

City of High Point

*Municipal Office Building
211 S. Hamilton Street
High Point, NC 27260*

Minutes

Monday, February 4, 2019

3:30 PM

City Council Chambers

Special Called Meeting

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**Present:**

Mayor Jay Wagner, Mayor Pro Tem Jason Ewing (Ward 6) [arrived at 4:27 p.m.]; Council Member Britt Moore (At Large); Council Member Don Scarborough (At Large); Council Member Jeffrey Golden (Ward 1); Council Member Monica Peters (Ward 3) [arrived at 3:57 p.m.]; Council Member Wesley Hudson (Ward 4); and Council Member Victor Jones (Ward 5)

Absent:

Council Member Chris Williams (Ward 2)

Staff Present:

Greg Demko, City Manager; Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager; JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney; Kenneth Shultz, Chief of Police; Travis Stroud, Major- High Point Police Department; Kenneth Steele, Major- High Point Police Department; James McNeill, Major- High Point Police Department; Mike McNair, Director of Community Development & Housing; Thanena Wilson, Assistant Director of Community Development & Housing; Michelle McNair, Community Resources Manager; Loren Hill, President- High Point Economic Development Corporation; Eric Olmedo, Budget & Administrative Director; Laura Altizer, Senior Budget Analyst; Jeron Hollis, Director of Communication & Public Engagement; Ryan Ferguson, Marketing Manager; and Lisa Vierling, City Clerk

Others Present:

David Willett. Resident
Judy Stalder, TREBIC

News Media Present:

Daniel Pierce, WGHP
Lee Sanderlin, High Point Enterprise

Note: The following documents will be attached in Legistar as a permanent part of these proceedings.

- ✓ PowerPoint Presentation- High Point Police Department- 2018 Year in Review
- ✓ High Point Gang Violence Focus- MLK Weekend 2019
- ✓ Map- 2019 Recent Shootings Reported to HPPD January 1-28, 2019
- ✓ FY 2018-2019 Second Quarter Budget Report

Mayor Wagner called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

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Police Department - 2018 Crime Stats

Attachments: [City Council Review of 2018 Police](#)
[HP GANG VIOLENCE 2](#)

Chief Shultz emphasized that the department focuses on results and looks at trends state and

nationwide. The Long-Term Investment Strategy indicates a 65% growth. According to the Violent Crimes Chart, 1994 was the worst year; the lowest point was in 2014 with 411 violent incidents; and the second lowest in crime was 2018 with 436 violent incidents. The department analyzed the spike in crime that occurred in 2004 and determined the incidents were drug-market driven. The Chief pointed out there are very distinct groups of gang members that continue to drive the violence in High Point. He offered assurances that their emphasis remains to be on violent crime.

There were 18 **homicides** in 2017 and the same number in 2018. The Chief pointed out the important thing to note was there were only four unresolved homicides out of the 18 and these cases continue to receive focus and attention. He felt the Violent Crimes Task Force is still working in the fact that four of five hear and heed. However, he expressed frustration with the number of homicides due to the positive reductions in aggravated assaults with firearms overall and the 19% decrease in robberies over the same time period. He noted they have been able to drive down the violent crime in all categories with the exception to homicides.

Regarding **staffing and deployment**, the Chief reported that 2018 ended at 248 of 255 sworn staff and 42 of 44 civilian staff. He pointed out the numbers reflect they are still down 7.6% taking into consideration those officers that are currently in training. The hiring/training process takes about 9 months for the officers to be effective.

Chief Shultz then shared the number of officers that have been killed in the line of duty continues to have negative effects on recruitment efforts. The total line of duty deaths nationwide for 2018 was 150 with 8 of those officers in North Carolina. Approximately 13% of these officers were killed by actual gunfire.

The Police Department is using a **new reporting system** for incident reporting and crime data called National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). The Chief advised that the FBI mandated this change and it is scheduled to be implemented by 2021. He noted this change has been a challenge and has created some issues causing them to have to go back and run records for previous years on incidents for comparison purposes. Greensboro and Winston-Salem have already implemented this system as well.

The 2018 **Impact Crimes Trend with actual 2018 and 2017** show spikes in crime generally in January, spring break, and Christmas. It shows the impact of crimes down 15% in 2018 as compared to 2017.

Chief Shultz stated he was extremely pleased with the **clearance rates** which would not be possible without the efforts of his staff as well as assistance and cooperation from the community.

