

TUMWATER PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING

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CONVENE: 8:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Chair Leatta Dahlhoff and Councilmembers Peter Agabi and Angela Jefferson.

Staff: City Administrator John Doan, Police Chief Jon Weiks, Police Lieutenant Kenneth Driver, and Police Administrative Manager Laura Wohl.

CHANGES TO AGENDA: There were no changes to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE, OCTOBER 11, 2022, NOVEMBER 8, 2022 & JANUARY 10, 2023:

MOTION: **Councilmember Agabi moved, seconded by Councilmember Jefferson, to approve the minutes of October 11, 2022, November 8, 2022, and January 10, 2023 as presented. A voice vote approved the motion.**

K9 PROGRAM UPDATE: Police Chief Weiks reported the briefing is an overview of the K9 Program in 2022 and changes in 2023. He introduced, Lieutenant Ken Driver, supervisor of the K9 Program.

Lieutenant Driver reported in 2022, the Police Department learned K9 Officer Mize would likely retire in 2023. K9 James was also reaching the end of his working life. The department initiated a selection process in 2022 and selected Police Officer Chase Grimmett to serve as the program's new K9 Officer. Officer Mize encouraged initiating the transition early to enable mentoring and training the new K9 handler. K9 Officer Mize has over 18 years of service as the department's K9 Officer. Officer Grimmett completed 400 hours of training in December 2022 and assumed the K9 handler position in January 2023 serving with a new dog, K9 Thor, a two-year old Belgian Malinois.

The pandemic and new state laws created many changes in law enforcement methods. Through 2018 to the present, narcotic deployments of the K9 unit decreased mostly because of legislative changes affecting K9 deployments involving narcotics. K9 deployments not related to narcotics from 2018 through 2022 have remained consistent. However, there have been no K9 contacts over the last two years for narcotic incidents. The department tracks all K9 deployments. The main change in

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deployments is related to narcotics. Currently, K9 Officer Mize is the only certified narcotics K9 handler in the region. Most of his work involves regional narcotic response.

Councilmember Jefferson asked about the different categories of deployments. Lieutenant Driver said K9s are not deployed for runaways or missing persons. Deployments are related to tracking for criminal offenses. New state laws on use of force have led to a decrease in deployments. Stricter guidelines dictate when a K9 can be deployed. Throughout the region, there are approximately four K9 handlers within the different agencies. Response is dependent upon the unit on shift. Tumwater's K9s are deployed frequently. K9 Officer Grimmert serves as the primary K9 unit when callouts occur. K9 Officer Mize serves as the second handler to assist in mentoring K9 Officer Grimmert. Both K9 Officers are on an on-call status.

Police Chief Weiks added that K9 tracking involves building searches, area searches, and evidence searches. K9s are often deployed as a deterrent to use of force.

Councilmember Agabi asked for additional information on the Blake decision.

Police Chief Weiks explained that the Blake decision primarily applies to narcotics and treating people with addiction. The ability for the police to enforce laws involving narcotics has been greatly reduced as marijuana was legalized, as well as possession. It is often difficult to charge a suspect with a narcotic-related offense with the exception of selling, which requires a second and third offense before the individual can be charged. Legislation changed policing from enforcement to a therapeutic model for addressing narcotic addiction.

City Administrator Doan advised that K9 Officer Grimmert and K9 Thor will attend the February 28, 2023 City Council worksession for a presentation and overview and to meet the new K9.

**SOUTH SOUND
BEHAVIORAL
HOSPITAL:**

The briefing was deferred to a future meeting.

Chair Dahlhoff shared that she had an opportunity to tour the hospital. The hospital is a behavioral hospital that provides specialized acute care for behavioral health and addiction treatment to people of all ages.

**ADDITIONAL
ITEMS:**

Chair Dahlhoff reported on a recent meeting with Jason Bean-Mortinson with the Thurston County Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program. She recommended scheduling a briefing on program outcomes. To date, the program has initiated 447 referrals with 220 people individually served.

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Police Chief Weiks said he would follow-up with Mr. Bean-Mortinson to schedule a briefing.

ADJOURNMENT: With there being no further business, Chair Dahlhoff adjourned the meeting at 8:23 a.m.

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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