



**MINUTES
CITY OF LAUREL
EMERGENCY SERVICES COMMITTEE
MONDAY, JANUARY 23, 2023**

The Emergency Services Committee meeting was called to order at 6:00pm on Monday, January 23, 2023, by Chair Heidi Sparks

Members Present: Heidi Sparks- Chair, Irv Wilke- Vice Chair, Richard Klose, Jodi Mackay, Jamie Swecker, Jim Irwin, Bruce McGee

Others Present: Police Chief Stan Langve, Fire Chief Brent Peters, Ambulance Director Lyndy Gurchiek, Troy Charbonneau- Ambulance Dept

Public Input: None

General Items

1. Approval of Emergency Services Committee minutes of November 28, 2022. Irv Wilke moved to approve the minutes; Richard Klose seconded- Motion carried 7-0

New Business

2. Update from Emergency Departments
 - a. Police Department Chief Langve – Report attached
 - i. Items to note:
 1. Chief Langve provided reports for end of November 2022 through January 23, 2023. Also included is a summary of 2022
 2. Police has been down 2 patrol officer positions out of 8 since October
 - a. Irv asked is this was a permanent situation
 - b. One individual has been hired and is currently at the academy. Has a current applicant pool and looking to potentially hire 1. Best case will be hiring for FTO by end of February
 3. Currently at 9 reserves, with 8 active reserves. The peak was 14 reserves
 - a. Having a difficult time covering community and school events with reserves and having to use full time officers to cover events. This is increasing overtime as well
 4. Senior Officer Baumgartner has been a part of Yellowstone County Tactical Response Team (TRT). This team has had an increase in activity and is asking for a second member of Laurel Police Department to be added to the TRT.
 5. Senior Patrol Officer Booth and Narcotics K9 Colt had an increase in callouts this year, over 2021
 - b. Fire Chief Brent Peters – Reports attached
 - i. Items to note:
 1. Laurel Fire Department covers approximately 125 square miles, which includes City of Laurel and surrounding fire districts
 2. Fire prevention included school presentations during the holidays

3. Richard asked about the cause of the structure fires and if these were space heaters. Chief Peters stated no space heaters so far, but a grill and fireplace as cause of fires
4. 35 members of the department. Participate in Laurel Homecoming, 4th of July and Christmas to Remember with Fireworks display
- c. Ambulance Director Lyndy Gurchiek – Reports attached
 - i. Items to note:
 1. Fire drivers are Fire Department members that are trained to drive for Ambulance. City drivers are city staff that are trained to drive for Ambulance
 2. AMR in Billings has a mutual aid with Laurel and can respond but due to staffing issues in Billings, they are not always able to respond
 3. Full time staff is currently doing 2- 24 hour shifts, and filling space with volunteers
 4. County is talking about having a city-county ambulance, however, Laurel City Attorney and Director Gurchiek are still looking at options for an Ambulance district
 5. The switch from the paid version of Image Trend to the states free version was not as simple as expected and took a lot of focus during December to get up and running

Old Business:

Other Items:

3. Irv asked about the status of the traffic study requested through the state for Main Street. Chief Langve said last he heard this was at the committee with the state for review of timing. Chief Langve will follow up with the state
4. Jamie asked about the city's status as a Class 2 city- What is the impact of the Class 2 city status on the Emergency Services? Specifically impact on Fire Department.
 - a. Chief Peters stated that a Class 2 city is required to have a full time Fire Department, which could be just a full time chief. Volunteer Fire Department can supplement the full time fire department
 - b. Chief Peters also stated the Chief and Deputy Chief are statused as part-time city employees
5. Jamie stated that since Karen left the city does not have a fire inspector, which is becoming a problem. Mike Spini, state fire marshal, has had some conversations with Jamie as city's fire marshal and is willing to talk with the city about concerns
6. Jamie would also like to have the city explore the option for emergency services staff to carry firearms for when they are on calls, both fire department and ambulance staff
 - a. Chief Peters stated this has been a conversation that has come up because of calls outside of the city where department is depending on county sheriff or highway patrol for assistance, and they may not be available for a period of time
 - b. Jodi asked if there are other fire departments within the state that are carrying firearms. Chief Peters stated that there are a few departments that have started carrying, some stated have legalized first responders carrying. Often concealed carry is required as part of this
 - c. Jamie stated the concealed carry permit should be part of the requirement, along with training. This would also be at the discretion of the department heads as well

Announcements

7. Next Meeting will be Monday, February 27, 2023, at 6:00pm in Council Chambers

Meeting adjourned at 7:16pm



Laurel Police Department

215 W. 1st Street Laurel, Mt. 59044 • Phone 406-628-8737 • Fax 406-628-4641

Chief of Police Stanley J Langve

Emergency Services Report January 23, 2023
Year end 2022

For the reporting period November 21st 2022 through January 23rd, 2023, the FAP reported 1,440 calls for service. November 21st – December 19th had 613. This is down from the three-year average 2019-2021, keeping in mind that 2021 was a record year. For the reporting period 12-19-22 through January 23rd, 2023, there were 827 calls for service. This is a decrease of 2.5%. Crimes reported for the PD for November through January were 95.

