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# The City of Sanford, Florida

## Police-Community Relations Enhancement Initiative: Report

Prepared By:



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## Introduction

According to reports from police watchdog groups the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement and the Department of Justice, improving police-community relationships is a priority for police departments nationally and internationally. Police-community relations are defined by mutual trust and respect, effective communication, proactive policing with community input, and perceived safety. Improving police-community relations isn't about pointing fingers at others. It is about asking all of us to step up to the challenge – because we all have essential roles to play in creating meaningful change.

Since the Rodney King situation in 1991, the press, religious organizations, social activist groups, civilian oversight groups and the public in general have maintained a high sensitivity to the role, function and performance of police officers. Likewise, incidents for increased scrutiny are on the rise; each year there are more high profile news events that put policing in the national spotlight - usually in a very negative way-alleging misconduct, abuse of authority and/or racial profiling. The reality is that no arm of government is scrutinized or more vulnerable to public criticism than police services

As a result of the close public scrutiny of police services and police history with certain ethnic groups, the potential for poor police-community relations, misunderstandings, lack of support and mounting citizen complaints against police personnel is a constant threat to all police departments.

In addition to the high profile cases, it is an established fact that historically, relationships between police and communities of color are often strained and adversarial. Because of this history, people of color distrust and are suspicious of police officers in general. The distrust and suspicion of the officers' motives sometimes lead to a negative interaction between the two, which continues to perpetuate a poor relationship. Therefore, any encounter can easily spiral into a confrontation if not handled properly by police personnel.

Poor police-community relationships usually result in increased citizen complaints being filed against police officers, the chief and the department. If the community's perception of the department is negative and trust gone, these complaints will be voiced to elected officials, news media and/or state and federal civil rights agencies. Consequently, in an effort to minimize complaints and promote good police-community relations, city administrations and police departments nationwide are actively engaging in collaborative problem solving processes to build bridges and strengthen their relationship with the community. The collaborative processes are predicated on the premise that police officers are public servants, work for the public and are accountable to the public.

In order to proactively and systematically address these concerns locally, in a meeting held on March 23, 2009 the City of Sanford Commissioner's approved a contract with Andrew Thomas (doing business as ALT Associates Conflict Management Consultants) to conduct a Police Community Relations Enhancement Initiative. The initiative's three-part goal is to assess the community's perception of the Sanford Police Department's current efforts to fight crime; discuss and explore ways to strengthen the partnership between the SPD and the community; and to identify any critical crime control issues facing the community.

## **Rationale for the Project**

The Sanford Police Department (SPD) and the City of Sanford realizes that in order to maintain the highest quality of police services and a good police-community partnership, an ongoing assessment process is essential. Due to an increasingly diverse and multi-cultural population with different values, morals and standards, improved communication between the police and community is crucial in order to earn and maintain the public trust. Like any successful business, quality control is the key to good customer service; therefore feedback from customers is extremely important.

Realizing the value of good police-community relations, numerous successful initiatives are already being undertaken by the Sanford Police Department and the City of Sanford in several neighborhoods. These efforts seek to improve public safety, enhance the quality of life and reduce crime. In addition, these endeavors are being carried out to make the best of the SPD partnership with the community and, in turn, minimize citizen concerns, complaints and negative perceptions of the SPD.

In summary, the Police Community Relations Enhancement Initiative is a proactive step to assess and enhance positive police-community relations. This initiative both embodies the spirit and takes action to further the SPD Motto: ***"In Partnership with the Community: By becoming partners with the community; we can address crime issues, solve problems in the city neighborhoods; and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Sanford and its visitors"***.

## **Project Description**

The purpose of the Police-Community Relations Enhancement Initiative is to identify the SPD's strengths in dealing with community members, as well as identifying any issues and concerns from the community's perspective in their interaction with members of the SPD. In addition, SPD, in collaboration with the community, desires to both build upon the strengths identified and proactively explore strategies to address any citizen concerns and/or issues regarding the Department's operation and delivery of services. The SPD Police Community Relations Enhancement Initiative involved five stages:

1. **Review of SPD Reports:** Review existing data including SPD Annual Reports, SPD Professional Standards Annual Reports, City of Sanford Employee Satisfaction Survey, PAS: Report On The Comprehensive Management Study Of The Sanford Police Department, Administrative Internal Investigation General Order, Newspaper Articles, and Recent Re-Accreditation Report;
2. **Interviews:** Conduct interviews with Citizen's Advisory Board members and a diverse cross section of SPD staff;
3. **Community Forums:** Conduct four (4) community forums open to the public; one in each district of the City, in order to receive input from the public on the SPD police-community partnership's strengths and challenges;
4. **Day of Dialogue:** Conduct a day of dialogue with selected community leaders; this included approximately 20 representative four (4) from each of the four districts, plus four (4) selected by the Mayor, 20 representatives from the community at large and 8-10 representatives from the SPD. The participation goal was to have 40 community representatives plus 8-10 representatives from the SPD; and
5. **SPD Feedback to the Community:** SPD will review the feedback/comments from the process with key staff in the department for the purpose of categorizing and prioritizing the best suggestions. Also, the Department will develop a strategic approach to community safety to act upon the suggestions and will conclude the process with a report to the community.

## Outcomes

The intended outcomes from the five stages SPD Police Community Relations Enhancement Initiative are the following:

- To **open dialogue** between SPD and the community;
- To **re-establish relationships with the community** based on inclusion and mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities;
- To **establish a shared vision and common commitment** to crime prevention;
- To **evaluate the relationship** between the police and community and identify critical crime control issues, and;
- To promote and **practice** the use of **effective communication** that crosses racial, cultural, and ethnic barriers.

## Review of SPD Reports and Operating Procedures

During the review phase the aforementioned documents were examined to gain clarity and understanding of the general operating procedures, policies and protocol of the SPD. Other documents were reviewed to assess the diversity, education level and staff turnover rate in the Department. Finally other documents were reviewed to better understand the history of the department and become familiar with the significant milestones and pivotal points in the organization's history over the past twenty-five years, including the accreditation status.

In addition, these documents were reviewed for possible indications of systemic practices that might have a negative or unfavorable impact on the Department's

police-community relations. Since purpose drives practice, it's critical to assess the Department's purpose, beliefs and values as they influence the culture of the department, which in turn informs the behavior of the officers. Based on the review of the documents, the following are my findings and observations.

