

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: January 26, 2013

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Kevin D. Treadway, Acting Police Chief

CC: Kevin Burke, Jerene Watson, Josh Copley, Department Directors

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FROM COUNCIL TO PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING THE ELIMINATION OF THE FIFTH GRADE D.A.R.E. PROGRAM, ALTERNATIVES TO YOUTH EDUCATION, AND POLICE RESPONSE TO THE EXPIRATION OF THE 2009 COPS GRANT EXPIRATION.

In the November Council budget retreat, Council expressed concerns regarding the effectiveness of the D.A.R.E. program, and directed the Flagstaff Police Department to explore other opportunities for public outreach and youth education. Additionally, the Council was reminded that the 2009 COPS grant for 6 officers was set to expire in FY14. This document serves to update Council on some preliminary findings in regard to alternative youth education, update the Council on our efforts to date, and provide Council information on plans to address the expiration of the 2009 COPS grant set to expire in September of 2013. My apologies for the length of this paper, in the spirit of brevity, an executive summary appears at the end.

**1. Resource Management**

DISCUSSION

A very important aspect of effective municipal policing is the allocation of limited resources. The mission of the Flagstaff Police Department is:

*To protect and preserve life, property, public order and the rights of the individual, by providing exemplary service through the establishment of a partnership of shared responsibility, support and trust with law abiding members of the community.*

To insure our mission in times of shrinking resources, we make staffing decisions based upon the following priorities (in order of importance):

- 1.) Protecting our ability to respond to emergency calls for service timely
- 2.) Response to "late" calls for service and public assists

- 3.) Ability to perform community policing tactics
- 4.) Unfunded partnerships with outside agencies

**2. Plans to eliminate D.A.R.E. and re-invest in alternative F.U.S.D. outreach initiatives**

DISCUSSION

The Flagstaff Police Department has started its research into alternatives available to us once we eliminate the 5<sup>th</sup> grade D.A.R.E. curriculum. We will continue to teach the D.A.R.E. program through the spring semester 2012. Many Council members know D.A.R.E. has been criticized for many years for failing to reduce drug use by youth. The Flagstaff Police Department has instructed D.A.R.E. in the community since 1987. Prior to 1992, D.A.R.E. was taught by officers assigned to normal patrol squads. These officers were each assigned one classroom, and taught one hour per week at local schools. This format proved difficult from a scheduling aspect due to calls for service and it also required a large number of officers become certified to teach the program (an 80 hour course). In 1992, the Flagstaff Police Department assigned two full time officers to the community relations department. These two officers currently teach D.A.R.E. to all 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms, do some limited teaching at the Jr. HS level, and also assist the Public Relations Sergeant in numerous other community outreach programs. Some of these outreach initiatives include teen court, National Night Out, Citizens Academy, Youth Day, Coconino County Fair, bicycle rodeos, and a variety of other community presentations, tours, etc.

Since its inception, over 30 research studies have been completed on the effectiveness of the D.A.R.E. program. Research on D.A.R.E. might be broken into two time frames, old curriculum and new curriculum. Old curriculum refers to the D.A.R.E. program taught prior to 2001. In 2001 significant changes occurred in the curriculum including changes to a more scientific approach. Most studies on D.A.R.E. reflect positive results from having a uniformed police officer in the classroom teaching life skills to students. Positive impacts include influence that crosses cultural and economic differences, some increased abilities in making decisions, and improvements in relations between the police and youth in the community. Although the effectiveness regarding successes on substance abuse improved after the 2001 changes, the results remain disconcerting, with most reliable recent research indicating only a 14-24 month impact on substance abuse related decision making following graduation of D.A.R.E. Our internal surveys reveal the community is more aware of the D.A.R.E. program than any other outreach the police department offers, and we continue to receive strong support from the Flagstaff Unified School District, classroom teachers and parents. As we begin to evaluate other programs, it is important to try to exploit the positive aspects of the D.A.R.E. program (namely the rapport that comes from placing a uniform officer teaching life skills in the classroom and our partnership with the schools) and evaluate the effectiveness of new material and local data to formulate new initiatives.

