
LANSING POLICE DEPARTMENT MOU PROGRESS REPORT



2 year update: July 7, 2020 (in blue)
Chief Dennis Murrin Jr.

Introduction

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter “MOU”) signed July 31, 2018 the following document outlines the six month progress made towards the completion of the steps agreed upon by members of the Lansing Village of Lansing Police Department and the Lansing Community Coalition and South Suburban Branch of the NAACP.

Additional information was added to compile this one year report. This information is in red.

This report documents progress made in the following areas; Community Policing (Recruitment), Restorative Justices Program & School Resource Opportunities, and Police Youth Relations (Video production and instruction).

Recruitment

The Board of Fire and Police Commissioners set a date of October 27, 2018 as the next probationary police officer testing. While the recruitment process in an on-going endeavor, the Lansing Police Department in cooperation and approval from the Board of Fire and Police Commission engaged the community in a variety of recruitment strategies. A meeting was held with Coalition member Elvis Slaughter on 09/06/18 to set direction and strategies for recruitment. It was decided that the testing orientation would be included at the date of the test. Below are the strategies discussed and implemented during this testing process.

- A Blue Line recruitment ad was placed on 09/17/18.
- A recruitment ad was placed in the Shopper. The ad ran for two weeks. Completed 09/18.
- Job recruitment pamphlet was created in both Spanish and English.
- Mr. Slaughter was provided 50 copies of the Spanish version and 200 copies of English version. (09/18)
- Emailed copies of the recruitment ad were emailed to various entities including School District 158 & 215, Lansing Municipal Center (for website), Lansing Chamber of Commerce, Lansing Library, and Lansing Journal. (09/18)

- A recruitment ad was placed in the National Minority Update (09/18).
- Attended Job Fairs at TF South, Family Christian Center, as well as Western Illinois University, & Indiana University Northwest prior to test.
- Flyers were sent to Indiana University Northwest and Purdue Northwest. (09/17/18)
- A promo video with a save the date was posted on Facebook. (09/06/18)
- The recruiting flyer was posted on Facebook. (09/17/18)
- Lansing Police employees and Village of Lansing employees were all made aware of the testing process via the LPD administration and LPD recruitment team.
- Meeting held (10/18) with Board of Fire and Police Commissioners to make online applications available for future testing processes.
- A budget request was made to fund recruitment expenses in the FY 2019-2020 budget process. (04/19)
- A new recruitment board was purchased for use at career fairs. Also included is a tablet which shows the LPD recruitment video. (04/19)
- LPD personnel attended the T.F. South Job Fair. (02/19)
- LPD personnel attended the Chamber of Commerce Business Expo. (04/19)
- LPD personnel attended the Thornton Township Job Fair. (05/19)

Prior to the applications being made available, the Board of Fire and Police Commission waived the \$25.00 application fee.

The probationary police officer testing was conducted by the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners on October 27, 2018. Sergeant Mike Hynek conducted the orientation prior to the administration of the test.

Below is information concerning those who took the examination:

- 81 people took out applications.
- 33 people arrived to take part in the testing process.
- 31 people actually took part in the testing process.
- 27 of the 31 were male, the remaining 4 female.
- 13 African Americans, 5 Hispanics, and 14 Caucasians took the examination.
- Prior to the test, applicants were asked to complete a brief survey

as to what advertising mechanism attracted them to the testing process.

- Of the 31 surveys received, 25 indicated that they heard about the testing process via the Blue Line Recruitment ad, 3 were from word of mouth, and the remaining from an LPD employee, local publication, or the library event.
- **The Board has set 70.00 as the minimum passing grade.**
- Upon the completion of the written test and oral interviews with the Board of Fire and Police Commission, the Commission established a final eligibility list which included 25 names.
- **Positions 1, 12, 20, 23, & 24 were male Hispanic individuals.**
- **Positions 7, 8, 16, 18, 21, 25 were male African American individuals.**
- **Positions 4 & 11 were female African American individuals.**
- **Positions 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, & 22 were male Caucasian individuals.**
- **The Board of Fire and Police commission authorized the hiring of 7 individuals.**
- **Of these 7 individuals, 5 were Male Caucasians, 1 was a male African American, and 1 was a female African American.**
- **Two of these individuals did not complete the basic police academy requirements and resigned.**
- **The Board authorized replacing these two officers. A male Caucasian and a male Hispanic were hired.**

