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Safety Committee

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Agency: [Cleveland City Council](#)

Date: Aug. 2, 2023

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Summary

- The mayor's office has been working on the RISE initiative against violent crime for 18+ months. It was launched three weeks ago.
- Multiple local, city, regional, county and state agencies are coming together and incorporating technology, marketing and analysis to assist law enforcement. They are working specifically to combat violent crime and recruit and retain officers.
- Juveniles are very much a focus of all levels of RISE to prevent and deal with crime. Hot spots will get extra attention and known "bad actors" will be targeted aggressively and taken off the streets, officials said.

Follow-Up Questions

- I'd like to know which local elected official posted online a recording of a private meeting with young people, and what disciplinary action was taken. (See the comment made by community member John Hairston [below](#).)
- What is Gov. DeWine's response to Cleveland's plea for funding this initiative and police compensation?
- Why has the state legislature made decisions such as making guns more easily accessible and motor vehicles hard to track with no front plate?

Notes

Meeting commenced at 10:15 a.m.

Mike Polensek, Ward 8 council member and Safety Committee chair, announced a quorum and stated members would have 10 minutes each to speak after a presentation by Cleveland's Public Safety Director Karrie Howard.

In attendance:

- Polensek
- Howard

- Benjamin Suver, Ohio Department of Public Safety, Governor's Office
- Wayne Drummond, Chief of Police
- Angela Shute-Woodson, Cleveland Community Relations Board
- Sonya Pryor-Jones, Chief of Youth & Family Success
- Council President Blaine Griffin, Ward 6
- Council Member Joseph Jones, Ward 1
- Council Member Charles Slife, Ward 17
- Council Member Kerry McCormack, Ward 3
- Councilman Anthony Hairston, Ward 10
- Council Member Stephanie Howse, Ward 7
- Council Member Kris Harsh, Ward 13
- Council Member Deborah Gray, Ward 4

Polensek opened with remarks about attending the funeral of 16-year-old Pierre Delonte Davis Jr. who had been killed in a shooting. Standing at the coffin of yet another teenager, Polensek wondered, "What could this young man have become?"

Polensek's friend and Pierre's great-grandfather, John Hairston, asked to address the committee regarding the killing.

Hairston said he was not here just to talk about Pierre's death but also to address the problem regarding reaching young people in general.

He spoke about how the Student Advisory Council (SAC) held a meeting and asked all the adults to leave the room so that young people could talk. "Who do you trust?" was the question. "Nobody," was the answer from 360 young people.

Hairston said, "It's time to wake up, our children don't believe us. Wake up."

"We need to talk to the people who this affects. You know who they are— have a conversation."

At the SAC meeting, Hairston said one young lady opened up about being raped by a family member.

Hairston expressed dismay over the betrayal of privacy in that SAC meeting when he got a phone call informing him that a local elected official had a camera in his lapel at the meeting, recorded it, and posted it on the internet ("that cotton-picking website"). "So, all that believability went out the door because someone wanted to be a star," Hairston said.

Sharing the video caused extreme and unnecessary heartache for the young girl who trusted us enough for a minute to tell her story, Hairston said.

Polensek spoke about addressing the rise in crime and gun violence. The Northeast Side of Cleveland has never experienced it this bad, he said.

Polensek read several short statements from residents regarding public safety:

- “I’m afraid to sit on my porch.”
- “I’m afraid to go to the local store or gas station for fear of being robbed or carjacked.”
- “I’m afraid of going to church on Sunday, or bible study on Wednesday night for fear of being a victim of some young man stealing my car.”
- “I’ve had to buy a gun because I don’t feel safe in my neighborhood or my home.”
- “Why aren’t the police enforcing the nighttime curfew laws?”

“This is not living,” Polensek said after reading the statements. “In fact, it’s not living. It’s just existing.”

Council has given the administration everything it wants, Polensek said. He mentioned legislation passed totalling \$145 million since 2022, but said crime continues to rise and that only a fraction of the 180 police promised have been recruited.

We’ve waited 16 months so far for the RISE initiative to launch, he said. Council cannot hire, fire, etc., yet council is besieged with complaints.

“Law enforcement starts with traffic enforcement.” Polensek said.

And why aren’t the parents and guardians being held accountable, Polensek asked.

People can’t get excited about millions being spent on lakefront development when their neighborhoods are in chaos, Polensek concluded.

Howard spoke next.