### **Policies, Protocol and Procedures**

SPD is generally regarded as a progressive professional department that works well with the community. Chief Tooley receives high marks for the development of the Street Crimes Tactical Unit and its ongoing work to reduce street crimes. As a result of presentations Chief Tooley has made to groups in the business community, the community in general is aware of the Tactical Unit and expresses a high level of support for it as well as the personnel involved.

**Community Policing:** The Community-Policing Unit is very active and partners with a number of community organizations. The Unit is involved in and supports a variety of community activities and events around the city. In addition, the Unit maintains a pool of approximately 40 competent and talented volunteers who receive training to assist the Department with various crime prevention and community relationship-building programs. These programs include but are not limited to Weed & Seed, literacy learning, D.A.R.E., chaplains, Martin Luther King Jr. Committee, school resource officers, and night out against crime. The staff and volunteers of the Community-Policing Unit contribute countless hours of service to the community; unfortunately, the general community is not aware of the vastness of the Unit's contribution. The staff and volunteers expressed their personal frustration in not being able to get the public more engaged in the public safety events and activities they are conducting for the community.

**S.A.R.A. Projects:** To augment and strengthen the community-policing philosophy, the SPD endorse and promote the establishment of S.A.R.A. (Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment) projects to foster greater collaboration between police and community in identifying, analyzing and resolving quality of life issues and crimes. The S.A.R.A. approach to crime prevention is associated with the problem-solving oriented policing model. A number of the officers in SPD have established S.A.R.A projects in several neighborhoods. These projects include the homeless loitering in CSA 13 area businesses, Lake Monroe Terrace street lights, nuisance alarms, and residential home address ID. However, due to a lack of specific guidelines, protocol and accountability for the projects, there is little to no uniformity or consistency in project designs, procedures or rationale. The intent of S.A.R.A. projects is to encourage officers under the auspices of their Lieutenants to form partnerships with community groups, organizations, businesses and associations, thus creating neighborhood-based crime prevention teams. The effectiveness of community-policing and S.A.R.A. projects are greatly enhanced when community organizing, community development, neighborhood development and capacity building are present and actively being pursued. The theoretic principles behind community organizing are threefold: promoting the improvement of basic living conditions; promoting collaboration between community and experts on identifiable issues, and; building capacity for self-determination.

**Number of Sworn Officers:** Despite difficult financial circumstances facing most cities throughout the country, Sanford, unlike many other cities, has maintained its commitment to a well-staffed, highly professional police force. Chief Tooley and the City Manager agreed several years ago to a formula that set the number of police officers needed at 166 or 2.62 per thousand residents, to ensure an adequate level of police services. The 166 officers are predicated on the projected population of approximately 63,391 residents in the City of Sanford by the year 2010. Currently the Department has 133 sworn officers servicing a population of approximately 52,000 people, reflecting a ratio of 2.55 per thousand. While the 133 officers are up from the 116 sworn officers employed by SPD when the formula was established in 2005, based on the agreed upon formula of 2.62 officers per thousand population, the Department is under staffed by roughly 3.24 officers.

**Accreditation:** February of 2008 the SPD received a favorable review from the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation Inc. agency and was reaccredited for three years. The internal assessment of the department was very thorough and took a critical look at patrol topics and pursuit policies, use of force, recruitment and training. Also, it reviewed training and policies regarding canine use. In addition, the assessment also included a tour of the facility and interviews with a cross section of the staff.

In summary, the Reaccreditation Report is very complimentary of the SPD and the leadership, Chief Tooley, for operating a well-organized professional police department. The officers and volunteers are highly skilled in the tactical aspects of carrying out police functions. Based on my review of the policies, procedures and Accreditation Report the following are my findings:

### **Findings**

- The reaccreditation assessment, although extremely thorough on the internal and tactical workings of the SPD, the assessment did not nor was it intended to include an external evaluation of the general public's perception of the Department's relationship and human interaction with the public in performing its duties.
- The SPD does not have a procedure for soliciting the public's comments on the quality of their experience when interacting with members of the Department.
- Volunteers and the community policing unit staff contribute thousands of hours of service to the community providing and promoting support services to the community. For the most part, this goes unnoticed.
- Neighborhood development, capacity building and/or community organizing is not actively practiced or promoted in the community.
- The SPD has invested the time and energy into developing a very positive and progressive Vision, Mission and Values Statement that speak to the human side of police work; however they do not appear to be integrated into the general orders, policies or procedures of the Department.

- The Department encourages the officers to identify and participate in S.A.R.A. projects within the community; the concept is an excellent one and connects the officers with the community. However, not all the officers participate in the program and the program itself appears to need more structure including definitions of whether it is voluntary or mandatory, criteria for types of projects, goals and objectives of the project, time frame of the project and accountability for follow through and completion.
- Although considerable research and planning has been undertaken to develop a comprehensive formula for ensuring the SPD is adequately staffed, the fact of the matter is the Department is understaffed according to the formula.

### **Professional Standards Unit (Internal Affairs)**

The Professional Standards Unit (PSU) is charged with the thorough and total accounting, review and conduct of all investigations involving citizens' complaints against members of the SPD. Internal affairs, or the Professional Standards Unit (PSU), is responsible for receiving and processing allegations of misconduct on the part of sworn officers and civilians of the SPD that involve the use of force and/or other actions that are inconsistent with departmental policies and standard operating procedures. As a check and balance to ensure the PSU is carrying out its responsibility in a manner that will invoke the public's confidence, every effort should be undertaken to ensure thoroughness, fairness and timeliness of formal investigations into citizens' allegations of police misconduct.

The manner in which citizen complaints are received, processed and shared with the public is a huge factor in driving the public's perception, trust and confidence in any law enforcement agency. Also, from the officers' standpoint, the citizen complaint process is a highly sensitive matter and a point of contention that can create dissention, distrust and morale issues within a police department.

Recognizing the divergent points of view held by the public and officers when it comes to receiving and processing citizens' complaints, information on the complaint process is usually joined with commendation information for officers in order to balance the information distributed to the public. The SPD is no different; the subject of citizens' complaints and the distribution of printed information is a controversial topic. Based upon my interview with PSU staff, review of the standard operating procedures for the unit and review of the annual statistics for 2006-2008, the following are my findings:

### **Findings**

- The PSU has a very powerful software package called Administrative Investigative Management (AIM) that is capable of generating comprehensive statistical reports; data trails and cross tabulations that could be extremely beneficial as a management tool for tracking complaints.
- The staff in PSU is very accommodating and work hard to address the needs of citizens with complaints. A number of potential complaints are averted after citizens' talk with PSU staff and gain clarity and understanding on the SPD standard operating procedures, role, responsibility and function of police

officers. A key point herein is that it is the citizen's voluntary decision not to pursue the complaint.