The Board of Fire and Police Commissioners set a new testing date of February 29, 2020. The test date was set on or about January 30th. The Lansing Police Department began advertising this in The Blue Line online advertisement as well as the National Minority Update advertisement, and Shopper / Lansing Journal newspaper. All Village based social media platforms (website, Facebook) had postings of the testing process. Also, recruitment notices were sent to the same colleges as in the past. Job Fairs were attended at similar locations as well. **Several copies of job pamphlets (Both in English and Spanish) were made for a member of the Lansing Community Coalition to distribute.**

It should be noted that this testing process afforded an application

process that was all online and a testing fee which continued to be waived. Also a study guide for the examination could be purchased prior to the test so applicants can better prepare themselves for the examination. In addition, a more lenient educational requirement and certified police officer certifications were accepted.

I attended and spoke at the Orientation session on February 29, 2020. My count of attendees included the following:

- 1 Female Hispanic / Latino
- 1 Female Caucasian
- 1 Male African American
- 4 Male Hispanic / Latinos
- 8 Male Caucasians

A survey was distributed to determine how applicants learned of the examination process. The following were the responses:

- 5 Applicants indicated they learned from the Blue Line ad.
- 8 Applicants indicated they found out by word of mouth (friends/co-workers, or officers from LPD)
- 1 Applicant found out by local publication
- 1 Applicant was notified by submitting a pre-employment card
- 0 Applicants indicated that they received a job pamphlet**

The BOFPC completed the final eligibility list on April 3, 2020. There is an expected 4-5 immediate openings that need to be filled from this list by the BOFPC which are pending.

Community-Based Restorative Practices Program

The Lansing Police Department and the Lansing Community Coalition agreed to engage the Cook County States Attorney's Office in discussions to implement a community-based restorative practices program. The program would be for first time youth offenders to reduce the effect of the school to prison pipeline and repeat offenders in the criminal justice systems. The implementation of such program would be in partnership with the Cook County States Attorney's Office.

A lot of research, meetings, and communication have gone into this topic. **Below are only the highlights:**

- Went to the Assistant States Attorney's (ASA's) office, Juvenile Division, and spoke about possible alternatives for juvenile arrests, especially as it relates to first time offenders. We were told that they do not have any alternative programs as it relates to restorative justice. They do have options related to mediation and mandated counseling, but these options are only available after a juvenile has been petitioned to court on a criminal charge.
- Also inquired if a restorative justice type program could be implemented, with the ASA's assistance, and was told that their office could not get involved with offenders unless a petition for criminal charges were completed.
- There is a relatively newly formed Southland Juvenile Justice Council (SJJC). It has been created, in part, to establish innovative ideas for restorative options for juvenile offenders. As of this date, they do not have any options that our department can utilize in lieu of a criminal petition. The ultimate goal is for the SJJC to create programs that all of the South Suburban police departments can benefit from. For now though, it is not an option.
- Researched a 16 hour violence prevention program, organized by Urban Youth Trauma Center, currently being utilized by Park Forest. This program was developed out of the University of Illinois at Chicago (via a grant), and is only currently being conducted at Park Forest.
- Heard of a program organized by Circuit Court Judge Collen Sheehan of Chicago, called Restorative Justice Community Court (RJCC). The program is catered to young adults though, age 18-26, and not juveniles. Obviously, this would not fit our parameters.
- Requested a conference call with the SSJC. Included was Dr. Jones, Jaclin Davis, Rev. Lane and LPD. A peer jury program was discussed that was developed by Rev. Lane. Rev. Lane is a Dean at Bremen High School in Midlothian. This program trains students to serve as a jury. It serves as an alternative to juvenile first time misdemeanor offenders and status offenders, and is also an alternative to school discipline. The juvenile offender appears in front of this jury and community service is usually recommended to the

offender. It is all voluntary. Right now the program is only offered at Bremen.