Howard’s opening remarks included a statement on low police recruitment retention and on the [RISE initiative that started three weeks ago and is looking to invest more in officers](#). Howard said that Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb called Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine and got a response.

The plan includes combating gang activity, [ShotSpotter](#), SmartSafeCLE, CLEstrategy, and recruitment marketing.

Howard said the plan will use unified command tools and video sharing for collaborating with regional, local and federal agencies such as the FBI, Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), and the street-level community. ShotSpotter is in every ward, Howard said, and the city is registering home and business cameras.

A dozen juveniles were arrested recently in connection with multiple crimes, including car thefts, Howard said. He also noted the rapid response to the mass shooting on West 6th Street—with an arrest after 60 hours. Recently a man was sentenced to 376 years in prison for a string of carjackings and rape, Howard said.

In addition, Howard said a federal lawsuit has been filed against Kia and Hyundai. Also, the trial the city is currently running using speed tables to slow down traffic on residential streets is working.

Howard told the committee that Benjamin Suver of the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Governor's Office, Ohio State Highway Patrol is currently in Cleveland. The state is helping with aviation assets to prevent car chases. Ohio is a home rule state that supports local government with traffic enforcement and crime.

Law enforcement has taken hundreds of guns off the street—analysts have been hired, Howard said.

Wayne Drummond, Cleveland Chief of Police, introduced Deputy Chiefs Sammy Morris, Annie Todd, Ali Pillow, Danny Faye and Commander Robert Tucker of the Third District.

Police work tirelessly in a sometimes thankless job, Drummond said, and he thanks them. Operating on plan RISE is ready. It includes pay increases, retention bonuses, etc. The city is negotiating currently with unions, said Drummond.

There are plans in micro-grids to target individuals who cause the majority of crime, Drummond said.

Drummond said police arrested 12 juveniles, one wanted for homicide. Two more juveniles were arrested the same night in the 5th District for a stolen Kia that crashed—all 12- to 17-year-olds. Drummond said the department was dedicated to turning the tide and

dealing with root causes of crime.

Drummond said the department needs more analysts, and that they are hiring five more to pinpoint issues in real time. Drummond said ShotSpotter has saved six people since it was implemented. Police were able to administer lifesaving measures when no calls came in, he said. He said they encourage businesses to participate by registering cameras with the city.

Howard then gave a PowerPoint presentation and Drummond elaborated. (Find screenshots of the presentation slides [here](#).)

295 people applied to the police academy and 11 were sworn in last Friday, said Howard. Some applicants were passed over by the director after social media reviews revealed extensive drug use, racism, violence, misogyny, and poor employment history. We support the director for not sacrificing quality for quantity, Drummond said.

Drummond said that in 1989, when he applied to become a police officer, there were 5,000 applicants. Now 300 apply and are vetted down to 11.

Polensek asked whether 25 was the anticipated number of hired officers for the year.

Drummond responded that he didn't have the numbers in front of him, but he believed it would be more than 25. There is funding for 180 officers, but so far only 23 have been hired, he said. Drummond said police academy salary is the main issue behind the dropout rate, and that the department is negotiating better salaries with unions now. The department also just signed a contract with marketing company Little Jacket. The city has looked at departments in other states, and the national average is that 10% of applicants are hired. There's a variety of reasons nationwide, but we are in line, Drummond said. But, we are not going to make 180 officers.

Drummond said ShotSpotter is being evaluated, but that 87% of gunshots are not called in. ShotSpotter is data driven and is now in every district, he said.

Shute-Woodson, director of the Community Relations Board, and Pryor-Jones, chief of Youth & Family Success, joined the table.

Polensek said violence is in the streets, not so much at recreation centers, but that's where the funding goes. Pryor-Jones spoke about clear definitions for the work being done, including rec center early stage prevention. Rec center social support specialists

are navigators, Pryor-Jones said. Expanded programs for youth engagement are available there. These efforts don't end up in the news, it's prevention, she said.

Polensek asked how they are engaged in safety. How do you interact with police? Pryor-Jones explained the approach and said that many offices share the same data.

Shute-Woodson, Community Relations Board: We are not violence interrupters, but we do work with folks in the street. We have partners over the six interrupters. Recently stopped five juveniles (13- to 15-year-olds) from stealing a car. Four of them had never been charged with a crime. We were able to engage with parents. We have a shoestring budget, but we're committed. We are not trying to arrest every young person if we can prevent it. It's not sexy enough for the news, but important because we're doing the right thing.

Shute-Woodson said the city needs two violence interrupters per ward.