- The Department does not make annual reports or inform the public as to the number of citizens complaints filed, number of complaints informally adjusted, the number of complaints going to investigation, the average time for processing a complaint, number of officers involved in the complaints, number of officers with multiple complaints, the outcome of the complaints or disciplinary action against officers when warranted.
- The PSU has initiated investigations on acts of misconduct against citizens discovered during the investigations of other unrelated allegations even when the citizen has not filed a complaint.
- Between January 2004 and April 2009, 145 citizen complaints were filed with the SPD. Of the 145 complaints files 10.3% were sustained and the remainder were closed, exonerated, not sustained or unfounded. The 10.3% sustained rate is consistent with the national average, which ranges from 10%-13%.
- The number of complaints filed with PSU for 2007 (74) was double the number for 2006 (38) and 2008 (39) and no analysis of the data was conducted to determine the reason for the increase.
- In 2007 there were 6 officers with five (5) or more prior allegations; this may be an early warning sign of an officer in need of additional training or other employee assistance.
- The Commendation or Complaint brochure published by the SPD has been out of stock for close to a year resulting in no printed material available to educate the general public on the commendation or complaint process.
- According to City Ordinance no. 3306 & no. 3494 which established the Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) under Section 2-475 (c), The Citizen's Advisory Board shall be involved in the citizens' complaints and solutions, assisting the Police Department in efforts to maintain courteous public relations and build public trust with citizens. There is no indication of a connection between the PSU and the CAB or involvement of the CAB in the citizens' complaints.

### **Level of Police Activity**

**Calls for Services:** The SPD has a high level of police activity for a city its size when compared to other cities of similar and larger size in the central Florida area. Calls for service in 2008 totaled approximately 104,000; up over 2006 and 2007 by approximately 8% and 13% respectively. Although calls for services were up, Part 1 crimes for 2008 were approximately 3550; down from 2006 (3,700) but up from 2007 (3,425).

The SPD has the highest number of calls for services in Seminole County and in contrast to larger cities like Kissimmee, with a population of approximately 62,000 residents; this represents approximately 10,000 more residents than Sanford at 52,000. Although Kissimmee has a larger population than Sanford, the number of calls for service was lower at 101,193 and Part 1 crimes were lower at 3,358.

The high level of police activity is in direct correlation with the crime and poverty index for the City of Sanford, which is driven by the social demographics (i.e.

education level, school dropout rate, unemployment rate, number of families on public assistance, number of families in public housing, and teenage pregnancy rate). The high demand for police services is compounded by the lack of human service agencies in the community resulting in the SPD attempting to fill the void. The drawback to this goodwill approach is the officers are routinely being asked and expected to provide services they are not trained to do. Consequently, the calls for services related to interpersonal disputes, parenting issues, counseling and family matters, etc., would be better served if there were appropriate agencies to which the officers could refer them. The increased availability of human services would allow the officers to concentrate on police functions and be more proactive when it comes to crime prevention and public safety initiatives. Based on my review of the statistical reports and interviews with the staff, the following are my findings.

### **Findings**

- The high activity level served to attract many of the officers interviewed to accept positions with the SPD. Some officers stated they turned-down job offers from other departments to work for the SPD.
- The calls for service, crime-control initiatives, community policing philosophy and other innovative policing activities which the SPD espouses is appealing to prospective law enforcement personnel.
- Many of the officers interviewed specifically mentioned the real world experience at SPD is what attracted them to the Department.
- The recruits feel the on-the-job experience they obtain from working for the SPD is unmatched in the area and a springboard for their careers in law enforcement.
- The high activity level and request for services sometimes is a double edge sword in that the officers are often expected to know and enforce the law, as well as be the primary provider of human services to the community.

### **Training /Education**

**Education level:** Currently the minimum level of educational attainment necessary to qualify for selection as a police officer is a high school diploma and completion of the criminal justice institute. The minimum requirement for community services officers is also a high school diploma; however they do not have to complete the criminal justice institute. Considering the growing complexities of law enforcement work, it appears that consideration should be given to the minimum educational level requirement probably should be elevated to focus upon the college educated population. Overall, SPD has a high percentage of officers with college degrees; 57 or 42.8% of the 133 sworn personnel have a college degree. Of the 57 with degrees, 29 or 50.9% have Associate degrees, 13 or 22.8% have Bachelor degrees, and 15 or 26.3% have Master degrees. The percentage of SPD employees with degrees far exceeds the norm for the City of Sanford where, according to the 2006 estimated census, approximately 14% of the residents in the City of Sanford has a college degree. The 14% college educated residents in the City of Sanford is one of the lowest in Seminole County for cities reporting i.e. Altamonte Springs is 31.2%, Oviedo is 41.2% and Winter Springs is 36.3%. Also, it is low in comparison to other cities in Central Florida (i.e. Kissimmee at 16.3 and Apopka at 22%).

Given the educational level and the other social demographics of the Sanford community such as the growing, diverse, multi-cultural population with different values, morals and standards, the skill sets necessary for the officers to deal with the residents may require additional training that goes beyond what is offered at the criminal justice institute. Supporting continued education is a positive for the SPD and demonstrated its commitment to ensuring the officers are better equipped to do their job. Based on my review of the educational level of SPD officers and the City of Sanford demographics the following are my findings

## **Findings**

- The high educational level of the officers is a plus for the department however it is essential that the infrastructure, management model and leadership style be flexible and keeps pace with the education of the officers.
- The additional pay for college degrees is a positive and motivates the officers to pursue a degree. However, the challenge for SPD going forward is to maintain the officers' motivation and drive after the degree is obtained. This could be an opportunity for enhancing the Departments' recognition/reward for high performance program. The program should be inclusive and an opportunity to recognize all members of the department.
- The minimum educational requirement for the City of Sanford police officers position is a high school diploma or GED. Considering the importance the department places on education and the percentage of officers with college degrees, the minimum requirement may need to be revisited to avoid an over qualified staff that is dissatisfied, disenchanting, unmotivated or unhappy and detached from the job and the community. To accomplish this, it may be helpful to focus on a plan for officers' career growth and development.
- SDP may need to supplement current criminal justice institute and SPD in-service training with community-relations training (e.g., interpersonal skills, interpersonal conflict management skills, sensitivity, human diversity, understanding cultural differences and communicating cross cultures) for all personnel.

