

Police Department and Communications Department

2020 was a year of forming and norming for the Wilmington Police Department.

The department added a patrol officer, a K-9 unit and dispatchers, while preparing for the return of the bike patrol. An Assistant Chief position was created to add depth to department leadership. This position is expected to be filled in the beginning of calendar year 2021. The candidate search continues for the right applicants to fill a dispatch position and vacant patrol positions. Our goal is to find people with the correct core values to serve our community and live the mission statement of the department.

Our partnership with The Matt Haverkamp Foundation allowed the selection of our new K-9 Team at no cost to the City. We interviewed three officers for the position of K-9 handler, and selected Jordan Ianson to be the K-9 handler. In late summer, Patrolman (Ptl.) Ianson, and two others went to Von Licke Kennels in Indiana, where we selected a Belgium Malivois and German Shephard mix, named Miko, over two other dogs. Miko and his handler, Jordan, attended a ten-week training course. Excelling together, the pair was certified in November. The team has high potential and are dedicated to both our city and county to deter the drug trafficking and stop the flow of poisons into our community.

The Dispatch and Patrol sections had a new CAD/RMS server and program installed in March of 2020 as the pandemic began to hit. The importance of this program is that it allows for a Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP), which allows the two largest agencies in the county to share information and be more effective in our service to citizens. The department found there was a learning curve to the program, but it falls in line with recommended templates from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Emergency Management Agency. The department also installed a new radio, phone, and 911 recording system that will provide better record communications, while preparing the infrastructure for the E911 requirement when it becomes law.

The focus for 2021 will be hiring, training, and implementation of the bike patrol as a functional unit. The retirement of veteran officers and the training of their new hire replacements will impact our work in the new year. Our new hires have already made their mark in the community. Ptl. Foster was named Officer of the Year, while Ptl. Sylvester was named Crime Fighter of the Year. Our Dispatcher of the Year was split among the four senior dispatchers who carried the department through a year of short staffing challenges. Our recent hires in Dispatch show great potential and promise for our City.

Our commitment to the citizens of our community is strong and every addition to our staff reiterates our resolve to reduce the fear and incidence of crime while protecting property, and promoting the peace in our hometown. This commitment will be achieved by partnering with our key community leaders, organizations, and neighborhood watch groups. Our staff is always open to constructive dialogue that benefits our community and addresses quality of life issues. We look forward to a positive and healthy 2021.

Ron Cravens, Chief

