

Council Business Meeting

May 15, 2018

Title: Ashland Police Department's Annual use of Force Report
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Summary:

Since 2008 the police department has come before Council to provide an annual use of force report. This presentation has grown in scope and now includes use of force, crime and clearance rates and an update on the enhanced law enforcement area (ELEA).

Actions, Options, or Potential Motions:

No action is necessary.

Staff Recommendation:

N/A

Resource Requirements:

N/A

Policies, Plans and Goals Supported:

47. Keep the Council informed of organizational activity and provide timely information for Council decision-making.

Background and Additional Information:

During 2017 the Police Department used force 13 times. This represents a 56% decrease from 2016, but also puts the department on par with 2015. There was one instance of the Taser conducted energy weapon being used in 2017. There were three instances of the use of pepper spray in 2017. The less lethal shotgun bean bag round was not deployed at all in 2017. The straight baton was used in one case in 2017. There were four instances of officers being injured, with all of the injuries being fairly minor. In one of these instances the officer received medical treatment and was placed on light duty for a short period. Of the 13 instances of use of force, seven resulted in the prisoner complaining of an injury. All of those complaints were minor in nature, and in no case did the prisoner require medical care. Fifty-four percent of the use of force incidents involved a person under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Sixty-nine percent of the use of force incidents occurred at night time. In 2017 APD handled over 27,000 calls for service and generated 4,436 case reports. This means that less than one half of one percent of the cases that were handled by the APD resulted in a use of force.

The department's use of force review board reviewed all instances of the use of force. Twelve of the thirteen incidents were deemed to be entirely within policy. One of the reviews resulted in the board finding that a different amount of and type of force should have been employed, as well as

different tactics in handling the call. In this case the officer received corrective coaching. In this isolated incident the suspect was not injured and complained of minor pain.

During 2016 Ashland officers received a total of 693.5 hours of use of force training.

Crime rate is based on the number of part one crimes occurring in a jurisdiction. Part one crimes are those that are reported annually to the FBI for inclusion into the Uniform Crime Report. They are homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, auto theft, arson and larceny. In 2017 the city saw a total of 799 part one crimes. This is down slightly from the 829 reported in 2016. For further comparison in 2015 the PD took 639 part one cases, in 2014 we took 629 and 2013 we took 694. Violent crime is defined as homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assault. There were 40 violent crimes reported to the Ashland Police Department in 2017, practically equal with the 39 seen in 2016. And still up from 20 reported in 2015. Clearance rates for part one crime remain high at 36%. Clearance rates for violent crime remains very high at 80%.

The Enhanced Law Enforcement Area (ELEA) ordinance has been in effect since August of 2012. The ELEA is roughly defined as downtown. In this area we see a concentrated number of complaints and disorderly behavior as this is the focal gathering point for many members of the community. A conviction of three or more qualifying violations (or crimes) in Ashland Municipal Court within a six-month period may result in a person being expelled from the downtown area. The qualifying violations are: scattering rubbish; unnecessary noise; dogs-control required; consumption of alcohol; open container of alcohol; dog license required; or use of marijuana in public. In 2017 there were 359 ELEA violation convictions in the municipal court. There were 15 people expelled from the downtown area and there were six people charged with persistent violator failure to appear under the city ordinance. The ELEA continues to be a valuable tool to address chronic negative behavior.

Attachments:

None