## **Diversity**

**Staff and Community Diversity:** As result of the recruitment plan, the SPD has significantly enhanced the gender, racial and ethnic diversity of the department to be more representative of the Sanford community. Again this was a goal of the current SPD administration that was actively pursued and successfully accomplished. The accomplishment of this goal raises the bar and presents a new set of challenges for SPD; challenges associated with creating and maintaining innovation, collaboration, cooperation and high performance from a diverse team. To maximize human diversity the Department faces the challenge of bridging the dynamics of gender, cultures, ethnicity, race and valuing differences with inclusion.

Breakdown of Sworn Personnel by Race (n=133)

Race	SPD	City of Sanford*	State of Florida*
White	66%	59%	78%
Black	18%	32%	14%
Hispanic/Latino	15%	10%	16%
Other	1%	3%	2%
Total	100%	104%*	110*

*\*All numbers for the City of Sanford and State of Florida are taken from the 2006 US Census Bureau estimated population and the totals add up to more than 100%*

Breakdown of Sworn Personnel by Race and Gender

	Males	Females	Total	Percentage
White	78	10	88	66%
Black	20	4	24	18%
Hispanic/Latino	15	5	20	15%
Other	1	0	1	1%
Total	114	19	133	100%
Percentage	86%	14%	100%	

As the Sanford community continues to become more diverse and multi-cultural, the SPD may need to modify and target its recruitment efforts to ensure the Department maintains its diversity to be representative of the community. The following are my findings based upon my review of the demographics of the Department.

**Findings**

- The Department recently promoted its first female to the rank of Sergeant. This female is also African American and is the only African American female holding the rank of Sergeant in any police department in Seminole County.
- The Department has utilized focus group sessions and mentoring to encourage females to take promotional exams.
- To fully embrace human diversity in the SPD, the recruitment plan should be augmented with a proactive career growth and development component containing provisions for inclusion and training regarding learning and unlearning established behaviors, attitudes and worldviews that shape the officers' current perception of themselves and others.
- Similar to the formula the City and the SPD established for the ratio of sworn officers per thousand residents, it may be necessary to consider some type of diversity goal and formula to ensure the Department continues to be somewhat reflective of the community's growing multi-cultural population.
- Sanford's person of color population represents approximately 42% of the City's Population which is higher than the state average of approximately 30% and the highest in Seminole County.

## Interviews

**Interviews with Citizen's Advisory Board:** Interviews were conducted with all nine (9) members of the Chief's Citizens Advisory Board representing 100% participation. Ordinance No. 3306 adopted September 16<sup>th</sup>, 1996 created the Citizens' Advisory Board for the purpose of providing suggestions and recommendations to the Chief of Police and the City Commission regarding law enforcement needs and resources. Ordinance No. 3494 adopted June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1999, amended Ordinance No. 3306 to clarify the role and responsibility of the Citizen's Advisory Board. Taking into consideration the intent of the Ordinances and the purpose of the Citizen's Advisory Board, the purpose of the twenty-two (22) question survey was to gain greater insight into how the Ordinance is being interpreted and accomplished from the Board Members perspective. Board members' participation in the interviews was strictly voluntary. The following are my findings based upon my interviews with the Board members and review of the City Ordinance that established the Board.

### Findings

- The board members unanimously expressed their strong support for Chief Tooley and the professionalism he has brought to the Department.
- The Board members are not familiar with the Ordinance that created the Advisory Board and are very interested in more education and training on role, responsibilities and function of the Board.
- The Board members are not sure they are making a positive difference, being instrumental in enhancing police-community relations, or building trust with the community. They would welcome the opportunity to be a greater resource for Chief Tooley, the SPD and the community.
- The Board members are not familiar with the citizens' complaint process nor do they feel they have participated in a meaningful way to enhance the process.
- The Board members are not familiar with the SPD Commendation or *You and the Police: Citizen's Rights and Responsibilities* brochures published by the American Civil Liberties Union.
- The Board members are somewhat satisfied with the SPD relationship with the community; however they would like to see the Department become more proactive, building a stronger relationship.
- Board members would like to see greater public participation at the meetings.

**Interviews with Staff:** Interviews were conducted with eleven (11) staff members of the SPD ranging from 1 to 22 yrs of service. The 11 employees represent approximately 7% of the 154 employees in the SPD. Also, the employees interviewed represented a cross section of the staff that included, lieutenants, sergeants, officers, and civilians; males (6) and females (5); white (3), black (4) and Hispanic/Latino (4). The purpose of the interviews was to obtain input from staff on their perception of the Sanford Police Department's strengths and challenges when partnering with the community. They also served as the voice of staff regarding their thoughts and opinions on what additional proactive steps the Department can be taking to further enhance the pursuit of positive police-community relations. The interview consisted of twenty (20) questions; the following are my findings based on the participants'

responses to those questions.

## Findings

- Everyone interviewed expressed pride, dedication and commitment to the SPD and that they are there by choice and not default.
- The participants acknowledge and are very concerned about the lack of confidence that the community has in the SPD and feel strongly that the Department should be initiating planned proactive steps to rebuild the trust and confidence.
- Although the participants indicated satisfaction with the overall relationship between the SPD and the community, they all were in agreement it should and needs to be enhanced.
- There was an acknowledgement by the majority of the participants that there are some officers/employees in Department that have weak interpersonal and communication skills, are not respectful to all citizens and treat people in certain neighborhood in a disparaging and condescending manner.
- The participants are concerned about the negative press the Department receives and wish the administration would develop a proactive public relations campaign to counter the negative press.
- The feeling of the participants is that the Values Statement and Motto are just words and not taken seriously by the staff. It was further stated, if the Department is serious about the Motto *In Partnership with the community*, leadership should develop a universal action plan that incorporate the Vision, Mission, Values, and Motto of the Department into the policies, procedures and protocol the agency.
- The opinion of the majority of staff interviewed is that the concept of S.A.R.A. Projects in the Department are not embraced by the masses; the feeling is it needs more structure, criteria and direction to give it meaning.
- The majority of the officers interviewed are not involved in community activities, agencies, organizations or groups beyond what is required by the Department.