Council President Griffin had questions for the presenters: The anger and frustration are palpable, police are overwhelmed, understaffed and retiring. We want to accomplish everything we've been asked to do by the administration, "But when and how do we take the gloves off?" Is Issue 24 helping? The Community Police Commission doesn't seem to be fulfilling the voters' expectations.

What tools are we using with AI? The public feels that the system is failing, said Griffin.

Drummond answered that the department is using every tool at its disposal, legally and constitutionally.

Griffin asked, "Where's the helicopter?" We spent a lot of money upgrading it. Two pilots have retired.

Drummond said the helicopter is not in the air due to maintenance. He said hopefully one will be in the air tomorrow. Highway patrol is sharing its resources. .

Griffin: Why aren't police allowed to chase?

Drummond: We have a strict pursuit policy—conditions and locations are taken into consideration for public safety.

Griffin: We need to review pursuit policy.

Griffin: We're losing officers, have we done exit interviews?

Drummond: Yes, we want to know why, too. He said the department has surveyed over 700 officers.

Griffin: Who are the 1,000 bad actors in the city and can we work on them?

Drummond: A small number of individuals are the worst. The objective is to remove them from the streets.

Griffin: We need to focus on deterrence, but we need to be clear about when it's time to take the gloves off.

Griffin: How do we get the Parole Board and Post Release Control (PRC) involved? More unannounced visits?

Suver, Ohio Department of Public Safety, Governor's Office, is reintroduced and answers: The governor has expressed a desire to do that, and I will pass that along to him. Many are previous felons.

Griffin: This is the worst time since the crack cocaine epidemic, not just fentanyl. Mental health is a serious issue. Made outreach to the corporate community. We need more money—corporate match money to cover gaps. We need regional cooperation to deal with out-of-Cleveland hell-raisers. The governor needs to supply incentives.

Griffin: Participatory budgeting takes money away from services. The public may want this, but there are consequences. We have to be and do better so the public understands our investments.

Howard: Mayor Bibb is looking at education, mental health, etc. An all-hands-across approach.

Council Member Jones, Ward 1: Since COVID I've never seen this much crime happening. Millions of dollars granted and we hope this money starts to sink into the neighborhoods already. State legislature is culpable with a cookie cutter approach to giving everybody guns. We're still recovering from COVID, and kids aren't going back to recreation centers. Tell me, with the dismal numbers in recruitment, what do we expect from marketing? Elaborate on recruitment, because someone needs to be fired. District 4 is the worst.

Explain why there are not more police in District 4?

Howard says that the RISE initiative is the answer to that, by making it attractive to be police. Cadets need to be paid more in the academy, Howard said.

Jones: I want to change the target age from 21-35 to hire at 18.

Howard: We expect marketing to attract people who can have diverse career opportunities. Changes must happen as a whole.

Jones: We should invest in doorbell cameras for seniors. It would have a profound impact. Traffic enforcement needs two traffic enforcement cars per ward. We need intelligence on the streets. Corporate participation is essential. Police chase policy needs evaluation. Word on the street is that police won't do anything. We should be able to do what the state highway patrol does, too.

Council Member Slife, Ward 17: How is Columbus faring in police hiring and retention?

Drummond: Some Cleveland officers left but came back.

Slife: I worry about morale and would like to find out more with labor involved.

Slife: I would like to know how ShotSpotter works during fireworks and make an official request for a data report from July 4 between 8 p.m. and midnight.

Slife to Suver: As a representative of the governor, I would like to ask you so that this gets to him: In 2019, there was a mass shooting in Dayton followed by a mass rally when people demanded that the governor do something. The state has not helped, they have harmed. The General Assembly got rid of a requirement that people have front license plates, despite how helpful they are to law enforcement. These are silly, callous actions to urban environments. It's evident that if communities are Black and brown people dying, that Columbus doesn't care. This is happening because of state government. Happy to speak to the governor. I feel these Republican politicians act with outright callousness and the governor needs to stand up to them.

Slife: Now there's \$3.5 billion in state rainy day funds and the state doesn't give it to us. There was a movement to centralize collecting taxes and we now get less. We are the cash cow of the state. But Portsmouth, with a population of 73,000, got a \$634 million bypass. We're not getting help, our funds are depleted.

Columbus pays \$25,000 more to police to work suburban low-crime areas. \$36 million more to Cleveland police would make a meaningful increase every year. Pass this on to the governor, I'm happy to talk. He needs to stand up to the legislature.

