



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 08/20/2024

ITEM NO: 17

DATE: August 15, 2024
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Laurel Prevetti, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Receive the Information Provided in the Police Services Report: January – June 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive the information provided in the Police Services Report: January – June 2024.

BACKGROUND:

On January 16, 2024, the Police Department presented a bi-annual update on overall delivery, staffing updates, and comparison analysis of Public Safety services. The Police Department has remained committed to providing this transparent update since 2022.

The Police Services Report for January – June 2024 presents the following information:

- Department staffing update and trends
- Efficiencies and improvements
- Calls for service and officer activity
- Department goals and communication
- Meliora Organizational Assessment update
- Community Outreach and Partnerships

Earlier this year, the Police Chief shared her vision for the Department with her entire staff team: “My vision of the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department is to provide a high standard of public safety services to those that visit, reside, or work within our jurisdiction through prioritizing recruitment and professional development, fostering a culture of wellness and compassion within the Police Department, and engaging our community for their partnership in serving and protecting. In the next one to two years, the blueprint by which we will enhance this vision is by:

PREPARED BY: Jamie Field
Chief of Police

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and Town Attorney

BACKGROUND (continued):

- Adopting a Department culture that is consistent with community values;
- Focusing on prevention and response to crime, safety, and quality of life concerns; and
- Combining both efficiency and effectiveness, while leveraging technologies that enhance policing operations.

DISCUSSION:

DEPARTMENT STAFFING UPDATE

The Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department (LGMSPD) continues to deliver essential public safety services, while striving to identify areas for improved staff and fiscal efficiencies and implementing important new technologies. The LGMSPD staff takes pride in the model of public safety services delivered, as it encompasses community partnership, a deep understanding of the personalized public safety approach of education, prevention and enforcement, as outlined by the Police Department values integrity, professionalism, and compassion.

The California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) is the California regulatory agency for law enforcement. The POST website has transparency dashboards: <https://post.ca.gov/Data-Warehouse>. One of the POST dashboards shows historical employment data, reflecting annual employment from 1991 to 2023 at the Los Gatos Police Department. The data show the historical staffing coverage and employment model at LGMSPD (see Attachment 1).

It is noteworthy to compare the data between 2001 to present. Overall, the LGMSPD has seen decreased staffing levels, increased calls for service, significantly more technology and auditing requirements, higher demands for training and standards, and an expanded service delivery model.

The data reflect some long-standing residents' observations that they may not see marked patrol units as frequently, as there are not as many Police Officers available as there were in the past. The Officers have more roles and responsibilities with the Department staffing model not increasing in conjunction with call volume, mandates, and population.

The LGMSPD has one Police Officer Trainee graduating from the Police Academy and beginning the Field Training Program shortly. In addition, the LGMSPD expects to have at least one other beginning the Academy in October 2024. While that brings sworn staffing to 33 of the 39 budgeted positions, there are still three Officers unavailable to work as shown in the chart on the next page. The one Officer in training is not available as a solo sworn staff member until the training is completed over the next four months. Part-time Community Services Officers (CSOs) and Reserve Police Officers (RPOs) continue to assist in a limited capacity to alleviate the workload on the lean staff.

DISCUSSION (continued):

The CSOs worked 1,087 hours during the six-month time frame and RPOs worked 941 hours. The table below identifies the current availability of sworn staff, while also considering protected leave, light or modified duty, and those currently being trained:

Budgeted Sworn	Current Sworn	Off due to injury	Light / Modified Duty	Field Training	Total Active and available
39	33	1	1	1	30

Dispatch has eight budgeted positions. Currently there are six operational Dispatchers and one in training. One Dispatcher is available on a limited status. The Police Department has per diem Dispatchers to supplement the full-time Dispatch staff and allow for better coverage. This was invaluable over the last six months due to two Dispatchers being unavailable for most of the timeframe. The per diem Dispatchers have filled in for 676 hours throughout the January – June 2024 time frame.

The Police Department has held a Dispatcher and/or Officer interviews consistently almost every other month of 2024. While nine Officers have retired or left the Department for other reasons the Police Department has hired its highest number ever in a that same time frame: seven sworn members.

The LGMSPD takes pride in maintaining high standards, exceeding the POST minimum requirements, including a minimum of 60 college semester credits or 4 years of military time with an honorable discharge. Additionally, LGMSPD also requires completion of the POST physical agility test and 1.5 mile run within 14 minutes or less to ensure fitness and protect against injuries.

LGMSPD remains one of the few agencies still requiring this high standard. The ability to demonstrate a minimum number of college credits or military service shows the aptitude, independent drive, and commitment to complete a Field Training Program, investigation, or police report.

The chart below compares overtime hours for two years between January - June. The overtime for the Police Department more than doubled what was budgeted for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24. The below variances are due to limited staffing, protected leave, Police incidents, special events, required trainings, and the January Vice Presidential and June First Lady visit.