## Community Forums

The overall participation at the five 2 hour community forums was less than expected. The original plan was to conduct four community forums and the fifth forum was added in response to the low turnout (6 people) at the June 11, 2009 forum at Westside Community Center Boys and Girls Club in Goldsboro. The additional forum was also scheduled at Westside Community Center for Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and only 8 participants attended, three of the participants attended two of the other forums and two participants were members of the Citizen's Advisory Board. To inform the public of the community forums announcements were placed in the Sanford Herald, and the Orlando Sentinel. In addition, flyers were emailed to all groups, organizations, associations and individuals known to the City administration. The total number of participants at the five forums was seventy-seven (77). Noticeably absent from the forums was people of color, clergy and human service agencies. The low response from people of color is particularly interesting since a significant percentage of the

complaints against the SPD are filed by people of color. In follow-up conversations with members of the Black community the explanation for the low participation level from people of color was; the people are fed-up with the disrespectful treatment and condescending attitude of SPD officers towards the Black community; and the meetings are nothing new. The SPD has held meetings in the past with representatives from the Black community to hear their concerns but nothing has changed. To a large extent the people of color have no faith in this process and don't believe the SPD or the City of Sanford is truly interested in their concerns nor do they intend to change their method of operation when it comes to dealing with people of color.

The same six questions were used for all five forums. The comments received from the participants attending the sessions were grouped into 12 categories. The following is a summary of those comments and the facilitator's observation of the public's participation.

1. **Role and Function of Community Services:** The public asked for more information on exactly what is the nature of the community services provided by the SPD; does it include support for neighborhood watch programs and etc.?
2. **Citizens' Advisory Board:** The public is unaware of the CAB and want more information on its role, function, who serves on it and how are they selected.
3. **SPD Staffing and Number of Personnel:** The public is interested in knowing more about the number of sworn officers in the Department, their assignments etc. The perception is the Department is understaffed and that's the cause of the slow responses to calls for service and the officers' lack of visibility in the community.
4. **Case Processing and Victim Assistance:** The public is concerned about quality control regarding the demeanor of officers when taking complaints, follow-up with victims, investigating complaints and closing of cases prematurely.
5. **Investigation Policy:** The perception of the public is the officers and investigators at SPD do not do a thorough job investigating crimes.
6. **Policy on Handling Minor (non-emergency) vs. Serious Crimes:** The public wants to see the SPD become more aggressive enforcing the laws for minor crimes e.g. nuisance issues, ordinance violations, property crimes etc.
7. **911 Call Center:** In general the public feels the operators are rude, insensitive and unfriendly to callers.
8. **Officer Training:** The public feels a large number of the SPD officers are not connected to the community, have no compassion, are nonchalant, insensitive, disrespectful and need interpersonal and effective communication skills training.
9. **Officer Recruitment:** There are some concerns regarding the criteria, screening and interpersonal skills required to be a SPD police officer. The concerns stem from the public's perception of inappropriate people skills some of the officers have displayed.
10. **Role and Function of the SPD, Courts and Correction:** The public would like more information/education on the separate role and functions of the various components of the criminal justice and juvenile justice system.

11. **Communication and Interaction between SPD and the Community:** The community feels no sense of partnership or collaboration of any type with SPD regarding crime prevention.
12. **Develop a Plan and Report Back to the community:** The community is expecting SPD to develop an action plan in a reasonable timeframe to deal with the concerns raised and report back to the community.

## **Day of Dialogue**

The Day of Dialogue was held Saturday, July 11, 2009 at the New Tribes Mission. There were 36 attendees that participated in the session. The 36 participants included 11 members of the SPD and 25 community residents. Participation in the Day of Dialogue was by invitation only. Invitations were mailed to approximately 60 individuals; this included the 9 members of the Citizen's Advisory Board. Similar to the community forums the participation of people of color and clergy in the Day of Dialogue was low. The low participation rate continues to demonstrate the need for extensive relationship building between the SPD and the community, specially the Black community. Also, it is noteworthy to mention that only three of the nine Citizen's Advisory Board members attended the event.

The 36 participants were divided into six (6) groups with each group assigned a topic from the categories generated from the community forums. Each group consisted of police officers and community residents. Based on the participants' survey responses, the session was well received; a good start to enhancing police-community relations, and more sessions should follow. A list of the comments and suggestions from the six groups on their specific topic are included later in this report along with the evaluation survey completed by participants.

## **Conclusion**

The City of Sanford has a highly educated police department which is a by-product of the value placed on education by the leadership of the Department. Also, the diversity in the Department has increased substantially over the past several years making the Department more representative of the community it serves. Within the past year the SPD appointed its first female Sergeant who also happens to be African American. The SPD is recognized as a state of the art police department with up-to-date technology and equipment. The Department's technical, safety and procedural training of the officers are commendable and greatly appreciated by staff. The SPD is highly sought after by law enforcement institute graduates and is recommended by law enforcement institute faculty as a good place to work. The Department has a higher than normal caseload that provides for plenty of law enforcement activity for the officers.

The demographics of Sanford are noteworthy and set it apart from the other cities in Seminole County. For example Sanford has high rates in specific social demographics (i.e. education level is low, school dropout rate is high, along with unemployment rates, percentage of families on public assistance, number of families in public

housing, and teenage pregnancy rate, etc.). The presence of these social indicators plus the absence of adequate human service agencies to address these social needs adds challenging dynamics to role and function of the police officers in the City of Sanford.

The Department's current state, although strong from the technical, equipment, policy and procedural standpoint, shows notable concerns regarding police-community relations. Issues related to disrespect, discourteousness, inappropriate language, cultural differences and a general insensitivity to crime victims have strained the relationship, requiring new and heightened efforts to improve and strengthen it. The issues of poor communication and interpersonal skills, follow-up on cases and better response time to calls-for-service are training issues. On the other hand some in the community feel sensitivity to crime victims, empathy and valuing differences maybe an institutional problem and might require extensive training and a cultural shift in the SPD.

