



MANAGER'S BRIEFING SESSION
May 20, 2019 – 4:00 P.M.
3RD FLOOR LOBBY CONFERENCE ROOM

Present:

Mayor Wagner; Mayor Pro Tem Jason Ewing (Ward 6) [arrived at 4:17 p.m.]; Council Member Britt Moore (At Large); Council Member Don Scarborough (At Large); Council Member Jeffrey Golden (Ward 1); Council Member Chris Williams (Ward 2); Council Member Monica Peters (Ward 3); Council Member Wesley Hudson (Ward 4); and Council Member Victor Jones (Ward 5)

Staff Present:

Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Police Chief Kenneth Shultz; Meghan Maguire, Assistant City Attorney; Eric Olmedo, Managing Director; Jeron Hollis, Director of Communications & Public Engagement; Roslyn McNeill, Budget Analyst; Loren Hill, President- High Point Economic Development Director; Michael McNair, Director of Community Development and Housing; Alisha Doulen, Community Specialist; and Mary Brooks, Deputy City Clerk

Others Present:

Matthew Martin, U.S. Attorney- Middle District of NC
Jim Summey, Executive Director- High Point Community Against Violence

News Media Present:

Lee Sanderlin, Reporter- *High Point Enterprise*
Danielle Jackson, Reporter- *WGHP*
Joe Dougherty, Photojournalist- *WGHP*

Update from Police Department- Focused Deterrence and Violent Crimes Task Force

Police Chief Kenneth Shultz advised that he would be providing some information that would be helpful to the City Council that would better assist them in answering some of the questions they might encounter from the community as it relates to crime in High Point.

He explained that Focused Deterrence is a strategy used at the High Point Police Department to address violent crime and that the core principle of this is that most people do comply with the law (4 out of 5 people generally listen and comply). He referenced a study showing that there are a small number of individuals that create or drive a majority of the violent crime. He spoke to High Point Community Against Violence and the partnership they provide and noted not only are they the voice of the community, but they also offer training support and training programs made possible through the Community Foundation grants and citizens to help those that have been convicted to be successful.

Chief Shultz spoke about an individual who completely ignored a Violent Crimes Task Force Notification message in December 2010 and proceeded on to commit numerous violent crimes involving possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, possession of a stolen firearm, possession with the intent to sell and deliver marijuana, etc.....The Chief pointed out that this individual's criminal record precludes him in that his actions are the type that are endangering to the citizens and they are constantly watching him and trying to expedite him through the system to get him off the street so they can keep the rest of the citizens safe.

The Chief then shared a picture that is hanging on the wall in the High Point Police Department training room that depicts the many partner agencies who offer assistance to them in helping to fight crime such as U.S. Marshalls, U.S. Community Correction group, FBI, SBI, DEA, DOJ, Treasury, ATF, Corrections, etc..... He further explained that they partner closely with these agencies because the offenders are driving crime across the borders, back and forth between Greensboro, Winston Salem and Lexington.

He noted the primary difference between the Focused Deterrence work with the Violent Crimes Task Force over the past 26 years has been in the past a blanket approach was taken; now the community members are involved in these discussions. He stressed the importance of the community involvement piece and how it is paramount to their success in fighting crime. He stated they have worked extremely hard to develop the community relationship and the trust with their partners and spoke to how critical it is to continue with the Task Force approach moving forward.

Chief Shultz then provided some statistics that reflected an overall 65% decrease in violent crime in High Point over the past 26 years and this happened because they kept applying the various initiatives (i.e. drug market initiatives, gang initiatives, domestic violence intimate partner relationships initiatives, etc....) to meet the specific needs of what they were encountering at the time with chronic violent offenders. He pointed out that 1994 was the worst on record with 1,494 index violent crimes while the population has continued to grow at a 50% increase. So, by indexing out 100,000 crimes per capita, they were able to compare numbers across these 26 years and come up with an equivalent. The Chief advised that they dealt with 1,494 violent crimes in 1994 and in 2018 they had 438 violent crimes which reflects a reduction of over 1,000. He reiterated that 2018 was the second lowest year in the city's 26-year history with 2014 being the best year with only 411 violent crimes. He pointed out the reality is that violent crime has been greatly reduced.

Chief Shultz alluded to how the focused deterrence work is being pushed by the Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney General and how the work of the Project Safe Neighborhood Initiative is expanding and being pushed out all across the country. He then introduced Matthew Martin, U.S. Attorney, to come forward and brief Council on the happenings across the Middle District.