DISCUSSION (continued);

Title	1/01/23 – 6/30/23	1/01/24 – 6/30/24	Difference in FY
Communications	1,771 hours	1,211 hours	-560 hours
Sworn Staff	4,614 hours	4,724 hours	110 hours

The overtime referenced in the above chart depicts the hourly overtime necessary to sustain core services and does not include the hours committed to Emergency Preparedness support or Community Outreach, Command Staff overtime, and other volunteer or Police Department management resources.

EFFICIENCIES AND IMPROVEMENTS:Silicon Valley Animal Control Association (SVACA) Transition

The Town of Los Gatos and City of San Jose Animal Care Services (SJACS) entered a twenty-year agreement for animal control services for the Town, which expired June 30, 2024. As a part of long-term budget strategies and fiscal forecasts, Police staff explored opportunities for reducing costs, enhancing local control, and improving operational efficiencies for animal control services for Town residents. This resulted in the Council's consideration and approval of a contract with Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority (SVACA) as the new service provider.

Crossing Guard Transition from the Town to Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

The LGMSPD has historically coordinated all-contract services for crossing guards at schools in Los Gatos and Monte Sereno for more than a decade. The previous crossing guard agreement was a four-party cost sharing agreement between the Town, Los Gatos Union School District, Union School District, and the crossing guard vendor, All City Management, which expired June 30, 2024.

Successful transition of the agreement management and crossing guard services to Safe Routes to School occurred during this reporting period with the collaboration of Parks and Public Works. This transition is expected to improve work efficiency, clarify communications between schools and crossing guard services, create streamline operations, and increase productivity.

Flock Safety

The Master Service Agreement with Flock Safety Group Inc. is for 17 Stationary Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR's) and was initially not all under one agreement or a parallel timeframe. Completion of a single, 60-month agreement enhances efficiency, fiscal management, and cost savings.

DISCUSSION (continued):

Grants

Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) grant funds are being used to introduce electronic citation technology for more streamlined communication. LGMSPD is implementing a traffic collision software and electronic citation solution which is expected to produce timely, accurate, complete, accessible, and uniform traffic collision records.

In addition, the software products can be utilized to identify, prioritize, and predict traffic safety issues, analyze appropriate safety countermeasures, record traffic safety enforcement efforts, and produce data to evaluate their effectiveness.

State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP) funds mentioned in the January 2024 Police Services Report have been made available. Project advancement and procurement of two Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTV), First Responder ballistic protective helmets, and protective respirators through SHSGP grant funds are underway. All equipment gained through SHSGP funding will strengthen the overall operational capabilities of the Police Department and provide an enhanced asset to mutual aid collaboration and coordination efforts.

The UTVs will be particularly useful to access the Town’s Open Space Preserves to respond to criminal activity and medical emergencies, conduct routine patrol checks, and perform mandatory evacuations.

CALLS FOR SERVICE AND OFFICER ACTIVITY

The LGMSPD strives to meet response time goals and provide an uncompromising high level of service to the community. The following table depicts a comparison of the Communications Division call volume, both inbound and outbound, immediacy to which they are answered, and number of 911 calls over the last two years between the months of January to June.

The industry standard for a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) agency target, is for 911 calls to be answered within less than ten seconds 95% of the time. Outbound calls can be a result of transferring callers to other points of contact within Town Departments, contacting or following up with community members, or conducting other inter-agency duties. The difference in numbers between the timeframes is likely due to fewer storm events in 2024 compared to 2023.

Jan – June	Inbound 911 calls	% of 911 calls answered < 10 seconds	Incoming Non-emergency calls	Non-emergency Outbound calls
2023	5,535	95.95%	16,416	8,362
2024	4,871	95.9%	14,591	6,872

DISCUSSION (continued):

Officers' response to priority calls for service continue to be comparable to prior years and close to priority goals. These performance measures can be found in the Adopted Fiscal Year 2024/25 Operating Budget in the Police Department chapter. Priority 1 refers to immediate emergency with threat to life or a public safety hazard, Priority 2 is an urgent emergency that requires an immediate response, and a Priority 3 incident is a non-emergency.

The LGMSPD has set response time goals of 5:00 minutes for Priority 1 calls, 10:00 for Priority 2 calls, and 15:00 for Priority 3 calls (see comparison bar chart, slide 6 of Attachment 2).

DEPARTMENT GOALS AND COMMUNICATION: (MANDATES AND TRAINING)

The LGMSPD is also focused on identifying future leaders within the organization. A promotional assessment process was held in March 2024 to evaluate and identify future Corporals and Sergeants. An experienced vendor, Donnoe & Associates, conducted the concise, credible, and POST-compliant testing and assessment process consistent with LGMSPD high standards. This is the first time in over a decade that the Department worked with an independent contractor on an assessment tool.