In many communities that face strained police-community relations from which public policy disputes emerge, the use of force is usually at the focal point, driven by a highly charged racial incident. Fortunately, the Sanford community is different in that it has not experienced a high profile incident. The primary concern of the community is a closer working relationship with the officers; more sharing of crime prevention information by the Department, greater involvement in neighborhood-based crime prevention, professional and courteous officers, equal treatment for all citizens and the development of a strategic policing plan that includes input from the community. The community is asking for inclusion in the public safety planning process to enhance public safety and the quality of life for the residents in the City of Sanford.

Research has found that most cleared cases and successful investigations are the result of information from victims and witnesses. Therefore, the key to successful police work is the community and police working together in partnership. The reality is successful police-community partnerships are possible; however, they require a lot of work from both sides. When police departments embrace community partnerships and collaborate with community members on developing a strategic community-based crime prevention plan that holds the partners accountable to each other, the benefits to the community are tremendous. The incorporation of such a strategic partnership concept will increase public satisfaction, increase public confidence and foster positive police-community relations.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are broad, and touch on a variety of SPD functions mentioned earlier in the Report. Although a number of people indicated the SPD relationship with the community has improved significantly over the past 8-10 years, and commends Chief Tooley for the changes; there is still room for and a need to continue to build upon that foundation. Therefore these recommendations are being offered in the spirit of recognition of past accomplishments while looking

ahead to the changes that are still needed. Simply maintaining the status quo is not an acceptable option for the Sanford community.

1. The SPD should develop a two-year police-community relations action plan that outlines the strategic actions to be taken with an establish timeline. The plan should state specific goals, objectives and strategies for accomplishing the goals
2. SPD should sponsor periodic focus groups, dialogues, or forums on police-community relations and policing practices as a means of educating the public and obtaining useful information.
3. SPD should develop an online procedure to receive feedback from the public as to their satisfaction when interacting with members of the Department.
4. The SPD Vision, Mission and Values Statements should be incorporated more fully into the SPD general orders, policies and procedures.
5. Wherever possible, SPD should include community leaders and clergy in advance discussions about policy, practice and procedural changes in policing tactics, to obtain practical advice and ensure community support for actions.
6. SPD should step up its partnership with the ministers' alliance making it more goals oriented with a specific focus on a particular area of police work; e.g. target areas for enhanced policing, aggressive enforcement of specific laws in certain neighborhoods, and addressing youth violence.
7. SPD should look for increased opportunities for citizen participation in the Community-Policing Unit, to support activities such as the creation of a steering committee or neighborhood-based police-community interaction committee, neighborhood crime prevention teams, neighborhood empowerment teams, etc.
8. The SPD should continue the development of a structure for S.A.R.A. projects to include reporting frequency, goals, objectives, strategies and timeframe.
9. SPD should develop a comprehensive tracking system and master plan (contract or memorandum of understanding) to clarify roles, functions and responsibilities when partnering with community agencies, organizations and groups on programs, activities and events.
10. SPD should designate a community relations staff person, responsible for coordination, development and tracking of all police-community partnerships, collaborations, events, activities, neighborhood watch groups and police citizens' interaction committees.

11. SPD should undertake a broad campaign to inform the public about the citizen complaint process – publicizing the good work of most police officers, while also indicating citizens’ rights to file complaints when there are exceptions. Train staff in key community agencies to provide guidance and consultation concerning the complaint process.
12. Publish an annual report to communicate overall outcomes of the citizens’ complaint process clearly and thoroughly to police officers and to the public. Also, develop an internal procedure to make better use of data to indicate patterns of potential problematic behavior before it becomes a disciplinary issue.
13. SPD should place emphasis on community leaders’ participation in Department in-service training. Exposure to what is going on in the community can help recruits and seasoned officers alike see community residents as people rather than only as objects and suspects.
14. Review the need for a more comprehensive paper trail to create a check and balance system for meeting the criteria required for closing an investigation.
15. SPD should develop protocol and procedures to focus on the quality and thoroughness of initial investigations, and hold command staff accountable for doing more thorough reviews of the reports filed by officers regarding whether more cases could/should be kept open for further investigation.
16. Develop a core leadership model and promote it within the Department. Also, develop a supervisory training for Lieutenants and Sergeants to include topics such as effective communications, modeling behavior, holding staff accountable, staff development, and mentoring.
17. SPD should require community relations training (e.g., interpersonal skills, interpersonal conflict management skills, sensitivity, human diversity, and cultural understanding) for all personnel. The training team should consist of one civilian and one veteran officer with the reputations for being “a tough but fair Cop” to give the training balance.
18. SPD should expand training and role-playing for officers in effective two-way communications using the empowerment and recognition theory based on valuing both personal strength and compassion for others; and treating citizens with respect and dignity.
19. The Citizen’s Advisory Board should be reviewed for possible restructuring to ensure it is representative of the community’s diversity to include race, ethnicity, gender, age and geography.

20. The Citizen's Advisory Board's relationship with the citizens' complaint process needs to be re-evaluated and brought in compliance with the Ordinance.
21. Develop a comprehensive orientation and training manual for the Citizen's Advisory Board and require all new members to attend.
22. SPD should publish an annual report of the Citizen's Advisory Board's activities and share this with the public.
23. SPD should develop a proactive public relations media campaign to highlight the positives of the department and to educate the public on new crime prevention initiatives underway, explain the juvenile justice process and provide tips for curtailing domestic violence, property crimes and how to settle neighborhood disputes peacefully.
24. SPD should actively solicit businesses and the corporate community to become more involved (i.e., help support special programs set up to link police with local youth groups and programs; e.g. Do The Right Thing, community peace fair, Peace camp, stop the violence, and also to build upon the Night Out Against Crime concept).
25. With full recognition of the current financial struggles the City of Sanford has to endure, to ensure adequate police service, every effort should be made to maintain the ratio of 2.62 officers per thousand residents.
26. It is suggested the SPD continue its forward thinking and advancing the law enforcement field in Central Florida and consider raising the minimum educational standard to be a police officer to at least an Associate degree or some number of college credits (e.g., 30) beyond a high school diploma.
27. Establish a formula and ratio for African American and Hispanic/Latino sworn officers based on the City's population to ensure the Department continues to strive towards being reflective of the demographics of the community.
28. Develop or enhance the Department's program on "recognition/reward for high performance". The program should be inclusive with an opportunity to recognize all members of the department.
29. The SPD should review, together with the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, the training curriculum for the 911 emergency call center staff and adjust as necessary to include how to handle difficult, emotional and rude callers.
30. The City of Sanford should investigate the cost of establishing or partnering with the County to establish a non-emergency call system (e.g. 311 or 211).