Council Member McCormack, Ward 3: Regarding previous comments on police pursuit policy: no one wants danger, but the challenge is that criminals understand this policy. As soon as a criminal gets in a car, they think they're good. We need an honest conversation. Are there active conversations with the federal government about what this balance is?

Howard: Yes, the feds are engaged. Need to be better at conveying success stories. We need to be mindful of harm to officers regarding car pursuits.

McCormack: Can't ignore reality. I've been on council 7 1/2 years and what I'm seeing isn't made up.

Drummond: We will continue conversations with the feds so a balance can be struck. We can modify the pursuit policy, but my expectation is compliance.

McCormack: Is this policy incentivizing behavior? My point is to address the balance, including with the judicial system.

Drummond: Once our air assets are up, we can strike that balance.

Suver: Strongly recommended investing in analysts to contribute to that balance.

Council Member Hairston, Ward 10: When are the gloves coming off? Chaos continues until trickle down? What happens in the meantime? We desperately need state government help. The 5th District has only 135 officers and they need help. I hope these cadets are being sent to the 5th.

Hairston: The same criminals are the ones neighbors call about as nuisances, same loud music is the same thief. Can't just tell them to move on. State patrol gives citations. Why don't we? Small citations make a big difference. Fail to appear or pay to make them go downtown. Curfew tickets, daytime curfew, nighttime curfew. Curfew citation has been missing on car thefts, etc., and needs to be added.

Polensek: Not citing for nighttime curfew. Nuisance laws are not being enforced either.

Same approach should be standard. Parents need to come down for curfew tickets.

Howard: The nuisance law is being used, but a number of occurrences can happen before ticketing is relevant.

Drummond: Quality-of-life enforcement is important. Twelve juveniles were arrested, and all parents were cited. With zero tolerance, those numbers will increase. Daytime curfew can only be during school hours.

Hairston: Six violence interrupters is not enough. Pennies to support these street-level groups. Consistent resources for consistent results. Courts are not part of partnership but need to be. CMSD isn't either. I hope a big ask is being made of CMSD because they can identify early, prevent issues. Gang Unit needed back here.

Polensek: There have only been 32 nighttime curfew tickets, and community service is included. We need more judicial involvement.

Council Member Howse, Ward 7, asked a question about the 12 kids arrested: Was any youth assessment done?

Drummond: Not sure if proper authority did. Police don't do that.

Howse: Who in the neighborhood knows about these juveniles? People close by are best contacts.

Howse suggested that we require youth assessment through the Safety Committee with an annual report. Is that doable?

Howard: It is not doable, not the nature of the Division of Police. That should be the county or pretrial services.

Howse: We all have to evolve in our jobs. This info isn't available anywhere.

Howard: This is county and pretrial work. We can't add to police workload.

Shute-Woodson: We do have interaction with Juvenile Court and I would be happy to share info.

Council Member Harsh, Ward 13: I want to revisit 295 candidates. Were they screened

before the outcomes on p.5?

Howard: Civil service processes the first level. That's where candidates are removed.

Harsh: How many applied and didn't make it to that level?

Howard: Doesn't have those numbers; 13 conditional offers were declined.

Harsh: What tests do candidates take before selection?

Howard: Psychological assessment is given after selection.

Harsh: What is the criteria for being selected? Why are 98 people removed, and for what?

Polensek: We don't understand it either.

Harsh: How did we end up with 13 out of a region of 1.2 million people? How far back is social media screened?

Howard: Not that far, not as juveniles. A contractor is engaged to search. We want to be sure we don't hire racists, etc. It's not arbitrary. We don't want to give the wrong person a gun.

Council Member Gray, Ward 4: Are all ShotSpotter alerts responded to? Many of my constituents don't see police showing up.

Drummond: All calls regarding shots fired are followed up on, and if they aren't we want to know. Responding officers are to get out and canvass.

Gray: Constituents are calling our congress members and their aides call council. Why can't we get the qualified personnel to visit the specific family to assess parenting etc.? People are asking for this help. I don't want them to be separated, so I don't call certain entities.

Pryor-Jones: Each ward has someone able to help navigate the system. We know that we need to do a lot more coordination. People get the runaround, and we asked for relief on that.

