

# MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor Rick Baker

**From:** Charles "Chuck" Harmon  
Chief of Police

**Date:** December 15, 2006

**Subject:** Community Policing

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This memorandum serves as a confirmation of our discussions regarding community policing in the St. Petersburg Police Department. During our conversations, it was apparent that both of us remain highly committed to our neighborhoods. However, we have both received persistent concerns from the neighborhoods about community police officers not returning phone calls and not attending meetings. After analysis of our community policing model, I have identified four main issues that need to be addressed:

1. A response needs to be developed to address neighborhood concerns cited above.
2. Community policing needs to be implemented Department wide.
3. Performance commitments to our community need to be established.
4. Service enhancements need to be made to better address community issues related to narcotics, prostitution and cyber-crimes.

Effective Monday, December 18, 2006, the following will be implemented:

In order to address the neighborhood concerns, I will create four Community Service Officers and one Community Service Sergeant assigned to each of the City's three policing districts. Their sole responsibilities will be to act as the community interface and liaison, and become facilitators of the problem solving/community policing process using department-wide resources. Each district will also have a centralized District Community Service (telephone) Line for citizens to call and report quality-of-life issues. A return phone call will be made within 24 hours by a Community Service Officer. They will also ensure that community meetings will be regularly attended by Department personnel.

Community policing will be implemented Department wide. I researched several internal and external resources. Of all the agencies within the state and the nation that we queried and researched, none currently utilize the model presently used by our agency. The trend of police agencies has been to implement structural changes aimed at flattening and decentralizing their community policing programs, coupled with a philosophical paradigm shift to accomplish the embodiment of the community policing philosophy throughout the entire organization. In acknowledging these trends, in conjunction with the Department's model which has evolved over time and circumstance, it is advantageous at this time to expand the present model, thereby increasing the level of responsiveness, service, and accountability to the community.

In comparing the large agencies in Florida (Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, Orlando, Tampa, and Jacksonville), I have found none currently operate with a model similar to our Department. This is also consistent with what was found nationally. The majority of these agencies have operationally integrated the community policing philosophy throughout their entire organization. All officers in these agencies are actively involved in addressing community issues and are considered "community police officers."

While staffing levels are currently sufficient to handle the current workload, a redeployment of personnel to the districts will allow additional time for all officers, who will be known as "Community Patrol Officers," to address community policing activities and problem solving. All shift sergeants and lieutenants (middle managers) will now play an active role in community policing. Additional community policing/problem solving training will be provided to all sworn employees in order to finalize this decentralizing expansion process, giving them the knowledge base necessary to ensure effective community partnering. Currently, the patrol officers are undervalued and underutilized in community policing activities. This expansion will focus all employees on their community policing role.

Performance commitments to our community are established as follows:

- Community policing will be practiced "24 hours a day/7 days a week" by all Department personnel.
- Citizen calls to the District Community Service Lines will be returned within 24 hours.
- A Department representative will attend scheduled neighborhood meetings.
- There will be dedicated Community Service Officers whose sole responsibility will be to liaison with the community.
- Community Patrol Officers will be available and given time to address community issues around the clock.

Additionally, calls received on the centralized District Community Service Lines will be assigned, extensively tracked via a computer-based reporting system, and resolved to their most logically and statutorily conducive conclusion. The Department's response to these calls will be measured and reported in the Department's Performance Measures.

Additional service enhancements will be implemented. The Street Crimes Unit will be expanded by one sergeant and eight officers, with an even greater emphasis placed on the enforcement of narcotic and prostitution related crimes. Also, a "Cyber-Detective," who will focus on computer-based criminal activity such as identity theft and child pornography, will be added to the Economic Crimes Unit.

In March of 2007, a Department Community Retreat will be held. During our administration, the community has always played a role in shaping the Police Department, and we are committed to continuing to involve community members as we move forward. At the Retreat, community and Department representatives will be asked to:

- Identify specific measurements to determine the success of community policing.
- Review and recommend revisions to performance evaluations of employees to gauge individual success relating to employees' community policing efforts.
- Review and recommend revisions to the Department's Performance Measures to gauge department success relating to community policing initiatives and all other Department operations.
- Review and recommend changes to new employee training and field training programs to ensure community policing is a core component.