crisis communications and cultural issues. This training is designed to ensure that Field Training Officers engage in fair and impartial policing. All of the Department's Field Training Officers have received a block of training to ensure that they are familiar with the Department's new Biased Policing Policy and how to educate new officers about this policy.

Continued Professional Training: All sworn personnel received training on the Department's new Biased Policing Policy. This training included a review of the policy, its intent and a discussion. Police Department personnel will continue to receive training in a variety of areas relative to biased policing and cultural diversity.

Meetings with Students: As part of the outreach plan with the schools, staff made presentations during six different Living Skills classes at Palo Alto High School. Additionally, staff have made presentations to work study classes at both Gunn and Palo Alto High Schools. These discussions included topics regarding individual rights, legal statutes and the criminal justice system.

The command staff also met twice with the NAACP chapter on the Stanford campus to discuss police/community relations. Additionally, staff made presentations during two sessions a day-long, open-house for high school prospects, speaking about search and seizure in the context of an ACLU-sponsored class on individual rights, with prospective college students from all around the Bay Area.

Staff intends to continue these outreach meetings and presentations next school year.

U.S. Department of Justice Mediation Program: Members of the command staff have met with representatives from the U.S. Department of Justice Community Resolutions Services Group to discuss holding focus groups to engage citizens on the topic of police/community relations. Additional planning will be necessary as staff explores the intended outcomes and format for these focus groups.

Meetings with Faith-Based Communities: Members of the command staff have met with local members of the faith-based community. While no formal program or structure has been developed, staff has opened communication networks. In August, a local church will host a Meet the Chief event in town.

Independent Police Auditor: Police Department command staff met with the Independent Police Auditor to review our current Bias Based Policing Policy, demographic data collection procedures and complaint procedures. Staff provided the auditor a copy of the previous Bias Based Policing Policy, a demographic data staff report and explained Department procedures. Staff also provided the auditor a copy of the new Bias Policing Policy. The Independent Auditor will review these documents and practices and make recommendations for improvements.

Promotional Process: During the recent promotional process for the position of Police Sergeant, the Police Department included representatives of the East Palo Alto and Palo Alto communities who participated on the interview panel. This community member evaluated the candidates for the position of Police Sergeant. Staff will continue to seek community members to participate in promotional processes.

Grant Funding and Training: The Police Department sought and obtained grant funding in the amount of \$28,545 through the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant. These funds were requested to provide command staff, supervisors, line-level and community stakeholders a series of training classes on Fair and Impartial Policing. This training presents what is known about human biases and provides guidance for providing fair and impartial policing in the areas of policy, training, supervision/accountability, leadership, recruitment/hiring, outreach and measurement.

Biased Policing Training Class: In May, the Palo Alto Police Department hosted a three-day course entitled, Policing Racial Bias. In attendance were command personnel from the San Jose Police Department, the San Francisco Police Department, East Palo Alto Police Department, as well as Palo Alto Police Department. Also in attendance were the Independent Police Auditor, two members of the Human Relations Commission, and two community members from East Palo Alto. The class was taught by Dr. Lorie Fridell, a nationally recognized expert in the subject in the field of Biased Policing.

The Police Department will be hosting additional classes taught by Dr. Fridell for command staff, supervisors and line-level personnel funded by the previously mentioned grant.

Biased Policing Policy: The Department conducted research on policies to provide Department personnel direction on bias-based policing. After doing significant research on the topic and consulting with subject matter experts, the Police Department adopted the policy developed by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). This policy is intended to reaffirm the Police Department's commitment to fair and impartial policing, clarify situations in which officers can consider race or ethnicity when making law enforcement decisions and to reinforce procedures that serve to assure the community that staff are providing services and enforcing the law in a fair and equitable manner.

U.S. Department of Justice, The Office of Community Oriented Policing Service, Curriculum Development Team: Lieutenant Sandra Brown of the Palo Alto Police Department was selected to participate in the United States Department of Justice Curriculum Development Team to design training for both new officers and supervisors entitled Racially Biased Policing Training. The focus of the training will be to enhance fair and impartial policing and reduce bias-based policing. Lieutenant Brown worked with a number of national subject matter experts to develop the program which will be piloted this summer and fall. The final curricula and all training resource material will be available to agencies nationwide in 2010 through the U.S. Department of Justice.

Lieutenant Brown will also serve as an in-house expert in Bias Based Policing. In this capacity Lieutenant Brown will conduct on-going training to our staff.

Computerized Demographic Data Collection: The Police Department has gathered demographic data on vehicle and pedestrian stops since 2000. To facilitate this data collection process, officers had to manually complete a card describing the reason for the stop, the person's ethnicity, their age,

the city in which they reside, and if a search was conducted and why. This information was then forwarded to Technical Services personnel for data input and sorting. Effective July 2009, Department personnel are able to enter the data directly into the records management system thereby eliminating the need for completing the cards and the data entry by staff later. This new automated procedure will ensure efficiency and reduce the time required to generate demographic data reports.


RESOURCE IMPACT

This is an ambitious and comprehensive outreach plan. Staff believes that the majority of items in the action plan can be absorbed within the Police Department's existing budget.

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