## Next Steps

1. The report along with the recommendations will be submitted to the City Commissioners. (August, 2009)
2. The Report will be submitted to the SPD for their review and consideration. (August, 2009)
3. SPD will consider the recommendations in conjunction with the comments from the forums and day of dialogue; categorize and prioritize the recommendations to develop a response and strategic action plan.
4. Establish dates/timeline and a process to report back strategic action plan to the Day of Dialogue participants and general public.

## Citizen's Advisory Board Members' Interview Comments

1. *What attracted you to the Board?*
  - a. Wanting to give back to the community as well as to make a difference.
  - b. Support of Chief Brian Tooley.
  
2. *Did you receive an orientation on the expectations of Board members when you joined the Board; if so was it helpful and did it prepare you for your role and responsibilities?*
  - a. Majority of the members do not recall a formal orientation, either Chief Tooley or Gracy explained the process very well, however, in hindsight a board member manual would have been helpful.
  - b. Not familiar with the Ordinance.
  - c. More information on the role, responsibilities and function would have been helpful.
  
3. *Do you feel the Board is making a positive difference and enhancing police community partnerships?*
  - a. Majority of the members are not sure they are making a difference.
  - b. The community is not aware of the CAB.
  - c. Board members want to be a greater resource to the Chief and the Department addressing public issues.
  
4. *What suggestions has the Board made to improve the partnership between the SPD and the community?*
  - a. No specific examples came to mind, thinks the location of new facility is a real plus to the partnership.
  - b. Would like to be more involved in decisions of substance regarding community issues.
  
5. *What suggestions are you aware of that the Board has made to enhance the operation of the SPD?*
  - a. Majority of the members felt the Board has been more active in this area.
  - b. Made suggestions regarding public safety issues (i.e. more police in high crime areas and location of the public safety building).
  
6. *What efforts has the Board undertaken to build and maintain safe and pleasing neighborhoods?*
  - a. Board members very supportive of neighborhood watch programs and would like to see more developed.
  
7. *Describe the Board's involvement in the citizens' complaint process.*
  - a. Not involved in the formal process.
  - b. Would like to know more about it.
  - c. Board review complaints other Board members bring in and the one's the Chief share.

8. *Are you familiar with the citizen complaint process; if so what is your understanding of the process?*
  - a. Do not know about the formal citizen complaint process.
  - b. Would not know what to tell a citizen if asked about the process or how to file a complaint.
  
9. *Do you know how many citizens' complaints are processed annually and the outcome?*
  - a. Board members do not know how many citizens' complaints are filed annually, or the outcome.
  - b. Would like to know more about the citizen's complaint process, # of complaints filed, outcome and disciplinary action taken.
  
10. *How has the Board assisted in maintaining positive public relations and building trust with SPD and the citizens?*
  - a. Not sure they are doing much to maintain positive relations and building trust with the community.
  - b. More advertising and community education on the CAB is needed.
  
11. *Have you participated in a ride along, if so what was the experience like and when was your last one?*
  - a. Two of the nine members participated in a ride along.
  - b. They enjoyed the experience and found it very enlightening.
  - c. Several members indicated that due to their age and health they are not sure they can handle a ride along.
  
12. *Have you participated in any department training, if so please describe the training and your evaluation of it, was it helpful or not?*
  - a. The majority of the members have participated in some form of training and enjoyed it and found it extremely informative.
  - b. Would like more training.
  
13. *Are you familiar with the Citizen's Rights and Responsibilities brochure printed and distributed by some cities? Does the City of Sanford have such a brochure?*
  - a. The majority of the Board members are not familiar with any Citizen's Rights and Responsibilities brochure or the City of Sanford Complaint and Commendation brochure.
  - b. Board members felt both brochures would be helpful to educate the public.
  
14. *Are you personally acquainted with the officers who work in your neighborhood?*
  - a. The majority of the members do not know the officers working in their neighborhood.
  - b. Two of the members know officers through work situations.
  - c. One member is very familiar with the officers in the Department.
  
15. *How familiar are you with the department's operation and the issues confronting it; can you name some of the issues and any strategies to address them?*
  - a. Some are familiar with operational issues.

b. Others said more information would be helpful.

16. *What do you think are the top three issues confronting the SPD?*

a. Funding, staff turnover, lack of community support and increase in drug related crimes.

17. *If money was not an object, what is the one thing you would suggest to enhance the operation of SPD?*

a. Hire more officers, keep school resource officers, and return dispatch services to SPD.

18. *Are you or anyone in your immediate family currently employed by the SPD or have been in the past?*

a. No members have an immediate family member that's employed by SPD.

19. *Have you ever made a presentation or spoke on behalf of the SPD at a community meeting or event, if so when and where?*

a. A couple of members have made presentations to community groups.

b. The majority of the members would welcome the opportunity to speak on behalf of the CAB in support of the SPD.

20. *What other community organizations, agencies, or groups are you affiliated with?*

a. The majority of the members are involved in their community and associated with other organizations.

21. *How satisfied are you overall with the interaction between the SPD and the community*

a. The majority of members are somewhat satisfied with the interaction.

b. The general consensus is the Board would like to see more proactive efforts by the SPD to improve the relationship.

22. *Is there anything else that you would like to comment on regarding your role on the Board or police-community partnerships?*

a. Feel fortunate to know the inner workings of the SPD.

b. Chief Tooley is an asset to the Sanford community.

c. Chief Tooley is extremely professional.

d. SPD should become more familiar with the religious leaders.

e. Invite community leaders to speak at CAB meetings.

#### Citizens' Advisory Board Profile

##### Gender and Race

WM	WF	BM	BF	HM	HF	TOTAL
3	3	0	3	0	0	9

##### Age

18-25	26-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	TOTAL
			2	4	1	2	9

## Comments from Participants at the Community Forums Grouped into 12 Categories

### *Role and Function of Community Services:*

- More information and assistance regarding starting neighborhood watch and other neighborhood-based crime prevention programs.
- Support for neighborhood crime prevention programs.
- Safety tips and alerts on crime trends, notice when sex offenders move in the neighborhood, as well as when parolees are release to the community.
- Information on how the communities can help prevent/reduce crime in their neighborhoods.
- Where and how does "Community Policing" fit into the picture?

