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CITY OF UKIAH POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Ukiah Police Department (UPD) is the law enforcement agency serving the city of Ukiah. The Grand Jury's investigation focused on the UPD training program, medical marijuana policy, and the impact of the new Chief on UPD operations.

Reason for Investigation

The Grand Jury received a citizen's complaint

Method of Investigation

The Grand Jury interviewed the Chief of Police and four Sergeants, the Director of the Mendocino County Department of Mental Health (MCMHD), and a representative of the Ad Hoc Committee of Community Concern (AHCCC). Documents reviewed: the Peace Officers Standards and Training Manual (POST), information from the MCMHD, (including mental health and developmental training information), UPD medical marijuana procedure, domestic violence training material, interoffice memoranda and the Policy and Procedures Manual. The Grand Jury toured the UPD facilities and the new state of the art dispatch center.

Operations

Findings

1. The UPD personnel consist of 41 employees. There are 26 sworn staff, 11 civilian staff, two Community Oriented Policing (COPS), one Community Coordinator and one Major Task Force personnel.

Response (City of Ukiah): The department currently has 26 sworn officers. This includes the Community Oriented Policing personnel. One (1) officer assigned to the Major Crimes Task Force. 11 1/2 civilian employees, which include public safety dispatchers, front office staff, vehicle mechanic and parking enforcement officers. Public Safety dispatchers and vehicle mechanic are actually shared costs with other City departments. Total UPD Personnel: 37 1/2.

2. In the last two years the UPD received a grant and has invested approximately \$500,000 to install a Windows NT network. This computer supports all divisions of Public Safety from emergency medical services to fire and police services. This system includes software for medical, fire, and police incident reporting and computer-aided dispatch software to track and assist in the deployment of emergency personnel. Peace officers, firefighters, and dispatchers now share a central database of information, which provides for enhancement and better use of their database.

The UPD also received a grant from the State of California for a computer controlled 9-1-1 telephone and radio system. This computer is tied directly to the UPD computer-aided dispatch system and provides immediate information to dispatchers in emergency situations. Also installed was an emergency medical dispatching software package, which is now assisting dispatchers to provide immediate medical information on the phone as personnel respond to the scene. The UPD has also received a number of federal grants, which have provided the UPD with computer crime-mapping programs, digital cameras, laptop computers, and information access.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with findings.

3. The morale seems high in the UPD and the entire staff has great esteem for the new Chief.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with findings.

4. The turnover rate remains consistently low. The staff shows no indication of discontent with the management or the manner in which the UPD is functioning.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with findings.

5. In response to a police shooting in July 1998, a group of concerned citizens formed the AHCCC to address racial issues and law enforcement. In 1999, the UPD and AHCCC signed a statement of mutual understanding.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with findings.

6. The UPD adheres to a 1999 countywide medical marijuana policy issued by the District Attorney's Office and administered by the Sheriff's Department.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with findings.

Training

Findings

7. Effort is made to ensure that all peace officers comply with the mandatory training required by POST. This compliance has been certified by POST inspectors.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with findings.

8. Currently there is no system for monitoring compliance with minimal POST

standards and additional UPD internal standards. A new computer program has been ordered to improve the tracking of the training requirements for the UPD.

Response (City of Ukiah): P.O.S.T. regulates and monitors adherence to P.O.S.T. standards with an internal record keeping system and on –site audit by P.O.S.T. personnel.

Recommendations

1. The Grand Jury urges the UPD to continue to make training one of their top priorities.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with recommendation. The department will keep training a top priority for all department personnel.

2. The UPD should install the computer program and get the training-monitoring program up and operational as soon as possible.

Response (City of Ukiah): The computer program that was purchased to manage our training records has been received and installed. Three department employees are scheduled to received training to properly use the program. Training scheduled for July 2000.

Findings

9. Peace officers are trained in domestic violence response, leadership, hostage negotiations, parolee contact, missing persons, field evidence, firearms instruction, civil liability, internal affairs, ethics, accident investigation, supervision, background investigation, sexual assault investigation, narcotics, canine, pepper spray restraint devices, crime-scene control and security, high-speed stops, and other training as offered.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with findings.

10. Although not required by POST, there were four formal training sessions with the MCMHD in the fall of 1999.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with findings.

Recommendation

Training from the MCMHD should be established on a regularly scheduled basis.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur. The department will continue to explore training opportunities with MCMHD. Regular scheduled training should be based on the needs of both departments and in conjunction with other law enforcement agencies. Additionally, U.P.D. invested in the training of two officers in mental health issues to enable them to return and provide ongoing training to U.P.D. employees.

Finding

- 11.** Training is sometimes restricted as a result of the budget restraints for reimbursement of pay as many of the classes require overtime. The UPD ran out of overtime in February 2000 and has since curtailed the training program. POST is responsible for setting training standards for the hiring of police officers. POST requires 24 hours of training per year, which is discretionary with each department. POST will reimburse local districts for up to 80 hours of training per officer per year, but does not include reimbursement for overtime.

Response (City of Ukiah): Concur with finding. However, P.O.S.T. does reimburse associated overtime for some specific training courses.

Recommendation

The Ukiah City Council should establish a separate training budget for the UPD that includes an adequate provision of necessary overtime.

Response (City of Ukiah): The Ukiah City Council did increase the overtime budget for fiscal year 2000-20001. This should help with providing for some additional training.

Response Required

Ukiah City Council

Response Requested

Ukiah Police Department