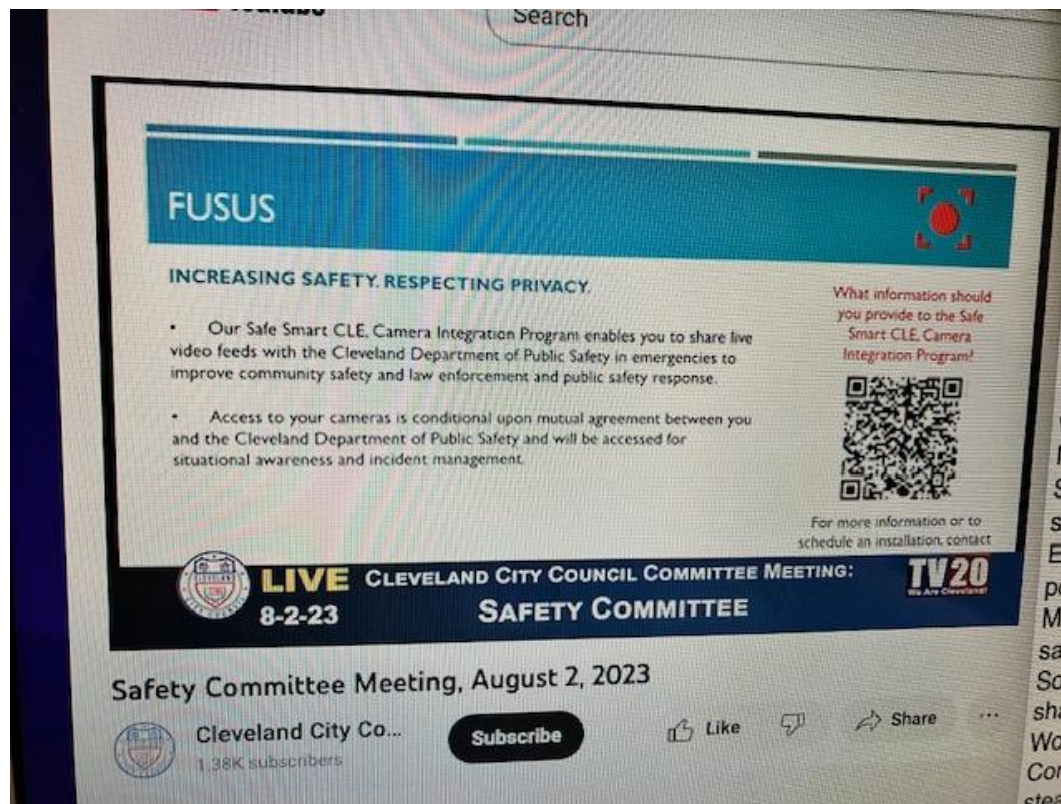
Polensek: We need to connect you more to Juvenile Court.

Polensek: How many officers have been disciplined in 2022-2023? We are approaching 1920s levels of police officers. We will drill down on curfew violations. Look forward to highway patrol collaboration. We want aggressive reform here. "I'm determined to get these violent offenders off my street," said Polensek.

Howard: Commitment here is to public safety. Restaurant owner Bobby George gave \$50,000 to downtown after the West 6th shooting. Residents can integrate their cameras. RISE is happening in collaboration. It's important to call 911, non-emergency and Crime Stoppers; 400,000 people should be a manageable population. County needs to participate more with social services.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Screenshots of the PowerPoint presentation given by Cleveland Public Safety Director Kerrie Howard:





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SHOTSPOTTER

- Expanded: 13 Square Miles
- Expansion Initiated and Completed in Q2 2023
- January – June 2023
 - 2350 Total Alerts
 - 87% of Alerts NOT Called in by the Public
 - 1298 Community Canvas Events
 - 25 Guns Recovered
 - 23 Arrests at the Time of Shooting

 6 Lives Saved in 2023

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Safety Committee Meeting, August 2, 2023

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PARTNERING AGENCIES

- Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office
- Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department
- Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority PD
- Ohio Adult Parole Authority
- Ohio State Highway Patrol
- Ohio Investigative Unit
- ATF
- DEA
- FBI
- HSI
- IRS
- US Marshals
- United States Attorney's Office