Yearend totals for 2022 total calls for service for the FAP were 9,346. Total crimes reported were 1,221. While 2022 had 1,039 fewer calls for service than 2021, it only had 42 fewer crimes reported. The three-year average for crimes reported prior to 2022 was 1,176. So, 2022's crimes reported were a 3.8% increase over the three-year average. These numbers also reflect the department being short staffed with vacancies in two patrol positions since October, which is a significant percentage of our patrol division. This impacts the number of proactive law enforcement encounters decreasing the overall numbers.

Overall, 2022 was another busy year. Thefts, particularly vehicle thefts, and calls involving firearms continue to increase. I have attached reports for our Tactical Response member, and our K-9 unit. The PD held a tactical response training over Christmas break at the Laurel High School and Middle School. We will continue these trainings and expand their scope and include other departments. Volunteerism continues to decline. No one who applied, qualified for our Reserve Officer Program this year. It will be the second year in a row we are unable to add to replenish our ranks.

Looking forward to 2023 it has the potential to surpass 2021's numbers. There is a large turnaround at the refinery. As the valley's population increases and more business and residences are coming into the city, calls for service will also increase.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Langve".

Chief Langve



Laurel Police Department

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Chief of Police Stan Langve

To whom it may concern,

Senior Patrol Officer Jackson Booth and Narcotics K9 Colt have been working as a team since April of 2021. Officer Booth and K9 Colt have been a huge asset to the Laurel Police Department, the city of Billings, Yellowstone County, Stillwater County, Sweet Grass County, Carbon County, Montana Highway Patrol, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Division of Criminal Investigations (DCI), and most importantly the community of Laurel.

This is the team's first full year together, from January 1st, 2022, until December 31st, 2022, Officer Booth and K9 Colt have been dispatched to 40 K9 related calls, an increase from last year.

The team had 30 narcotic deployments, one tracking deployment and nine other calls involving K9 Colt and Officer Booth, including school sniffs, civil demonstrations, or deployments K9 Colt did not alert to.

Out of the 30 narcotic deployments, K9 Colt was used 23 times. K9 Colt had no false alerts on any of the 23 deployments. The other seven calls Officer Booth was able to use his investigation and communications skills to search the vehicles without the help of his partner.

Out of those 30 narcotic deployments Officer Booth and K9 Colt have removed the following:

1,255 grams of methamphetamine, just under 3 pounds. With a street value of, \$120,860.

3,300 fentanyl pills. Street value \$363,000

276 pounds of illegal marijuana. It should be noted, K9 Colt was deployed to sniff the car full of the marijuana but did not show any alert or indication behavior. Officer Booth and Troopers used their investigation skills to apply for a search warrant. Once the warrant was granted and the vehicle was searching the illegal marijuana was located. This is proof that K9 Colts and Officer Booth training is paying off due to K9 Colt being a non-marijuana drug dog.

20 grams of shrooms. Street value \$700

3 grams of heroin. Street value \$250

Thousands of dollars in drug paraphernalia.

5 guns.

Stolen property.

\$80,995 in illegal money

With this high volume of activity out of Officer Booth and K9 Colt, agencies have been able to make 24 felony arrests. Some of these cases are still pending but some have already led to convictions.

Officer Booth and K9 Colt are also certified in tracking for lost or missing people. Officer Booth takes great pride in this aspect of the job as the K9 handler. Officer Booth and K9 Colt spend hours each month working on their tracking skills to help bring peoples loved ones home.

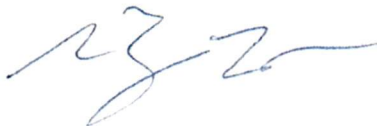
In 2022 Officer Booth and K9 Colt were dispatched to one lost suicidal female, south of town near the river. K9 Colt tracked the female for over a mile and a half and lead officers to her exact location. K9 Colts actions saved the woman's life.

