



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Montré Freeman, City Manager
James Webster, Chief of Police

Date: February 9, 2024

Ref: Update / Discussion - Violent Crime and the Department Response

BACKGROUND:

During the period of Thursday, February 1st through Sunday, February 4th, Elizabeth City saw a series of shots fired calls:

-On February 1st at 4:22 a.m., the department received a call of shots fired in the vicinity of West Church and Griffin Street.

-On February 1st at 1130 p.m., the department was dispatched to the area West Church and Griffin Street for shots fired.

-On February 2nd at 5:52 a.m., officers responded to shots fired in 1100 block of Herrington Road.

-On February 3rd at 2:23 p.m., officers were dispatched to shots fired at 1803 Weeksville Road.

-On February 3rd at 10:47 p.m., officers responded to shots fired in the area of Hunter and Cahoon Street.

-On February 4th at 5:50 p.m., officers responded to the Speed Street for a shots fired call.

ANALYSIS:

A. Significant Calls

On February 1st at 4:22 a.m., the department received a call of shots fired in the vicinity of West Church and Griffin Street. Officers responded to this call but were unable to locate any evidence or property damage. Officers were able to utilize the City cameras and confirm the sound of shots fired in the area. Later on February 1st at 11:30 p.m., there was an additional call in the area of Griffin and West Church; however, no evidence or damage was located.

On February 2nd at 5:52 a.m., officers responded to the 1100 block of Herrington Road. Officers discovered that a Mr. Jahemian Raynor had discharged a weapon in his home during an argument. Mr. Raynor was arrested on February 5th. He has been charged with discharging a firearm in the city limits and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

On February 3rd at 2:23 p.m., officers responded to 1832 Weeksville Road for shots fired at the Legends Barbershop. At least three individuals were involved in an exchange of gunfire. A bystander was injured during the incident and seven vehicles were damaged. The victim was transported to Albemarle Sentara Medical Center for treatment. Detectives and officers were able to collect evidence at the scene, including the seizure of two suspect vehicles. The investigation into this matter is still underway.

On February 3rd at 10:47 p.m., a Mr. Jarontea Chamblee self-reported to Albemarle Sentara Medical Center emergency department with two gunshot wounds. The wounds were non-life-threatening. He reported being shot near the Cahoon Street and Hunter Street intersection. Mr. Chamblee was in his car at the time. This case is still under investigation.

On February 4th at 5:50 p.m., officers responded to the area of Speed Street for shots fired. A group of individuals were seen leaving the area but no evidence of shots fired could be located.

As stated above, three of the shots fired calls could not be substantiated with physical evidence. This is not to say that they did not occur but that all investigative means have been exhausted at this time. The incident on February 2nd has been cleared by arrest. The February 3rd incidents are still under investigation.

B. What is the Department Doing to Address Weapons Crimes

1. Juvenile Call Ins- This past summer the department recognized a spike in shots fired calls involving juveniles. The department mirrored a focused deterrence model of crime aimed at adult offenders and conducted two call-ins focused on the parent and or guardian of our most prolific juvenile offenders. At the call-in parents were educated on the activity of their children and put on notice that law enforcement knew their children and would hold parents accountable when possible.

The parents were also provided the opportunity to ask for help. Help included graduation plans for their children, mental health and employment services. A total of twenty four invitations were sent out with five parents attending. As a result of the call-in shots fired incidents calmed down. After the call in two parents received curfew violation citations and one was cited for contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Landlords were also notified of activity occurring on their property and subsequently two evictions were carried out. The streets were these evictions took place have gone quiet.

2. Community Watch- The Elizabeth City Community Watch program had languished due to a number of factors including COVID. The department revitalized this program in order to strengthen the bond between citizens and the police department. The department has presented attendees with updates on crime in the city, the state of the police department as well as crime and safety tips.
3. Violent Crime Action Plan (VCAP) - On January 8th, ECPD staff met with Mike Easley, US Attorney for Eastern NC along with representatives from Federal, State and regional partners to counter gangs and violent crime. Eleven different local, state and federal agencies were in attendance. The work group will use the focused deterrence model to concentrate its resources and enforcement efforts on our community's most prolific adult offenders. ECPD went to the initial meeting armed with a list of our top fifteen offenders. VCAP will allow our department to request assistance when necessary from federal and state assets. VCAP will also enable ECPD to request attention and face track for prosecution our worst offenders.
4. Carolina Regional Fugitive Task Force- The department continues to partner with the US Marshal Service. The department maintains a Task Force Officer with USMS. We have called upon USMS to track and apprehend fugitives from our City.
5. Technology- ECPD uses a variety of investigative tools to apprehend and prosecute offenders. These tools include the City Camera System, collecting DNA and other forensic evidence at crime scenes. We have a strong partnership with NC Crime Lab. The department submits ballistic evidence to be processed through the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN). The department uses ETRACE (Federal weapons data base) to track all weapons that the department comes into contact with. Our Intel Officers use open source data to create link analysis for our offenders. Our Officers and Staff are very adept at processing crime scenes and handling evidence.

6. The following spreadsheet illustrates the hard work the department has put forth over the past years. Especially noteworthy is the fact the department has managed this effort with a much depleted work force

Elizabeth City Police Department						
Year	Homicide Incidents	Nonfatal Incidents	Shots Fired	Firearms Recovered	Shell Casings Collected	NIBIN Hits
2018	3	6	208	58	185	N/A
2019	1	16	183	57	315	3
2020	7	16	249	70	385	1
2021	9	27	250	65	798	14
2022	8	27	218	62	646	41
2023	3	17	255	51	737	49
Total	31	109	1363	363	3066	108

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

No action requested. The proceeding was for informational purposes.

