

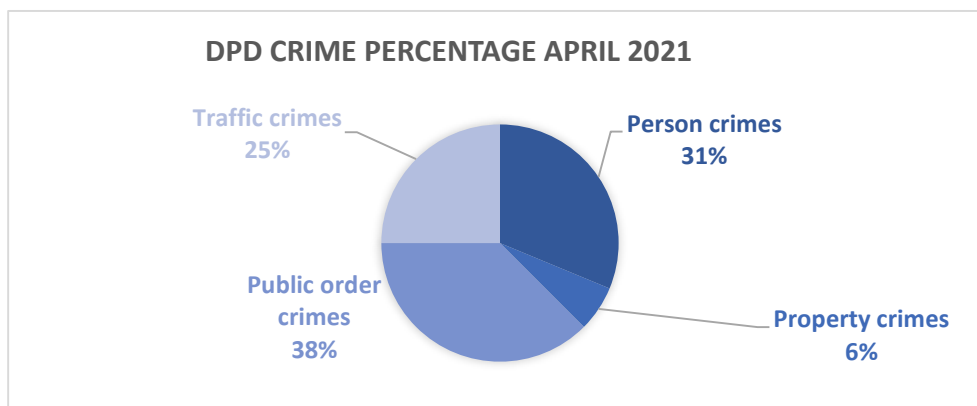


## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** 4-27-2021  
**TO:** Interim-City Manager Gregg Brelsford  
**FROM:** Chief Daniel Pasquariello  
**SUBJECT:** Public Safety Department Report **MAY 2021**

### STAFF REPORT

*Reporting dates 3/24/21 to 4/27/21*



### PATROL

Officer Lowery resigned, after working 7 years as a patrol officer. He took a newly created position as an Alaska DOC Pre-trial Enforcement Officer. The position as regular hours and his salary is 25% higher. We will miss him but wish him well in his new position. Since this position is based in Dillingham we will continue to work with him.

So, we now have 3 vacant officer positions, a 62% staffing level. We have been advertising locally, statewide, and nationally for 6 months and have received only two applications. We hired both applicants. One left after only four months and the other will have to attend a 16 week police academy later in the summer, further reducing our staffing level.

Our difficulty in recruiting and retaining police officers caused us to evaluate our recruiting and scheduling practices. A meeting was held with the Chief, the City manager, Finance Director,

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the Mayor, and the chairs of the Finance /Budget committee, and the Code committee. A plan for a two week rotational schedule, similar to north slope workers, to try and attract experienced certified police officers. The plan was presented and approved. Below is the text of the power point presented at the meeting by the Chief:

- Police departments throughout Alaska (and the USA) are having a difficult time recruiting and retaining police officers in this current climate of anti-police sentiment
- The problem is extremely dire in rural Alaska
- DPD has been advertising for police officers for the past 6 months, both statewide and nationally. We have received only 2 applicants, and hire both of them. One was a local raw recruit and one was an Alaska certified lateral hire
- After 4 months of working for us the lateral hire resigned and moved back to his place of residence in another Alaskan community
  
- We try to recruit local, non-experienced raw recruit, but rarely find any interested persons
- We hire raw recruits at salary step level 1
- When we hire raw recruits they must be field trained from scratch for a minimum of three months (12 weeks) in order for them to learn the very basic of police skills
- During this time the raw recruit is not autonomous, cannot work shifts alone, and does not provide competent service to the public
- The raw recruit must then be sent to the Sitka police academy, at great city cost, for four months (16 weeks) in order to be eligible for APSC certification
- During their first year the raw recruit will be either in training, or out of town for 28 weeks, more than half of the year
  
- A lateral hire officer is an experienced police officer that has been trained and certified in either Alaska or another state
- We hire lateral officers at salary level step 4
- If hired the officer will require minimal field training for one month (4 weeks) to familiarize themselves with DPD operations
- If the officer is Alaska certified the city will incur no academy costs
- If the officer is certified from another state the city will incur the costs of a 2 week re-certification academy in Sitka
- The officer will be able to provide competent police service to the public right away
  
- Retaining experienced out of town applicants is extremely difficult due to them/their families not wanting to live in such a small, isolated community like Dillingham
- Dillingham is competing with other small rural police departments to attract experienced lateral officers
- Most other small rural PD's pay a higher starting salary then we do
- Small PD's that pay less than we do are on the road system, a huge attractant
- All small rural Alaska police departments are having trouble recruiting and retaining experienced police officers

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“Several Alaska police departments have hired non-resident officers to alternate shifts, including Bethel, North Slope Borough, Fort Yukon, Kotzebue...It’s a solution that more remote police departments struggling with turnover have adopted...It is far more widespread than we have seen in the past.”