Mr. Martin gave a brief overview of the organization of the U.S. Attorney's office and responsibilities. There are 94 Districts and 93 U.S. Attorneys across the country with three being assigned to the Middle District in North Carolina (Greensboro, Winston Salem, and Durham). As the top Federal Law Enforcement Agency, they work closely with the FBI, DEA, ATF,

Department of Justice agencies, Department of Homeland Security, IRS, criminal folks, Postal Service, as well as state and local partners.

He explained that Project Safe Neighborhoods is actually a program that had its infancy that followed after some happenings in High Point and in Greensboro. He confirmed what Chief Shultz reiterated earlier, that generally the 80/20 rule could be applied to crime and that a majority of the violent crime is driven by a very small minority of criminals. Thus, this is the reason they focus on those criminals that are driving the crime.

He then spoke about how Project Safe Neighborhoods is essentially an umbrella that requires five things for it to work and be successful:

1. Leadership by the U.S. Attorney's Office. The U.S. Attorney's Office plays a vital role in taking on the leadership role to ensure coordination between federal, state, local law enforcement agencies and among existing initiatives and task forces to help reduce violent crime.
2. Partnerships. As already mentioned by Chief Shultz, partnerships with federal, state, local law enforcement agencies, prosecutors and the community are essential.
3. Targeted and Prioritized Enforcement. Each community develops data-driven strategies targeting enforcement efforts in areas where violent crimes are occurring. Violence cannot be reduced unless the things in the community that might be driving the violence is addressed. Mr. Martin mentioned that Reentry is also a pillar of Project Safe Neighborhoods and most likely an indicator that someone will commit a violent crime is if they have already committed a violent crime. The key is addressing such issues with those coming out of prison who have committed acts of violence in an effort to break that cycle. One of the research partners in the Middle District is UNC-Greensboro. They have criminologists who do the actual research based on the data and the target and prioritization is based on that data.
4. Prevention of additional violence. Effective relationships are essential with community leaders and residents.
5. Accountability. Accountability is a critical pillar because the biggest thing that would breakdown and sever trust is if things are not done and carried through as promised. Measuring outcomes (i.e. reduction of violent crimes) and quality of investigations and prosecutions.

Mr. Martin mentioned a study that was conducted by Michigan State in 2008-2009 where they researched Project Safe Neighborhoods activity during a six-year period. The outcome of the study showed a .09 percent reduction in violent crimes generally; however, Project Safe Neighborhoods realized a greater reduction with as much as 20% achieved by many. There were a few Project Safe Neighborhood sites that had much larger sustaining results that showed a 40%-42% decrease in violent crime. He pointed out High Point has seen sustained decreases in violent crimes. Cabarrus County has also seen double digit decreases in violent crime

He reported that violent crimes continue to increase across the Middle District of which there are nine Project Safe Neighborhoods and pointed out many leaders across the country and the world want to learn more about what High Point is doing.

Regarding the federal involvement, Mr. Martin mentioned how valuable the Task Force Officers are because they are the most highly trained and ready to go in federal court. He spoke to how crucial they are in helping to solve these crimes and bring convictions to the repeat offenders to get them off the streets. He explained that much more could be done on the Federal level than the State level because of the Federal organized crime laws and statutes that were passed years ago.

Mr. Martin mentioned a few new strategies taking place.

1. Gun Casing Screening meetings. There's now an organized system in place where the District Attorney's office, the U.S. Attorney's office, ATF, and the High Point Police Department are sitting down on a regular basis to discuss cases and crimes involving the use of firearms and prioritized on the federal level when appropriate.
2. Nationally Integrated Ballistics Network (NIBIN). This is a computer system that is run by the ATF that tracks and assesses gun fingerprints. The computer can identify shell casings that are fired from the same gun, which helps tremendously in solving crimes across borders from different crime scenes. There are currently three of these machines locally in Durham, Greensboro, and Winston Salem. These machines communicate with each other and Mr. Martin expressed the importance of jurisdictions making sure they get the shell cases in from the crimes as soon as possible after they are committed. Mr. Martin expressed excitement about the computer and felt over the next year or two it would help tremendously with prosecution and help stop some of the trigger crimes.
3. Prevention Efforts. Mr. Martin noted the large-scale call-in notifications have obviously been very powerful; however, there are many people that do not quite qualify to participate in the notification because they do not meet the required criteria. At the same time, they still need to know what would and could happen if they continue down the wrong path.

Mr. Martin mentioned that Re-Entry has been a focus on a national level. He thanked Jim Summey, Executive Director for High Point Community Against Violence who took the time to participate in the first Re-Entry Summit that was held in Greensboro recently and shared some of the success stories that High Point Community Against Violence has had. Also participating in the Summit were other community partners across the district who have also seen success.