Here locally, we have reviewed data collected by Citizens Against Substance Abuse (C.A.S.A.) to evaluate our needs regarding youth education. Each year, C.A.S.A. in partnership with the Flagstaff Police Department and other law enforcement agencies, provides the Challenge program in local high schools. This program is presented the week prior to prom and focuses on good decision making and specifically DUI and alcohol abuse. C.A.S.A. conducts a survey of high school students during this program as well. The 2010 survey has some pertinent information for us to consider when making decisions on tailoring police outreach to youth in the community. First is the acknowledgment there is a substance abuse issue involving the youth in Flagstaff. Approximately 75% of all students polled at all high schools revealed they had consumed alcohol within 30 days of taking this survey and over 50% indicated they had used marijuana in the 30 days prior. Perhaps most telling for us was data collected that indicated in every substance abuse category, (alcohol, marijuana, methamphetamine, other drugs and prescription drugs) most students indicated they first tried drugs in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

When it comes to substance abuse locally, data suggests that the current D.A.R.E. program at the fifth grade level assists with substance abuse decision making for up to 24 months, but most of our students experimenting with drugs and alcohol do so 4 years later when in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Therefore, the data suggests our greatest impact regarding drug education is to place uniformed officers in 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms.

We are currently exploring curriculum for substance abuse education at the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade level. If the Flagstaff Police Department loses the two FTE positions currently assigned to the Public Relations Office, we will need to find a way to continue to support the Public Relations Sergeant if we are to continue our other outreach initiatives. If we can keep one officer assigned to that office, we should be able to provide that support as well as continue to have that officer teach some classes in the schools. Additionally, we can look to patrol officers currently certified as general instructors or those with teaching talents to provide different curriculum in our classrooms. Perhaps this can be done once per week as we did prior to 1992, although scheduling these courses consistently is a challenge due to calls for service on the road.

Once again, we have started the process of researching other curriculum. In addition to substance abuse programs, we feel strongly that other life skills should be offered. Topics include violence, gangs, decision making, bullying, domestic violence, sexual assault prevention, good citizenship, etc. In the brief research we have conducted, we have found a number of programs available. We have obtained material from "L.A.W. Publications", a company that produces class room workbooks and lesson plans (at the Jr. High and H.S. level) on dating violence, conflict resolution, drug abuse, bullying, gangs, sexual assault, domestic violence, and many other topics. We are also conducting research on a program called N.O.V.A. Principles (Nurturing Opportunities Accountability Values). We also plan to conduct research with the University of Colorado-center for violence prevention as well as programs endorsed by the Department of

Justice. We are also evaluating the G.R.E.A.T. program, (G.R.E.A.T. stands for Gang Resistance Education and Training-a program we have taught in the past that includes life skills on assaultive behavior, bullying, consequences, etc.). Finally, we are evaluating the Jr. HS D.A.R.E. curriculum known as "Keepin' it Real", which has been praised in much of the research for its effectiveness. Our intent is to find program(s) that have already been researched with data supporting their effectiveness that can be realistically presented in our schools given the reduction of resources in FUSD and elsewhere. Some programs looked at initially involve far more commitment on the part of the classroom teacher, and we will be meeting with FUSD to explore whether the schools are capable to commit resources to these types of programs. Additionally, some programs contain copyright materials with requirements that officers teaching the programs be trained and certified. This obviously results in additional costs and makes it far more difficult to train multiple officers than just a few.

Another option we will explore that may help alleviate the need of training multiple officers and the scheduling challenges that accompanies taking them off the road to teach is to explore the feasibility of creating two School Resource Officers in addition to the grant funded one we currently have. This is admittedly a "new program", but we recognize the schools are consistently one of our hot spots for calls for service. The department has received community support for the creation of school resource officers for some time. Officers at schools can provide a uniformed presence, teach some of the programs discussed here, and respond more quickly to calls for service at the school. We may consider creating SRO's in FY13 by eliminating the FBI liaison position and re-allocated the remaining DARE officer. However, difficulties in sustaining two officers as SRO's become more apparent when planning for the elimination of the 6 COPS grant officers in FY2014 which will be discussed next.

### **3. 2009 COPS grant expiration**

#### **DISCUSSION**

As you may recall, the Flagstaff Police Department was successful in obtaining six officers in the 2009 COPS grant. This grant supplied full funding for the six officer positions over a three year period with the agreement that the City of Flagstaff would supply the fourth year funding. Our fourth year commitment on this grant is approaching. Funding requirements for the fourth year commitment of this COPS grant total \$450,000.00 (six officers at a burdened rate of \$75,000.00). As of January 1, 2013, \$377,500.00 was set aside last year out of one time savings in the general fund with the remaining \$72,500.00 to be applied in future one-time monies.