Overall, property crimes are down 14% from 2017. According to 2018 arrest statistics, 6,633 individuals were arrested for 14,485 charges; 78% of these are misdemeanor while

22% are felony arrests. The breakdown according to gender and age is as follows:

70% Male
30% Female
41% Age 19-29
27% Age 30-39
14% Age 40-49
9% Age 50+

He then shared the Top Crash locations for the six beats in the city as follows:

Beat 1: S. Main Street & Fairfield Avenue
Beat 2: S. Main Street & Greenview Terrace
Beat 3: Lexington Avenue & Westchester Drive
Beat 4: Eastchester Drive & I-74
Beat 5: Eastchester Drive & Johnson Street
Beat 6: Eastchester Drive & Wendover Avenue

Chief Shultz explained in 2018, the department reorganized the beats for response purposes, resulting in a 2:18 response time for priority calls. Numbers are a little bit higher in Beats 1 and 2.

There were nine traffic fatalities in 2019. There were 19,374 traffic citations written, resulting in 23,770 charges and 5,082 warnings. The Top 5 traffic charges are:

1. Speeding
2. License suspended or revokes
3. Registration expired
4. Speeding 15 mph over speed limit
5. No Operator's license

Chief Shultz reported his department started tracking Heroin Overdoses in 2014 and shared the following numbers.

Year	Heroin Overdoses
2014	116
2015	77
2016	191
2017	316
2018	218

He noted the department ended up decreasing the overdose responses by 31% for the year and were able to decrease the number of actual heroin deaths decreased by 37%. He noted the department continues to work strongly with the District Attorney Task Force partners to address the heroin side of the opioids and it remains a focus of their Vice Narcotics unit.

In 2018, The Family Justice Center opened in High Point that was made possible by partnering with Guilford County. The center provides necessary services and resources for domestic violence victims, child and elder abuse victims.

Improvements in 2018

The Chief reported that authorized funding for a public information officer position. The Community Outreach Program is now Community Engagement Operations. Once all positions are filled in this unit, plans are to have a very visible presence in the downtown area moving forward utilizing the Community Engagement unit.

Chief Shultz entertained any questions from Council pertaining to the overview at this time.

Mayor Wagner inquired about a comparison of High Point's statistics with other jurisdictions per capita to see where we are as far as the crime rate. Chief Shultz replied the department does this through benchmarking and reports the results in the budget process. He stated he did not have the

At this time, Chief Shultz turned over the floor to Major Travis Stroud for a report on violent crime that has happened so far in 2019

Gang Violence in High Point

Major Stroud deals with major crimes, deterrence and prevention. He prefaced his presentation with a statement that some of the information he would be providing may appear to be vague and he did remove any names and identifying information of suspects because they did not want to jeopardize any of the active on-going investigations.

He highlighted statistics for the department through Week 5 of 2019. Criminal homicide, robbery, robbery with a firearm, and total persons crime are all down as compared to the same time in 2018. He reported an alarming high number of assaults with a gun which is up 64% as compared to the same time last year. He shared a map that was distributed identifying locations of 2019 shootings throughout the city that were reported to the Police Department.

Major Stroud elaborated on some theories on the gang violence that has been happening in the city. He reported a power struggle between gang rivals, drugs, and retaliation over a dispute regarding a stolen necklace in Greensboro are largely responsible for the gang violence that High Point has been experiencing. He then shared the following theories on the uptick of gang violence happening in the city:

- ✓ The violence is a direct result of a power struggle between two groups. The Police Department is aware of these individuals and their affiliations.
- ✓ One specific group has been dominant and responsible for past violence in the city.
- ✓ Through Focused Deterrence, the Police Department was able to disrupt and dismantle a portion of this group (i.e. 701 Thissell Street and through the MLK shootout arrests)
- ✓ As a result of this action, one side now has a lack of shooters on the street and the other side is now trying to take over as a result of the power vacancy.

Additional theories and rumors are that two figureheads with extensive records are both giving orders for shootings due to unpaid debt for drugs and the power struggle. Major Stroud went on to say that orders are being given from high-ranking gang members who are outside of High Point and these orders have included shooting rival gang members on sight regardless of any prior interaction. He noted that it has also been rumored that bounties have also been placed on various individuals.

Major Stroud explained that the Police Department's reaction and response time (two minutes and eighteen seconds) is critical when answering calls, and pointed out the flipside to the fast response time also makes for a better chance for an arrest and a better chance for a confrontation between the suspects and the police officers that respond. He stated response time is a crucial element to these calls because it provides a better chance of on-site arrests; gathering of evidence at the crime scene; and potential witness information. This allows responding officers to:

- ✓ Make possible arrests based on probable cause.
- ✓ Offenders are taken off the street and cannot commit any more acts of violence in the short term.
- ✓ Chances of retaliatory shootings are decreased.
- ✓ Potential future victims are removed from the equation since they are now in jail.

