

Americus Police Department

Fiscal Year 2018

Goals

Fourth Quarter Progress Report

Goal 1 - Strengthen partnerships and increase cooperation between the Americus Police Department and other Court, Law Enforcement, and Public Safety Agencies in the area.

Progress: Chief Scott was invited to present a block of training on Critical Incident Response at the GACP Summer Training Conference in Savannah. He participated in the GACP Goal Setting Conference at GSP Training Headquarters in Atlanta and joined chiefs from across the state in a meeting with the governor and legislators. He presented a training block at this goals conference on Critical Incident Planning and made a progress report on the work of the GACP ad hoc committee that he co-chairs. GACP District 2 (our district) was recognized by the GACP Executive Director as one of the most active districts in the state. Chief Scott serves as the elected representative for District 2.

Goal 2 – Strengthen partnerships with community groups and develop new relationships with community stakeholders.

Progress: The department conducted the Summer GREAT Program and capped the program with a presentation of the USDOJ S.T.Y.L.E. Program in cooperation with the US Attorney's Office, the FBI, and other state and local law enforcement officers. Sgt. Brown and Lt. Sims are teaching the GREAT Program two days a week in the schools. We completed our third session of the Citizen's Police Academy with graduation in November. The graduation exercise included presentations by all city Department Heads who gave a summary of the city services their departments provide.

Goal 3 – Implement Crisis Response Teams

Progress: The department is working toward full compliance with the One Mind Initiative sponsored by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). The campaign involves establishing a clearly defined and sustainable partnership with a community mental health organization, developing a model policy to implement police response to persons affected by mental illness, training and certifying sworn officers and selected non-sworn staff in mental health first aid training or other equivalent mental health awareness course, and providing crisis intervention team training.

We have established a partnership with Middle Flint Mental Health Services and implemented a comprehensive policy on dealing with persons with mental health issues. We have made significant progress in training our personnel and have identified training opportunities across the region for both Mental Health First Aid and the Crisis Intervention Team Training. We have made CIT training a priority for both sworn and civilian personnel and intend to exceed the IACP standard by having our entire department CIT certified.

Goal 4 – Maintain State Certification and attain CALEA Accreditation

Progress: We have maintained our GLECP files so far this year and are hard at work building the CALEA files. We were able to use asset forfeiture funds to purchase Power DMS, which is an

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Fiscal Year 2018

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accreditation management software program. We have already built the CALEA assessment in the software and have uploaded all of our existing policies and procedures. At the close of 2018 we are approximately 80% complete with the CALEA Self Assessment Process. The software allows us to build training courses and deliver them to all personnel through an online learning platform. We are using this resource to provide POST approved training on mandatory topics which do not require a classroom environment.

Goal 5 – Implement Proactive Strategies to Reduce Crime and Enhance Response to Crime Scenes

Progress: We have worked to address criminal activity through directed patrol of high crime areas and through an effort to educate the public on how to decrease their vulnerability to property crimes. We have given particular focus to domestic violence through a partnership with the SWJC Family Violence Council, Inc. and the Southwest Georgia Victim's Assistance Alliance, Inc. Through this partnership we are emailing a copy of all domestic violence reports to a victim's advocate for follow-up. We have also done a number of print, radio, and social media campaigns encouraging people to remove valuables and particularly guns from their cars in an effort to decrease the number of entered auto reports.

A major milestone for the police department and for the community in 2018, was the arrest of Devontae Watts for the 2014 murder of five-year-old Asata Snipes. This arrest came as a result of a four year investigation by the department in cooperation with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. As we enter a new year, one of the crime problems we must face includes the nationwide opioid abuse epidemic which is claiming lives through drug overdoses here in Americus and Sumter County. We ended 2018 charging two men with murder for their role in the overdose death of a local woman. We will work closely with the District Attorney in 2019 to prosecute individuals who are profiting by supplying these deadly drugs to our community as we also work with our local mental health agencies to help those battling addiction to get free from these dangerous drugs.

Although we are continuing to see a downward trend in reported crime and our overall crime numbers continue to be lower than they have in years past, we are seeing an increase in the number of injuries and deaths due to violence among the young men in our community. There were eleven reported incidents of drive by shootings in our community in the last 90 days of 2018. We charged seven people in connection to these incidents and at the time of this publication, the incidents are still under investigation. We have been able to tie nine of these incidents to the same groups of people and are fairly certain that the other two are also related. Fortunately, although a lot of rounds have been fired indiscriminately in these incidents, only two people were actually injured. We seized or recovered 37 guns last year, 16 of those in the last 90 days. This is a community issue, in that the only way to address this type of violent crime is to teach our young people violence is never an acceptable method of resolving conflict. Incidents of individuals shooting into houses, cars and crowds because someone has made them angry increased dramatically last year and unless we address the issue as a community, I fear that they will continue to increase in 2019.

Americus Police Department

Fiscal Year 2018

Goals

Goal 6 – Provide Timely and Meaningful Training to all Employees

Progress: We met with all sergeants and lieutenants and advised them to start working with their employees to identify their career goals and training needs. Supervisors were provided with a standardized form to use in these meetings so that they can document a training plan for each of their employees. These individual training plans were then submitted to the Training Officer for Review. At the close of 2018, all personnel had met their minimum training requirements. Total training hours for the agency was 5,643 hours, which averages out to 144.7 hours of training per officer.

Goal 7 – Fill all allotted sworn positions.

Progress: We have worked diligently in partnership with Human Resources to identify and recruit top quality candidates to fill vacancies. At the close of the fourth quarter we have six unfilled positions. As we filled vacant patrol positions, we were able to fill the two vacant detective slots in CID and assign one officer as our new Canine Handler. The Canine Team is not assigned to a patrol shift, but works a flexFible schedule to allow coverage of all four patrol teams.