- Took a lot of information from the above listed items, and other additional sources. Conducted numerous meetings with LPD personnel. Discussions are taking place in reference to exploring the option of starting our own restorative justice style program at our police department. This program would divert eligible first time offenders away from the juvenile court, and also divert away from our local ordinance violation process. Talks are aimed towards recognizing those juvenile offenders that may qualify, and depending on the violation, referring them to one or more of a few options. They may be referred to counseling, community service, and/or attending a “life choices” class. The life choices class would be aimed towards helping redirect the juvenile and teach them how to help make better decisions in life. We are currently doing research on what type of material would best benefit the juvenile for the “life choices” portion. We are also researching if there is an entity out there that already does this type of training that we can utilize.

Continued research on this concept is still in progress, and a few options are being explored. There doesn't seem to be anything available at the moment that fits our overall needs. Hopefully, in the future, more resources will be available in the South Suburban area. If we are looking to fill the gap, and do something soon, it might be best to explore more in the area of our own internal program.

Grant research via the Lansing Police Department Grant Writing team continues regarding additional School Resource officer options.

- Numerous conversations and meetings took place with Rachel Wax with UIC. She is the Director of Youth Programming LEADS-VPC, and Program manager for Urban Youth Trauma Center. We are currently waiting to see if Rachel Wax is successful in her request for grant funding. Her program is already in place at Park Forest Police Department, and she is looking to expand this program to other agencies. If grant funding is approved, the Lansing Police Department would be able to commit to the below highlights:
 1. Have all of our officers trained as certified juvenile officers (It must be noted that our agency has already been working towards this goal, and this will continue to be the practice with

or without grant funding). We believe that it is important for all of our officers to not only understand the differences in juvenile law, but to make sure our officers are advocates for our youth in all situations.

2. Have all of our officers trained in the Law Enforcement Adolescent Development Violence Prevention Collaborative, also known as LEAD-VPC. LEAD-VPC is trauma informed youth violence prevention training for law enforcement. The LEAD-VPC training will enable The Lansing Police Department to screen all youth who are arrested in our municipality utilizing the Adverse Childhood Critical Events and Safety Screener (ACCESS). This screening process will help facilitate the identification of violence exposure, food, shelter and safety needs, and connect youth with critical services.
 3. For qualify infractions, there will be a diversion program implemented. In lieu of a criminal arrest, or in lieu of a municipal fine, a qualifying youth/parent will be offered the ability to have the youth attend a diversion program. The diversion program is a 16 hour program that has a range of topics geared towards decreasing recidivism, and helping the youth make better life choices. A member of The Lansing Police Department will also be in attendance during these sessions. This will help foster relationships between the youths in attendance, and the officers involved.
- Rachael Wax (listed in the bullet point above) was unable to secure grant funding thus unable to further expand her program.

We decided to revisit our earlier conversation with Reverend Lane and create our own Restorative Justice Program, exclusive to LPD. After numerous meetings with Reverend Lane, it was agreed upon that he would assist us in developing, implementing and ultimately teaching our program. Just a few of Reverend Lanes qualifications/highlights are listed below:

- Doctoral Student at Newburg Theological Seminary
- MA from Chicago State University in Gen. Admin. Education
- BA from Governors State University in Psychology
- Board member of South Suburban Juv. Counsel
- Presenter on Bullying Prevention for High Schools
- Restorative Justice Practitioner

- Community Service Provider for Markham Court House Juv. Probationary Dept.
- Member of South Suburban Juvenile Officers Association

The outbreak of COVID-19 has stalled the start date for this program, but our plan is to start screening for qualified juveniles at the start of the August 2020 school year. Again, this will be dependent on COVID-19 restrictions. First time offenders, low level misdemeanors, and certain case by case scenarios, will be eligible for the program. It is a voluntary program where the parents and the juvenile will have to agree to enter into the program. This program will be in lieu of criminal prosecution and/or Municipal Ordinance Citations. The program will be a total of 3 classes. They will run on Saturdays, and each Saturday will be 4 hours in duration. Reverend Lane will teach the classes. Reverend Lane will also be screening each juvenile individually to determine the root of the cause, and to determine if other outside resources are recommended (For instance, is there abuse, or is counseling needed). This program will have a range of topics geared towards decreasing recidivism, and helping the youth make better life choices. Some topics will include:

- Accountability
- Competency development - New skills to replace skills that do not produce the desired outcome
- Stakeholders – Victims, Offenders, Community – Taking Responsibility/Apology
- Improving communication
- Dealing with anger
- Making changes for the better

The program will be interactive – involving lectures, discussions, role playing, videos, and games. Topics may also be altered depending on the needs of the group currently in attendance.