Several internal candidates successfully completed the process, demonstrating readiness for a promotion. An eligibility list was established from this process and two Sergeants, and one Corporal have been promoted thus far. This will be a continued annual process to assure an eligibility list is maintained for succession planning within the Police Department and an ability for potential candidates to prepare for such opportunities.

A Police Captain position was filled in June after a nationwide search conducted by Peckham & McKenney.

At a Department-wide training meeting in February, each staff member received a handbook detailing an integral wellness program that provides resources and support for many aspects of well-being, following a "LGMSPD Wellness Wheel."



DISCUSSION (continued):

In May 2024, the LGMSPD Leadership Team utilized POST Grant funding and support from the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Foundation to take part in a POST approved and facilitated Team Building Workshop (TBW). A similar workshop occurred in 2022. At the 2024 TBW, the LGMSPD leadership team focused on building a culture of accountability, teamwork, and inclusiveness while evaluating and outlining the Department Strategic Plan for 2024-2026. The goals included within the LGMSPD 2024-2026 Strategic Plan are:

- Recruitment, Development, and Retention
- Embrace and Integrate Technology throughout the Agency
- Organizational Wellness

The Department participated in other trainings, including a debrief of the 2021 Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) active shooter incident, joint training exercises with the Santa Clara County Fire District, and other events.

As staffing improves, the Police Department is focused on supervisor development and training to re-establish specialty teams and to develop confidence and competency in these roles. This requires continuous assessment of mandatory or immediate Department training needs based on POST requirements and operational effectiveness. LGMSPD recently passed its 2022-2024 POST audit.

MELIORA ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT UPDATE

In January 2024 during the Police Services bi-annual report out, the Council unanimously approved entering into an agreement with Meliora Public Safety Consultant services for a comprehensive assessment of the Department. The project is underway, and the consultant efforts are still in progress. The overall themes and outcome of the assessment will be summarized in a future report to Town Council.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Police Department is continuing to invest in community outreach, engagement, and trust-building opportunities to establish and maintain strong relationships and partnerships.

More than 20 Los Gatos and Monte Sereno residents and business owners completed the second LGMSPD Community Police Academy. The Academy took place during the eight weeks of March and April 2024.

Other outreach and engagement opportunities included:

DISCUSSION (continued):

- LGMSPD Explorers supporting visibility and public safety awareness at the Los Gatos Spring into Green. LGMSPD needs additional Explorer volunteers ages 14-20.
- Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Foundation Gala fundraiser that supported funding four new ballistic shields to replace outdated protective equipment.
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Open house at Calvary Church twice in June. There are at least seven new CERT graduates within Los Gatos and two newly built Neighborhood Incident Command Posts (NICPs)
- Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run with \$4,455 funds raised – June 26, 2024
- Special Olympics fundraiser by Steve Mariucci “Battle of the Bay” Bocce Ball Tournament at Campo Di Bocce, Los Gatos – June 4, 2024
- Special Olympics Polar Plunge – February 2024
- Los Gatos Little League Opening Day – March 2024
- Big Truck Days – 3 events
- Senior Resource Fair
- Therapy Canine community engagements
- Neurodiverse event with the Youth Commission for Easter

The Volunteer in Policing Program (VIP) currently has four members. In the last six months, they have contributed over 800 volunteer hours. Their services include checking seven to 20 homes on the vacation log up to three times per week, distributing 260 Welcome Packets, delivering Council mail, and completing other Police support efforts.

The Disaster Aid Response Team (DART) is a non-profit organization that assists in both planned events and unplanned policing incidents, some of which included assisting with the Cats Hill Race and other downtown events with road closures, Vice-Presidential and First Lady visits to Los Gatos in January and June 2024, and other occurrences.

As time permits, Police Department staff works with the local unhoused community, its stakeholders, and service providers. Sworn staff frequently attends the weekly pantry offerings at St. Luke’s and maintains positive relationships with the unhoused residents.

CONCLUSION:

The Police Services Report for January to June 2024 provides an update with transparent information regarding operational efforts, priorities, and accomplishments. LGMSPD is distinct from other public safety agencies due to our exceptional hiring standards, community accessibility to police resources, personalized and high-touch public safety service delivery, and engagement in various forms prior to any policing enforcement possibly being necessary.

CONCLUSION (continued):

The combination of the innovative use of technology with relationship building is valued by our community, has reduced crime, and has maintained the excellent quality of life in Los Gatos.

During the remainder of 2024, the LGMSPD will continue implementing its Strategic Plan focused on hiring and recruitment, technology, and organizational wellness. Future engagements include the swearing in on September 10, 2024, the Police Recognition Luncheon hosted by the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Foundation on October 17, 2024, the Meliora report out, and an explosive detection and tracking canine addition to LGMSPD.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The receipt of this report has no fiscal implications.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Historical Staffing Levels
2. PowerPoint Presentation