Focused Deterrence then comes into the picture and they try to predict and prevent the next act of violence by custom notifications to potential drivers of violence and their support system as well as involvement and assistance through probation and parole.

Mayor Stroud shared the following information on the offenders/victims/players that are driving these violence and gang-related crimes.

Arrests	Age	Special Notes
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36 since 1998	38	
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12 since 2008	26	Currently wanted
4 since 2014	22	
6 since 2017	24	1st Degree Murder Charge (MLK Shootout January 2018)
19 since 2008	26	
10 since 2014	22	Involved in Langford homicide 2017

He reiterated that the Police Department is data driven and this data is used to help focus available officers on particular people or places and allows them to concentrate on hot areas with saturated patrol activities while being mindful to cause the least amount of impact to those not involved.

The data shows that gun crimes have drastically increased over the last five years. So far in 2019, 309 casings have been collected and 48 guns have been collected compared to the entire year in 2018, 221 shell casings were collected, and 43 guns collected.

In closing, Major Stroud reported the Police Department would continue

- ✓ To work closely with Federal and State partners to assist in their focus on violent offenders.
- ✓ To work closely with HPCAV to help deter and guide at-risk individuals.
- ✓ Take the proper steps to upgrade the Forensic Unit to the level where minimal outside assistance is needed to investigate, process, analyze, and produce reports on evidence of violent crimes-particularly gun crimes.
- ✓ Continue to make strides in Community Engagement and positive interactions with citizens.

Following the presentation, Major Stroud entertained questions.

Council Member Golden asked if the method that was used to shut down 701 Thissell Street could possibly be applied to some of the other houses with high criminal activity and calls for service. Chief Shultz explained the reason it took so long to shut down 701 Thissell was they were victims and the Constitution does not allow them to address victims, but the Department was able to put enough heat on them elsewhere and they eventually decided to move to another location in the city. He further explained as the city is looking at the Top 10% of crime in the neighborhoods for the rental properties, they would have to closely watch this because being a victim of a crime would not count towards the numbers where bad things are happening in the neighborhoods.

Council Member Peters reported that she has received several calls regarding the rash of shootings that recently occurred on W. English and asked if there would be some way for High Point is sick and tired of gangs and suggested it could be High Point Against Gangs or something similar. She mentioned the tagging of buildings by gang members.

Chief Shultz explained there is an ordinance for graffiti removal and asked Council Members to report any incidents to the Police Department because once the owners are provided notice, they are required to cover that up or the city will do it and they will be fined for it.

City Manager Greg Demko added that we are working on tightening up what appears to be loop holes with the bonds and how to keep these violent crimes offenders in jail.

Council Member Jones asked if there were city funds available to possibly go around and clean up the tagging in the city. Mayor Pro Tem Ewing felt in the case of abandoned structures it would be an opportunity to treat it like tall grass and other public nuisance abatement issues, clean it up and place a lien on the property. City Attorney Carlyle advised that staff needs to investigate this to see whether it could possibly be added to the list.

Council Member Hudson applauded the School Resource Officers for how they get involved in the student's lives while at school and away from school.

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Six Month Budget Review (2018-2019)

Attachments: [FY 2019 Second Quarter Report](#)
[EO Feb 4 Catalyst Development Project UPDATE 2_4_2019](#)

Eric Olmedo, Managing Director, provided an overview for the first half of the FY 2018-2019 budget. (A copy of the presentation will be attached as a permanent part of these proceedings).

General Fund

Year-to-Date, the revenues total almost \$65 million or 54% and expenditures are at \$54 million or about 45%. Mr. Olmedo noted the major revenue category in the General Fund is property taxes of which \$55 million was budgeted. Approximately \$43.6 million has been collected year-to-date or about 79%. The Sales Tax revenue we get from the State is up about 4% which is what staff anticipated. Powell Bill and DOT funds we get from the State for maintenance of streets is already at 88% of collections mainly because these funds get paid the first six months of the year.

Mr. Olmedo reported that pretty much the various departments revenues and expenditures are consistent as to expectation.

Seventy percent of the revenues have been collected for the building permits/fees due to more commercial development and more counter permits than were budgeted for. Mr. Olmedo explained that some of the fees were changed in last year's budget, but because of the unknown impact, staff budgeted conservative numbers.

Bottomline, for the General Fund revenues, approximately \$65 million has been received so

far for the year (\$52.8 million was anticipated). The expenditure side for the General Government is a little over at 51.6%. Mr. Olmedo advised the primary driver for this is the legal services and some of the outside legal counsel expenses. Staff is reviewing these charges because some of the charges belong in the Water & Sewer fund legal services line item.