Officer Booth and K9 Colt have also helped conduct school sniffs at the request of school officials and the Billings Police Department K9 Unit. K9 Colt helped sniff lockers and cars at the Laurel High School and Middle School. Billings Senior High School, Ben Steele Middle School, and Skyview High School.

Officer Booth takes great pride in helping his community at all levels. He has taken K9 Colt to do demonstrations at schools to provide awareness to kids and young adults about drug use. They have done presentations at West Elementary, Columbus Middle School, and Broadwater High School. The team has also done demonstrations at the Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter, Laurel Public Library, and the Sunshine Academy.

The Laurel Police Department takes great pride in its organization. With Officer Booth and K9 Colt's great success they have been noticed for their hard work by departments and agencies around the country. This year Officer Booth was elected as the President of the Montana Law Enforcement K9 Association by his K9 peers across the state. With this roll Officer Booth oversees setting up the state certification along with other group training exercises for K9 handlers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "R. Booth", written in a cursive style.



Laurel Police Department

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To Whom It May Concern,

Senior Officer Steve Baumgartner has been part of the Yellowstone County Tactical Response Team (TRT) for a year now. This team is made up of assorted members from Yellowstone County Sheriffs Office ranging from patrol deputies, detectives to special assignment drug unit members.

As part of his position with the team, Senior Officer Baumgartner responds to calls with high levels of dangers. These calls range from High-Risk Warrant Service to Active Shooter situations.

Senior Officer Baumgartner has been involved with three armed barricaded subjects (ended in arrests). These take place in Billings. A shooting in Laurel on 3rd Ave had TRT activated and Senior Officer Baumgartner was on scene in patrol uniform until the suspect was arrested.

TRT works jointly with DEA and the United States Marshal service to serve high-risk warrant service on dangerous individuals. Senior Officer Baumgartner worked on two joint DEA/Marshal operations in the early hours of the morning to arrest dangerous and armed wanted persons. One operation was conducted on the outskirts of Billings with the seizure of drugs. Another operation was conducted in Laurel on E. Maryland Ln. in which dangerous individuals were arrested.

Yellowstone County TRT works with the Billings Police SWAT on dangerous calls and warrants within the city limits of Billings. Senior Officer Baumgartner was activated to assist and was on scene for the arrest of an armed individual related to the homicide at the Colonial in Billings (this ended with the arrest of suspect). Most recently Senior Officer Baumgartner was activated for the homicide/home invasion that occurred on January 8, 2023 (this ended with the suspects arrest).

Apart from working together with local agencies, TRT gets called to places across the state to help with dangerous situations. On September 12, 2022 Yellowstone TRT was activated and went to Bozeman to assist their team with an active shooter. Senior Officer Baumgartner was on scene until the situation in Bozeman was resolved (death of suspect).

Members of TRT are expected to help in situations such as manhunts. On September 12, 2022, two individuals escaped from YCDF (county jail). Senior Officer Baumgartner was leaving the

scene of a standoff in Bozeman and was reactivated to assist in the manhunt of these two individuals until 1-2am. These individuals were captured the following day within the area of YCDF.

Senior Officer Baumgartner trains one to two days every month for 12 hours. These trainings include everything from live fire shooting to dry runs of courses. This training is done in full gear and equipment (weight ranging from 50-75lbs). Senior Officer Baumgartner has worked with and been exposed on numerous occasions to CS Gas (2-chlorobenzylidene malononitrile) or more commonly know as tear gas. Training with gas involves being able to function and perform with gas masks on which is trained with.

TRT trains in house or have joint training with Billings SWAT and US Marshals. Joint training involves hours of continuous work on Hostage Rescue scenarios and barricaded subjects. With the US Marshals, training involved the use and work with ballistic shields. Senior Officer Baumgartner spent a full day carrying and live fire shooting behind the shields. Training with the US Marshals also included high risk traffic stops with armed and dangerous individuals.

Senior Officer Baumgartner trained with no light and low light live fire shooting/movement to locations. TRT trained in the movement and live fire action out in open countryside. This training is to simulate a manhunt of an armed suspect.

Senior Officer Baumgartner worked with command staff with Laurel Police Department on setting up an active shooter training at the schools. The training covered movement through hallways and room clearing. More in-depth training will be occurring later in the summer of 2023 to help hone the skills of officers within the department.

Senior Officer Baumgartner wants to thank everyone allowing him into this position to help serve and protect the community of Laurel along with individuals throughout the state who request the assistance of Yellowstone County TRT.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N. Baumgartner', is written below the text 'Sincerely,'.