Safety Committee Meeting, August 2, 2023

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CRIME STATISTICS: GRAND THEFT MOTOR VEHICLE

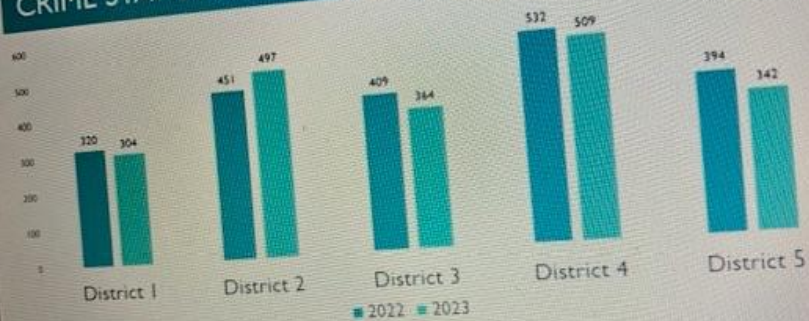


TV20 Live Stream

Live Stream

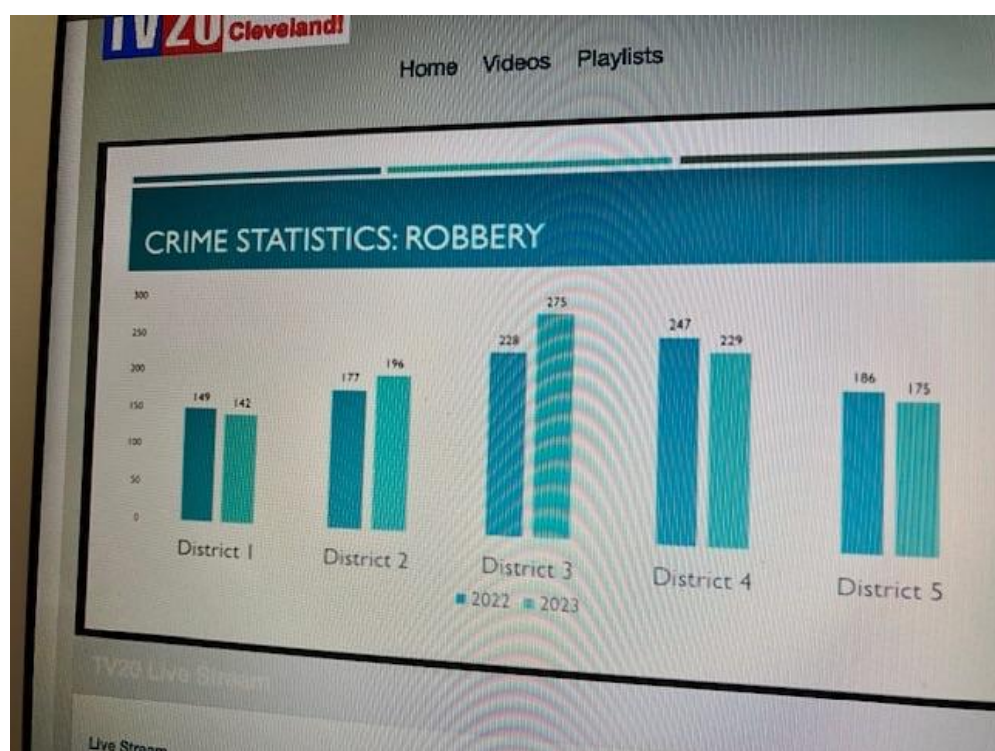
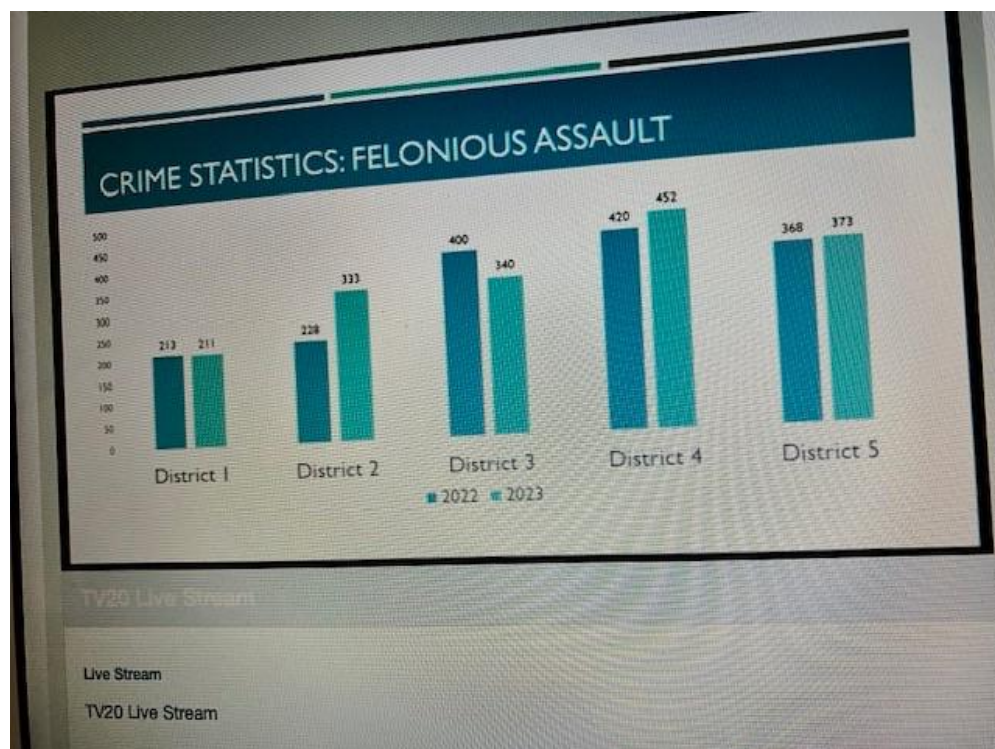
TV20 Live Stream

