

TAPPAHANNOCK POLICE DEPARTMENT

January 17, 2018

2017 Annual Staff Inspection Report

Chief James G. Ashworth, Jr.

The following is a brief summary of the staff inspection review process and overall activities accomplished by the Tappahannock Police Department during 2017.

A review of the overall operation of this office has been completed. It is my opinion that the members of this department are effectively pursuing department goals and objectives and there were no overall deficiencies discovered.

This inspection included, but was not limited to, a review of the following items:

- The Agency Goals and Objectives themselves were reviewed, with changes.
- The Agency Mission Statement was reviewed, with no revisions.
- The day-to-day operations standards of the various sections of the department were reviewed with no discernible concerns detected.
- A complete review and revision of the department's policy and procedures manual was conducted and completed in accordance with accreditation standards.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION:

There were no new significant equipment changes or additions for 2017. The VCIN terminal connection was upgraded to meet current FBI/VSP requirements. Also, the dedicated body camera computer station connection was upgraded to assist in upload/download times. Special thanks should go to Chuck Huntley, Essex County I.T. manager, for helping us with the body cam connection.

Office/Equipment:

Captain Siddons reported that improvements will need to be made to the computer hardware for the entire department. The realistic life expectancy for computer systems is about 5 years and all the desktop computers within the department are nearing that threshold. Plans to replace the existing records management system are in place; therefore I see no need in addressing that currently. If, however the RMS plans do include the possibility for MDT's for the vehicles a proper assessment should be conducted. It is also recommended that the Police Committee begin discussions related to the current state of the police headquarters. The current facility is over 80 years old and lacks the necessary space, storage, and conveniences of a 21st century police department.

Training:

All sworn personnel requiring recertification in 2017 did so without extensions or special considerations. Captain Siddons along with the partnership of Captain Robert Nester and Investigator Scott Hamilton of the King William Sheriff's Office, conducted two successful and well attended regional in-services at the TEVFD. There are preliminary plans to host two more this year with a slight change in the offered curriculum. Those in-services allowed us to send officers to quality training without requiring long commutes. Captain Siddons would also like to send both Officers Jones and Edwards to upcoming Crisis Intervention training if the schedule allows. This would give us 100% CIT certification in the patrol ranks. All officers requiring recertification of their Breath Alcohol Operator status did so at the Department of Forensic Science in Richmond. Officer Hurd successfully completed Field Training Officer course during the summer. A patrol rifle class was held in August for two officers prior to rifle issuance. The class was taught by Wally Johnson of the Stafford Sheriff's Office and another class is tentatively scheduled for the spring of 2018. Currently we have 3 rifles deployed in the field. All officers were recertified in DCJS mandated firearms in December. This training/qualification was limited to issued sidearm and off-duty pistols.

Evidence/Property Room:

The evidence & property room was audited 6 times during the following the departments accreditation term (January 27, 2017-January 26, 2018). All audits were found to be in compliance with DCJS regulations and policy.

Grants:

The police department utilized two distinct types of grants during the year. First, we were awarded the *DMV Highway Safety Grant* in October 2016 to September 2017 in the amount of \$5144.00. The funds were used for speed enforcement overtime and to replace an inoperable RADAR system. The grant closed with less than \$200 used. The second grant is the *Byrne* discretionary grant awarded by the Commonwealth of Virginia in the amount of \$4566.00. The department purchased crime scene lights, crime scene evidence collection kit, crime scene photo cone kit, digital cameras, and flashlights.

Department Accomplishments:

The police department was able to place the 1997 GMC/HORTON ambulance into service as our *Mobile Command/Forensic* vehicle. Tig's Automotive graciously donated the paint and labor to the department to match our color scheme. A donation was made to the department by the Tappahannock Women of the Moose to be used for refurbishing this vehicle. These funds were used to decal the truck which was marked at *Housier Sign Works* in Hanover. To date the truck has been used at Riverfest, the fall Drug Take Back event, the Northern Neck Electric Touch-A-Truck event, Community Day at Trinity Methodist Church, and department firearms training. It has been stocked with scene lighting, crime scene kit, and other associated crime scene processing equipment. The truck will continue to be stocked as funds become available.

The department in cooperation with the Essex County Sheriff's Office conducted Drug Take Back events in April and October of this year. Both events combined events collected approximately 80 pounds of unwanted prescriptions.

A crime prevention program related to senior personal safety was presented in May by Captain Siddons and MPO F.J. Mitchell, Virginia Marine Police to the Essex-Tappahannock TRIAD. The police department, ECSO and the TRIAD presented the annual CAR-FIT program in October at Tappahannock Chevrolet.

In December, the police department took delivery of a 2017 FORD Police Interceptor Utility from Richmond Ford West. The vehicle was purchased under the City of Chesapeake's municipal contract and outfitted by East Coast Emergency Vehicles of Smithfield, VA. This vehicle has been assigned to Officer Edwards of the patrol division.