A member of The Lansing Police Department will also be in attendance during these sessions. This will help foster relationships between the youths in attendance, and the officers involved.

Our goal is to also continue with the practice of having every one of our officers trained to be Certified Juvenile Officers.

Police Youth Relations (Video project)

The “What to Do When Stopped by the Police” video project ~~is currently on schedule and considerable progress has been made over the past several months.~~ **has been completed, pending introduction into the school system in the 2020-2021 school year.** The following is a timeline of progress to date:

July 2018

- Initial meeting to set outline for video & initial timeline. MOU Meeting to discuss objectives for Video Project and other aspects of the agreement.

August 2018

- Meeting at Village Hall with LPD, LNN, and Village Administration to discuss progress, roles, and expectations.

September 2018

- Meeting at TFS with Students. Roundtable style discussion on necessary elements of video, expectations, and preliminary filming schedule was set.
- Rehearsal at TFS with students for upcoming filming.

October 2018

- Filming Day 1 – Opening Sequence at TFS Cafeteria.
- Filming Day 2 – Pedestrian Stop sequence at Burnham / Ridge Rd.
- Filming Day 3 – Traffic Stop sequence at 2100 block of 178th Street.
- Filming Day 4 – Traffic Stop sequence at LPD.
- October 30th Meeting at LPD with LPD, LNN and Mr. Newman.

January 2019

- Preview of first cut of video at VMC with LPD, LNN, and Village Administration.

- Follow-up meeting to discuss comments and recommendations from the viewing on January 10th.

February 2019

- Filming Day 5 – Reshoots were conducted on a traffic stop sequence.
- Editing continued.

March 2019

- Editing continued.

April 2019

- Filming Day 6 – Search scenarios were filmed to replace one of the traffic stop scenarios.
- Editing continued.

May 2019

- Filming Day 7 – Roundtable discussion with students and officers which was based upon the scenarios and other topics related to the video.

June 2019

- Preview of second cut of video was released.
- Follow-up meeting was held discussing comments and recommendations from the video release.
- Editing of video continued.

July 2019

- Filming Day 8 – Transitional scenes between the scenarios was filmed, involving one student and one officer.
- Editing of video continued.

August 2019

- Editing of the video continued.

October 2019

- Final Cut of the video was completed.

November 2019

- Video was shared with the Village of Lansing Trustees and the United States Department of Justice.
- The video was praised by Mr. Ken Bergeron of the United States Department of Justice, Community Relations Service, in which he wrote: “This is an amazing video! I commend everyone for the professionalism in the “What To Do When Stopped By The Police WATERMARKED” video. Not only do you show three separate relevant scenarios on what students and even adults should expect if stopped by police... but you provide discussion on the why. This will go a long way to improving understanding in youth police engagement and dis-engagement. This project is a great tool and outcome from what brought us together. The future impact is priceless. Great Job Lansing! and Thornton Fractional South Students!”

December 2019

- A screening of the video at TF South was done with everyone directly involved in the project.
- Plans were made to introduce the video into classrooms in April, 2020.

March 2020

- COVID-19 emerged and delayed the introduction of the video as in-person classes were suspended.

June 2020

- Video released publicly on LNN’s YouTube Channel and the Village of Lansing website.

As of this date, ~~a majority of the all~~ primary filming is complete. ~~There is one additional primary sequence to film along with secondary footage and the inclusion of learning content.~~

~~We are on schedule to have the video completed by the end of the 2018-2019 school year in August 2019, with a possible introduction at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year.~~

We are on schedule to have the video introduced at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.

This project has progressed with great cooperation between the Lansing Police Department, Thornton Fractional South High School Administration and students, and the Village of Lansing Administration alike for the content of the video. LNN has filmed all scenes and will complete all post-production to put the project together.

This concludes the ~~6-month one-year~~ two year progress report. Work will continue in 2019 2020 and beyond regarding these topics. Additional reports will follow at times described in the MOU.