

January 19, 2022

**Semi-Annual Report for July 15, 2021 – January 19, 2022**

City Prosecutor – Samuel Erskine

**To: Mayor Scholl and Council Members**

**Introductory note:**

Thank you for allowing me to appear via this written report at council proceedings today. As with previous reports, I will begin this memorandum with a brief snapshot of prosecution statistics for the past several years:

	<b><u>2019</u></b>	<b><u>2020</u></b>	<b><u>2021</u></b> (Some cases still pending review)
<b>Police reports received/processed</b>	380	411	341
<b>Total cases referred</b>	242	290	232
<b>Total cases charged</b>	184	190	194
<b>Jury trials held</b>	8	0	0

While overall case referrals were down slightly, there was an increase in total number of cases charged for 2021 compared to years past. The ongoing absence of jury trials, which could be cause for concern in more normal times, appears related both to scheduling difficulties related to COVID-19 (in the early part of 2021) and to a run of cases resolving on the day of trial or being unable to move forward with the trial due to a defendant's failure to appear.

**Noteworthy recent achievement:**

I believe that Mr. Brown may have presented a note about this in his report to the Council, but I want to take a few lines to provide some additional detail about the recently expanded resources that I have worked with the police department to develop for DUII investigations. With Mr. Brown's help, as well as assistance from Sgts. Eustice and Castilleja at the police department, I coordinated the opening of an account with a private laboratory that can assist in DUII investigations by conducting chemical analysis (of blood or urine samples) for substances that the state crime lab will not conduct analysis for. As we moved forward with this project, I discovered that the Oregon State Police administers a grant program that will pay for the testing (and any witness expenses) associated with prosecuting these cases, so the expansion of these resources has come at zero additional cost to the city. The addition of these resources should strengthen the city's ability to investigate and prosecute a broader range of DUII cases than was possible prior to this expansion.

**Closing:**

I continue to be grateful for the opportunity to serve as the city prosecutor for St. Helens and, despite the likelihood of sounding like a broken record, I want to acknowledge the professionalism and support of the police department, Judge Lindgren, the court-appointed attorneys that work with the court, the court clerks Ms. Payne and Ms. Messenger, and the administrative support from Mr. Brown. Having now had a significant amount of experience in other municipal courts, I can confirm that the St. Helens court operates in an incredibly professional and courteous manner, and it is my pleasure to be part of the staffing for the court.

Samuel Erskine

City Prosecutor for the City of St. Helens