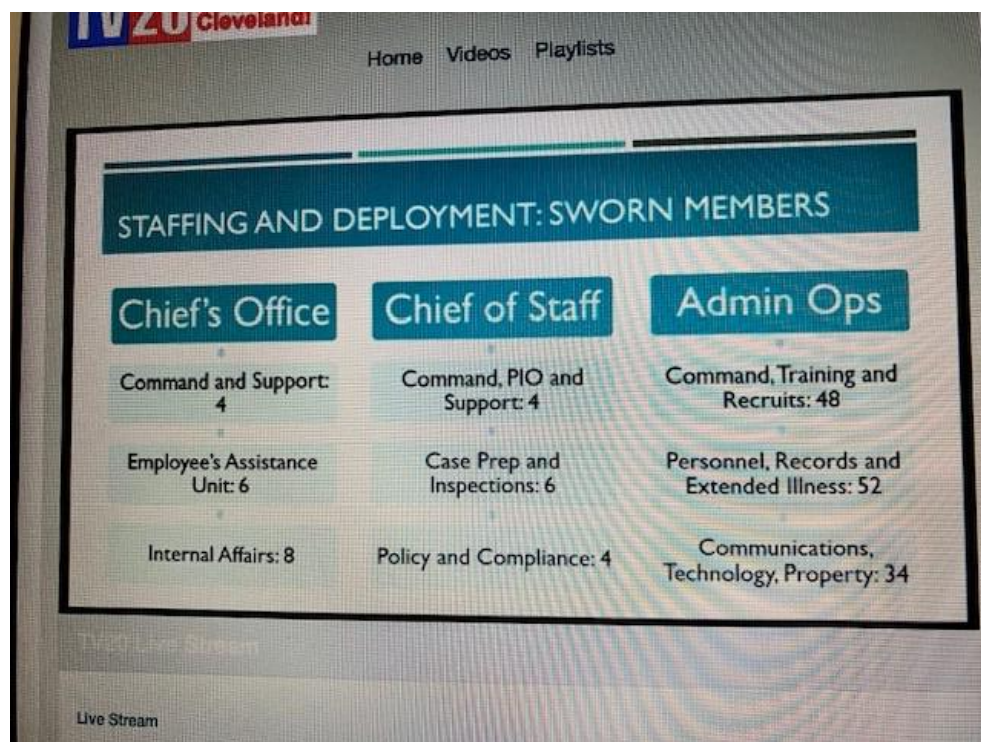
CRIME STATISTICS: BURGLARY



TV20 Live Stream

Live Stream





CURRENT AND UPCOMING ACADEMIES

- Class 153: Currently in Session - 9 Recruits
- Class 154: August 14, 2023 - 16 Recruits Pending
- Class 155: October 2023

TV20 Live Stream

Live Stream

TV20 Live Stream

Home Videos Playlists

CDP APPLICANTS VS. ACTUAL JUNE 2022- PRESENT

■ 153 A group →

24 started in our process/ 3 conditional offer declined/ 1 conditional offer rescinded/ 1 declined employment/ 5 Passover/ 1 resigned/ 9 withdrew

■ 153 B group →

50 started in our process/ 1 conditional offer declined/ 1 conditional offer rescinded/ 3 failed PAT/ 6 no show interview/ 18 Passover/ 1 removed background/ 3 removed medical/ 10 withdrew

■ 154 class →

56 started in our process/ 4 failed PAT/ 1 no show PAT/ 1 no show interview/ 8 Passover/ 1 removal requested/ 25 withdrew

TV20 Live Stream

Live Stream

CDP APPLICANTS VS. ACTUAL JUNE 2022- PRESENT

■ 150 class →

126 started in our process/ 4 declined conditional offer letter/ 12 failed PAT/ 2 Military/ 12 no show interview/ 1 no show medical testing/ 31 Passovers/ 7 removals/ 2 removed medical/ 1 removed Psych/ 27 withdrew.