Bob Griffiths, Executive Director of the Alaska Police Standards Council

- Many of the small rural Alaska police departments that we are competing with to attract lateral hire officers have adopted the 2 on/2 off rotating schedule
- Even the Alaska State Troopers have adopted 2 week on/2 week off schedules for their most rural posts (Togiak being one of them)
- In order to compete with them Dillingham needs to adopt the 2 on/2 off rotating police schedule model
  
- A lateral hire officer would work fourteen 12 hour days (84 hour pay period) and be off for fourteen days
- City will pay airfare for officer ANC-DLG round trip (twelve trips = \$7,200 a year)
- Officer would live in the city-owned Senior Center apartment and pay minimal rent. This will provide revenue to the Senior Center department
- Officer would be given a sign-on bonus, currently \$10,000, to attract applicants.
- While seemingly high, the city will not have to pay academy/training, the costs of which are many times greater
  
- DPD becomes a much more attractive place to work since officers/families will be able to live elsewhere
- The hiring pool will increase from just locally/statewide to nationally
- Experienced officers will be able to provide immediate quality, competent service to the public
- Living full-time in bush Alaska requires serious mental toughness and a desire to live here due to isolation.
- Attracting persons with the required toughness and desire is getting harder and harder
- Essentially having a vacation every 2 weeks will allow officers time to de-stress
  
- Policing is changing in Alaska and throughout the nation
- The Dillingham Police Department will fall by the wayside if a solution to officer recruitment and retention is not found
- A 2 week on/2 week off rotating schedule may be that solution, providing higher quality officers, at a great savings of training costs and overtime coverage

Officer Farnsworth continues to work as part of the AST Anchorage Airport Interdiction Team (AAIT) task force. The below metrics show **the amount of drugs that were headed for Dillingham** that were seized this month by the AAIT task force:

Heroin	89 grams
Meth	73 grams
3 persons charged with drug offenses	

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The Alaska Police Officers Association (APOA) provided us links to free on-line webinars. Many officers took advantage of the training, accumulating multiple certificates. The Chief made two 8 hour webinars mandatory:

Verbal De-escalation  
Confronting Bias in law Enforcement

These two topics are currently major issues in American policing today.

## **DISPATCH**

We still have a vacant dispatcher position, keeping us at an 80% staffing level.

## **CORRECTIONS**

The Alaska Court System "TrueFiling" system is currently up and operational. When learning any new system all agencies involved are experiencing minor issues, but we are slowly getting them all resolved.

Public Works repaired/replaced the torn off paneling in cell #6.

## **ANIMAL CONTROL**

The ACO held an annual rabies shot clinic at the shelter. We gave 46 rabies shots and sold 24 Dog licenses. This event could not be this successful without the help of some wonderful volunteers:

Melany Eakin from Environmental Health  
Paul Lieberg  
Patty Buholm and her daughter Tricia

A raven was observed dangling from a tree by some monofilament fishing line in HUD. The ACO responded with the assistance of ADF&G personnel. The plan was to free the bird by shooting the fishing line with a shotgun. After further thought Nushagak Cooperatives personnel were contacted and the raven was freed using pike pole.

The same day as the raven incident AST brought a prisoner to the jail from the airport. The prisoner had a small Chihuahua dog with them. After the prisoner was placed in the jail AST went to take the dog out of their patrol car and give it to the ACO. The dog escaped and fled down Alaska St. with a trooper in foot pursuit. The dog ran into the ADF&G fenced yard and disappeared. The prisoner was from Anchorage and the dog, never before having been in Dillingham was obviously in a panic. Two troopers, two DPD officers, the ACO, and emotional

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support K-9 Vinny showed up at the yard. Passers-by stopped wondering what excitement was occurring since here were so many officers/vehicles present. Unable to find the dog the prisoner (*owner*) was taken from the jail to the scene. The dog was soon safely apprehended and taken to the pound.

### **DMV**

We are still not giving road tests to avoid having our agent be in a confined space with persons during this pandemic.