We currently continue to utilize the department Facebook and Twitter accounts. They have been active since 2013 and have been well received. The public engages it the most heavily when persons wanted by the department are shared. It is also used to share crime prevention tips, traffic updates, special events and other news worthy items. Currently over 2600 people follow our Facebook page and over 300 people follow the Twitter account. The website usage is difficult to track and plans to update should be discussed. The website is essential however to the department for a variety of information such as employment and annual reports.

Accreditation:

We are currently in the 2nd term of our reaccreditation process. The term dates are January 27 to January 26 of the corresponding year. The reaccreditation efforts will be a much more challenging process due to the tighter time constraints. All proofs must be dated within the term timeline. Ms. Marks continues to be valuable in the maintenance of accreditation files. Both Ms. Marks and Captain Siddons attended accreditation training in October in Bristol, VA. This three-day conference is vital to staying abreast of significant changes to the VLEPSC process.

Events:

- The Tappahannock Police Department and the Essex County Sheriff's Office conducted two prescription drug take-back programs at Wal-Mart.
- The TPD provided off-duty security at Walmart and the Annual TEVFD Oyster roast.
- The TPD also provided security and traffic control during the annual Rivahfest event.
- We also provided assistance with the monthly Tappahannock Farmer's Markets.
- TPD also provided traffic control for the Homecoming and Christmas parades.
- We also provided extra patrol and security for Halloween.
- TPD officers also provided traffic control for several 5k walk/run events.

OPERATIONS DIVISION:

After discussion with Operations Commander Captain Charles F. Davis, Jr., it was determined that the patrol section had met its goals and objectives for the reviewed period of time and directed patrols and checking details have been conducted. The patrol section continues to function in a professional manner and continues to meet the expectations of the agency. Captain Davis advised that traffic enforcement is not where it should be and will be assigning more directed patrol and enforcement projects for patrol. He also stated that the department's Radar and Lidar equipment is in good working condition. He also advised that the department's

patrol vehicles are in good condition but a regular new vehicle purchase program should be maintained.

Captain Davis explained his goals for the upcoming period as follows:

- Continue to support training of patrol officers and their activities.
- Increase traffic enforcement with more directed patrol and traffic checking details.
- Improve and maintain officer morale and motivation.
- Continue to obtain useful equipment and update current equipment.

2017 Total Calls for service and Enforcement statistics:

- Calls for service (Routine) – 1193
- Criminal Investigations – 259
- Total accidents investigated – 57
- Criminal arrests – 362
- Illegal narcotics criminal arrests - 38
- Traffic summonses issued – 494
- Driving under the Influence arrests – 11
- Total calls for service – 2003

Criminal Investigations:

The section continues with weekly discussions regarding active cases, information received, and case reviews are being conducted. Major case investigations have been successfully prosecuted. Training continues regarding crime scene procedures, evidence handling and packaging, and evidence storage. A total of 259 criminal investigations were conducted which resulted in 362 arrests. Captain Davis advised that a real need for filling the department's detective position exists in order to conduct serious investigations and for follow-up investigations from patrol units.

Captain Davis set his goals for the upcoming year as follows:

- Continue to increase training within the section and to offer more training to patrol officers as well.
- Conduct more illegal narcotic investigations.
- Fill the detective vacancy with an experienced officer who excels in investigations.

Personnel Complaints:

Personnel complaints are either handled formally, (Documented with disciplinary action if proven and sustained) or informally (written or oral counseling administered). The total number of personnel complaints for 2017 are below:

- Complaints investigated – 10
- Complaints sustained against employee – 1
- Complaints unfounded against employee – 1
- Complaints not-sustained against employee - 1
- Complaints handled informally with counseling – 5
- Complaint inquiries unfounded – 2

Use of Force Investigations:

Use of Force investigations were conducted whenever any type of force was used against an individual who resisted arrest or upon complaint from an arrestee. All incidents of this type were thoroughly investigated to include a written report by the officer and any witnesses as well as a supervisory review of body cam video. This was followed by a recommendation by the officer's supervisor to the Chief.

- Use of Force investigations – 15
- Officer Justified – 14
- Not Justified – 1

General Condition of Department:

- The Tappahannock Police Department maintains a high condition of operational readiness with above average morale and professionalism. We have good, quality equipment and each officer is well trained. Patrol vehicles are well maintained however, several vehicles will need to be replaced in the future. As mentioned previously, office and equipment storage space is very limited and the headquarters building is outdated.

Future Projects and Planning

- The Police Department Headquarters Building should have a generator system installed for use of the office and computer systems during power outages. Future planning for additional office and storage space should be considered.
- Implementation of a Police Officer Career Development Program is in the planning stages. This would allow officers who achieve certain career benchmarks to progress to a higher lever within this rank. Funding for this program has not been determined. This program is another incentive to retain and attract good patrol officers and has been implemented by most law enforcement agencies.

- Implementation of incentive based Performance Evaluations. Consideration should be given to reward some incentive such as a salary increase or additional leave time for those employees whose work performance exceeds expectations and performs their duties in an exemplary manner. The department has been conducting employee performance evaluations since 2012.
- A reasonable increase in the department's training budget is requested to allow specialized training for sworn employees. Additional training is needed in firearms, evidence and forensics, interrogation and interviewing, patrol techniques, impaired driver detection, and criminal investigations.