Our grant obligations for these officers will be expiring between September, 2013 and January, 2014, necessitating a phased plan for elimination of these six officer positions if no on-going funding is identified. To accomplish this, we will eliminate both of our current Federal liaison positions first. We currently have one officer assignment within the local office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation,

working with their Joint Terrorism Task Force. The second officer assignment is within the United States Marshall's Office, Fugitive Task Force. Both of these positions are currently unfilled due to staffing shortages in the Patrol Division. The elimination of these two officer positions will have no impact on day to day patrol operations or response to normal calls for service. This action will however degrade our current level of cooperation and partnerships with these Federal enforcement agencies. While our working relationships will remain strong, the timeliness of intelligence and resource sharing will suffer. The greatest negative impact of this action may come from the loss of the United States Marshall's Office and their focus on the Flagstaff area for wanted fugitives and those with felony warrants for their arrest.

Assuming current budget reductions will in fact result in the loss of one of our two officer positions currently assigned to the DARE program this year, we will eliminate the second DARE officer position in September 2013. This action will mean reduced ability to provide youth education programs as previously described. This will also negatively impact our Community Relations Office in that both of these officers have traditionally aided in community outreach programs like the Citizen's Academy, National Night Out, The Challenge Program and various community functions like the Coconino County Fair and Flagstaff Home Show.

The fourth officer's position for elimination will be taken from the Northern Arizona Street Crimes Task Force (METRO). We currently have one Sergeant and three officers assigned to this unit and the Coconino County Sheriff's Office supply's one Deputy. The elimination of this officer's position will result in a 25% reduction in enforcement capability of drug offenses and potential increases in levels of property crime as it is associated with narcotics and other substance abuse crimes. It would be our intent to try to influence cooperating agencies (CCSO and NAU) to fill this position. They have been unable to do this for some time due to their own staffing concerns.

The final two officer's positions will be eliminated from the Uniformed Patrol Division. This action may affect the patrol division's response to calls for service and ability for proactive enforcement and crime prevention.

#### **4. Executive Summary**

The Flagstaff Police Department is actively exploring youth outreach opportunities to replace fifth grade DARE. The elementary school DARE program has been criticized for its ineffectiveness in reducing substance abuse among youth. Local surveys reveal the most common grade Flagstaff youth experiment with drugs and alcohol is 9<sup>th</sup> grade. A better target audience for substance abuse education appears to be junior high and high school students. Empirical studies have revealed the strengths of the D.A.R.E. program are the positive relationships established between youth and uniformed officers. This environment crosses socio-economic and cultural boundaries with some success on developing decision making skills. Local hot spot crime analysis reveals high

schools and junior highs top the list of calls for service during day time hours. For FY2013, we have a couple options to continue youth education outreach. One is to utilize the one remaining DARE officer to assist the community relations sergeant with public outreach and continue to teach in the high schools and junior high schools. We can look at training additional patrol officers to teach classes in schools in one hour blocks. The challenges there involve scheduling patrol officers in classrooms while remaining responsive to calls for service and the certification requirements involved with new curriculum. Another option is to dissolve the FBI liaison position in July 2012, reinvesting this position and the remaining DARE officer in the creation of two School Resource Officers for the 2012 school year. These officers will maintain a high visibility uniformed presence at the high schools and junior highs, and teach a curriculum covering a variety of topics including substance abuse, anti violence, gang education, bullying, etc. We will research the appropriate curriculum and meet with FUSD school officials over the next several months. The 2009 COPS grant expires in September 2013. In order to absorb the loss of 6 officers, we will eliminate the remaining DARE officer, the US Marshall's position, and FBI liaison, (or the two SRO positions created), one officer assigned to Metro, and two officers from patrol squads. At that time, we will have to evaluate whether with existing resources, we can continue a formal youth education program using patrol officers assigned to the field.

#### **RECOMMENDATION / CONCLUSION**

Our recommendation is to develop two School Resource Officers, utilizing the existing DARE officer in the Public Information Office and the officer position available by eliminating the F.B.I. liaison position. These officers will remain assigned to the Public Information Office allowing them to continue to assist with other community outreach programs. We will be meeting with F.U.S.D. officials in the upcoming months to develop this program and will continue our review of available curriculum and strive to certify these officers in a new curriculum prior to the 2012 Fall semester.

In September of 2013, our six COPS grants officers will begin to expire. In order to protect our primary mission of responding to calls for service, the elimination of these officers will result in removal of one officer currently assigned to Metro, the elimination of the officers assigned to the Public Information Office (the new SRO's), the elimination of the officer assigned to the Marshalls fugitive task force, and a reduction of two officers across our patrol squads.