Mr. Olmedo did note that the reason Public Services is a little low is partly due to some vacant positions. Laura Altizer, Senior Budget Analyst, added that some of it was also the street resurfacing which is a big driver because it cannot happen during cold weather, so it gets pushed out later in the year.

The only other area where there was a bit of an increase over the 50% is the Theatre due to them having to book and prepay some of the acts at the Theatre.

It was anticipated for the General Fund expenditures to be about 48%, but the expenditures are at 44.8%.

Water & Sewer Fund

Mr. Olmedo advised the total budget right now for the Water & Sewer Fund is around \$55 million. On the revenue side, 50.4% or \$27.7 million has been collected thus far. On the expenditure side, departments have spent \$26.3 million, which is about 47.8% of the projected budget.

The revenues are consistent at or just above 50% as expected. Mr. Olmedo pointed out the Miscellaneous revenue is down due to a large insurance payment received for the Riverdale Pump Station that flooded during Hurricane Michael. Bottomline, approximately \$28 million has been collected or 50.4% of the expected revenue. On the expenditure side, approximately \$26.3 million has been expended or about 47.8%.

Electric Fund

The Electric Fund totals about \$38 million. Year-to-date revenues of \$69.5 million or 50.5% have been received; year-to-date expenditures total \$56 million or 40.8%. Most of these are at or a little above 50% as expected. Mr. Olmedo pointed the residential electric is up at 53.8% which is probably due to the extremely cold weather that we've had. He reported no surprises on the expenditure side and noted engineering is a little low because of some savings in design services and software leases. The Power Supply is the largest expense at \$93 million. Year-to-date \$4.9 million has been spent or about 51%. This is strictly the wholesale cost. There are several Capital Improvement Projects in process in Electric's budget; the total expenditure is right at \$56 million or 40.8% of the budget.

Solid Waste Fund

The Solid Waste Fund consists of a total budget of just over \$18 million. The actual revenue is \$8.1 million or 45% with expenditures at \$7 million or 37%. Mr. Olmedo noted the MRF tipping fees and recycling sales are down a little, but overall, the fund is right at 45.1% which is expected. The expenditure side for the landfill operations is at \$2 million or 36% which is also

expected. The expenditures at Ingleside, MRF and collections are right on target.

Mayor Pro Tem Ewing asked where the incinerator and sludge hauling expenses were in the budget. Mr. Olmedo replied this is in the Water and Sewer Fund side under Capital Improvement Projects. He noted it is not included in this report but offered for staff to do an update soon. Mr. McCaslin shared some good news in that we are no longer hauling sludge because the incinerator is working and operating properly.

Stormwater Fund

Year-to-date revenues in this fund are at 33.5% and expenditures are at 19.7%. The collection for the stormwater fees that all residents and businesses pay is as expected, and on the commercial side as well.

Mr. Olmedo noted the Miscellaneous is at 152% and explained that is good, but noted it is interest earnings. On the expenditure side, the operating expenses are at 42.7% and this is a little lower due to engineering trying to get plans ready to do these large projects and those monies have not yet been spent. In anticipation of a bond sale this year, an anticipated debt service was included in the budget. Staff is waiting to get the right project list compiled to go out and have a bond sale for the stormwater projects.

The following questions were posed at the conclusion of the presentation.

Council Member Moore inquired about the date of the last bond sale for the Water and Sewer Fund. Mr. Olmedo noted the last water and sewer bond sale was in 2016. Mr. McCaslin noted that they anticipate doing a bond sale again this Spring.

Referring to the Solid Waste Fund, Mayor Pro Tem Ewing asked if staff has seen a benefit since the city did the conversion to a full Enterprise Fund. Mr. McCaslin explained it depends on how “benefit” is defined but advised that it is pretty much going as projected. Mr. Olmedo added that having a tax rate that is 0.3 cents lower than it was at its peak is a benefit. Based on the coverage of revenue over expenditures, Mayor Pro Tem Ewing asked if staff foresees any future increases in those rates. Mr. Olmedo stated based on the current projects the answer is no but noted that staff does look at this on an annual basis.

Mr. McCaslin advised that recycling is one area where there a cost increase will be anticipated because of all the recycling changes that are coming in the next several years.

CLOSED SESSION (ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE)

Mayor Wagner announced the need to go into closed session pursuant to N.C. General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3) to preserve the attorney-client privilege.

Upon reconvening into open session at 5:12 p.m., the Mayor announced there was no action taken as a result of the closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 p.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jay W. Wagner, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa B. Vierling, City Clerk