Following the conclusion of Mr. Martin's overview, he entertained questions.

Council Member Moore inquired about the role that ICE plays in the process. Mr. Martin replied that ICE is under the umbrella of Homeland Security and noted they do play a role. Chief Shultz added that ICE representatives do work with the High Point Police Department and have been extremely helpful with the Domestic Violence Initiative.

Council Member Peters asked if there is any new data showing homicides outside of violent crimes and if homicides could be categorized separately. Chief Shultz referenced the chart and noted the various crimes are identified on the chart that he shared earlier such as criminal homicides and manslaughter. He expressed frustration because while the robberies are decreasing as well as many of the other crime numbers, but assaults with a deadly weapon has increased to 41%. He explained that a majority of these are houses that are being shot at and although it's not actually people, the National Reporting System categorizes it all as aggravated assault. He further explained that High Point is at 17 more total violent crimes, including homicide, than this time last year. Overall,

averaging the burglaries, auto thefts, and larcenies shows a decrease of 7% as compared to the same time last year for the totality of those major crimes that impact the city.

Council Member Golden mentioned the tics identified on the chart and asked if this was a one-year tic or multiple year tics. Chief Shultz replied they were annual tics.

Council Member Golden mentioned an email he received where somebody questioned the spikes in crime for more than a year and asked if High Point should be calling in others to help. The Chief explained this was the message in the meeting today, that there are agencies and partners working in High Point to drive the crime numbers down. He emphasized that it is the federal partners that makes the wholistic approach successful.

Looking at the violent crime, so far this year the High Point Police Department is averaging more than one gun being taken off the streets per day and arrests are being made on a regular basis. He emphasized that they are getting a lot of benefit from the gun screenings. The Chief noted that the State Probation and Parole is a critical partner and has been very helpful in moving forward.

Chief Shultz noted the proposed FY 2019-2020 budget includes an additional person for their crime lab that will help tremendously in helping to solve these crimes and better help them to get the 2,000+ shell casings that have been collected over the year into the NIBIN computer system to be analyzed. He also reported that he has been in discussions with Greensboro and Winston Salem about partnering with them to use their NIBIN. The ATF and U.S. Attorney has also been very helpful in getting the High Point Police Department connected to the National Database in Alabama and they are hopeful to have some success.

The Chief advised that the deterrence efforts are ongoing and explained their efforts are to get out in the community and stop the violence before it happens. He spoke to how they could impact violence in two ways.

1. Based on the criminal records, they are aware of the likelihood that offenders are going to get involved with acts of violence.
2. Retaliation—they are also aware that much of High Point's violence comes from shootings and gang retaliation.

Council Member Jones asked there is any data available that shows the impact of the new Family Justice Center in High Point. Chief Shultz advised he could get a report on the services provided but noted that he has been extremely pleased with the effort and the amount of services provided so far. Council Member Williams added that they have provided services to over 1,100 people since the Family Justice Center opened.

Council Member Golden inquired about the gate that used to be located at Brentwood Crossing and if it might be possible to make the property owner put the fence back up. Chief Shultz acknowledged this is one of the hot spots for crime, but advised that it is private property, so they couldn't make them put the gate back up.

Council Member Peters asked if the DARE program is still in the schools. The Chief replied that it is not and noted that most agencies around the country have dropped the DARE program as it

becomes a matter of leveraging resources and manpower. As a final point, the Chief Shultz stated the goal is deterrence and encouraged any suggestions from Council as to getting in front of the youth to help mentor and make a positive impact on them. He explained the earlier we start mentoring the youth, the better it would be and the benefits of the payback for the efforts would be realized down the road to break the cycle.

Council Member Moore asked how it is going on the prosecution part and if the court system is better or still slow. Chief Shultz advised they are still working through the system and expressed frustration when people in the community demand the Police Department do something about the violent crime and question why the suspects cannot be caught and prosecuted. He noted unfortunately the community does not think enough efforts are being put forth by the Police Department. He mentioned there is a national push to get away from bonds due to them disproportionately impacting people, and he felt this really needs to be assessed because people are victimizing the community and being released back into the streets again.

Chief Shultz explained that any changes to the system would have to come from legislation and encouraged Council to talk to their Representatives and Congressmen, as well as contact the District Attorney and U.S. Attorneys to see if they have what they need to keep the community safe.

Deputy City Manager McCaslin thanked Mr. Martin and Chief Shultz for taking time to present this information to Council.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa B. Vierling, MMC
High Point City Clerk