■ 151 Class →

65 started in our process/ 1 failed PAT/ 7 no show interview/ 14 Passovers/ 1 removal requested/ 2 removed background/ 1 removed military/ 2 removed psych/ 3 resigned/ 17 withdrew

■ 152 A group →

36 started in our process / 2 no show interview/ 1 conditional offer declined/ 14 Passover/ 1 removed background/ 10 withdrew

■ 152 B group →

27 started in our process/ 1 conditional offer declined/ 1 no response / 1 no show agility/ 1 no show psych/ 8 Passover/ 8 withdrew

re Stream

20 Live Stream

APPLICANTS THAT DID NOT MAKE IT TO THE ACADEMY (JUNE 2022 TO PRESENT)

■ Declined Conditional Offer:	13
■ Failed Physical Agility Testing:	20
■ No Shows:	33
■ Pass-over by Director:	98
■ Removal (History, Med, Psych):	21
■ Withdrew (Self-Initiated):	110

TV20 Live Stream

Live Stream

TV20 Live Stream

OFFICERS THAT ARE ELIGIBLE TO RETIRE AS OF AUGUST 1, 2023

■ **Sworn Members with 25 Years of Service: 255**

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Live Stream

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TV20 Cleveland

Home Videos Playlists

2023 POLICE DEPARTURES: 99

Deceased: 1

Deferred Pension: 1

Termination: 2

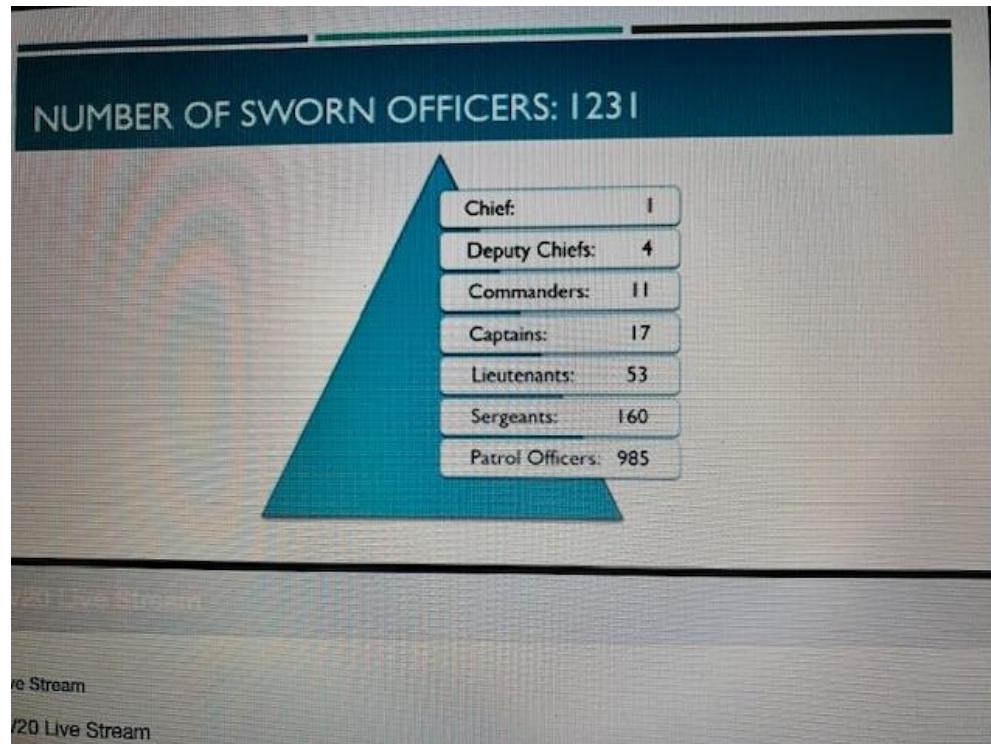
Service Pension: 43

Resignation: 52

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