### *Citizens Advisory Board:*

- What is the Citizen's Advisory Board?
  - What do they do?
  - Who serves on it?
  - When does it meet?
  - What are the criteria to serve on it?
- How can the CAB be more actively involved in building positive relationships between the police and the community?
- How should the CAB be more involved in the citizen's complaint process?
- How can the community's awareness of the CAB be increased?

### *SPD Staffing and Number of Personnel:*

- How many sworn officers and civilian personnel in the SPD?
- What are the various departments, units, functions and assignments?
- The staffing comments stem from:
  - Slow responses to calls
  - Lack of visibility of officers in the community and minimal direct contact with community members.
- Some neighbors would like to see the officers more on bikes and walking the streets (out of the car and connecting with the people).

### *Case Processing and Victim Assistance:*

- What are the policies regarding taking complaints and follow-up on cases?
- When and why cases are closed out and how are complainants to be notified of the disposition of their cases?
- SPD staff not customer friendly; e.g. phone calls not returned; operators give vague responses to inquires and they give misinformation.

### *Investigation Policy:*

- What is the investigation policy at SPD?
- What type of special training do investigators receive?
- Why the investigators sometimes do not dust for finger prints search the immediate area for suspects, question neighbors etc.?

- Investigators do not take property crimes serious because no one is physically hurt.

*Policy on Handling Minor Crimes (non-emergency) vs. Serious Crimes:*

- Department has a high tolerance for minor crimes involving nuisance issues and ordinance violations.
- Officers don't take property crimes, noise, crowd gathering, parking violations and blocking of sidewalks and traffic as serious matters.
- The community wants to see more enforcement on these matters or be told why the law is not being enforced.

*911 Call Center:*

- Dispatchers at the 911 Call Center are not caller friendly, make inappropriate comments and ask inappropriate questions.
- In general the feeling is that they are rude, insensitive, not pleasant, nasty and unfriendly.

*Officer Training:*

- Concerns about the officers' social/people (interpersonal) skills when interacting with the public.
- Officers are seen as having no compassion, nonchalant, half-hearted, insensitive, disrespectful, negative and condescending.
- Complainants are made to feel like offenders and not the complainant or the victim,
- Officers should be more sensitive to the effects of victimization.

*Officer Recruitment:*

- There are some concerns about the criteria for being an SPD police officer, specifically what are the characteristics, skills, traits and demeanor looked for in individuals.
- There are concerns about the lack of appropriate people skills some of the officers display and whether or not these skill sets, like empathy, are trainable.
- They believe this deficit skill set may go beyond just basic communication training.
- The feeling is officers do not know the residents and the residents do not know the officers.

*Role and Function of the SPD, Courts and Correction:*

- Need for more information/education on the separate role and function of the various components of the judicial system.
- It would be helpful to know the limits of the police regarding criminals being released back into the community without being held accountable for their criminal behavior.
- How can the community help ensure those committing crime in their community be held accountable beyond a slap on the hand?

*More Communication and Interaction between SPD and the Community:*

- Lack of communication and positive interaction between SPD and the community.

- No sense of partnership or any type of collaboration on the SPD's part with the community to promote and provide effective crime prevention efforts.
- With certain crime issues like burglaries and other property crimes, if the police and community worked together effective strategies can be developed to reduce them.

*Develop a Plan and Report Back to the Community:*

- The community expects an action plan will be developed to deal with the issues they have raised during the forums and the SPD will share the plan with the public.
- Many of the issues are low ticket items and do not require additional dollars to address, but rather an adjustment in current practices, policies and procedures.
- Participants expect the plan to be developed in a reasonable time frame.
- Participants don't want this effort to fail due to a lack of follow through by SPD.

This table shows the date and location of the forums and the number of participants.

Date	Location	# of Participants
Tuesday, June 9, 2009	Bettye Smith Cultural Arts Center 119 W. 5 <sup>th</sup> Street	29
Thursday, June 11, 2009	Westside Community Center 919 Persimmons Ave	6
Tuesday, June 16, 2009	Mayfair Country Club 3536 Country Club Ave	12
Thursday, June 18, 2009	Westside Community Center 919 Persimmons Ave	8
Thursday, June 25, 2009	Hopper Academy 1101 Pine Ave	22
TOTAL		77

## **Day of Dialogue Suggestions and Concerns from Groups**

### *1) Citizens Advisory Board*

- Increase the CAB members to 22.
- Members need to reflect the SPD community service area (CSA) with 2 CAB members per CSA. Also, representation needs to be diverse.
- Review the selection process.
- More community involvement at the meetings.

### *2) Education on SPD Community Services & Community Policing*

- Explain to victim expectations relative to the crime (better explain the results of investigation).
- More empathy needed from the officers and also they need to employ better communication skills with crime victims regarding what to expect.

- Educate the community as to why reporting every crime is important (mapping).
- Communicate that the SPD cares about the community.
- Communicate the reasons for some of the SPD limitations (\$).
- Needs more relationship-building events and activities.
- In struggling communities, suggest that officers will be at "X" spot to hear from community citizens.
- More buy-in from community neighborhood watch groups to get information out (way for SPD to get out and touch/connect with residents).
- Objective of community policing is to get SPD and residents to work together.
- More marketing.

### 3) *Recruitment & Training of Officers*

- Use recruiters that reflect diversity and create inducement for recruiters that reflect positive buy-in for Department.
- Use growth programs to build law enforcement interest. Recruit from volunteers such as school resource officers, community resource officers, trainees, etc. also, civilian ride along and explorer students could be part of recruitment pool.
- Trainee program: pay a salary to trainees to go thru academy; they must sign a contract for minimum services to SPD. This can also be used as a diversity tool.
- Training: explain department procedures from onset of case to prevent unrealistic expectations on the part of the victim. Also ensure that the citizen education by SPD is followed-up & documented in officer reports.
- Training: use volunteers to do added tasks, especially follow-up, protocol & maintenance tasks so law enforcement officers can have time to do expanded activities.
- Training: need more training in the areas of customer relations and conflict resolution.
- Use CSO positions as means to attract women/minorities & interest them in law enforcement careers.
- Create officer trainee positions as a means of diversifying department.
- Actively recruit at academies using recruiting inducements. Cherry/hand pick academy grads using inducement for recruiting.
- Promote and encourage participation at citizen academy and ride along.
- Expand & use explorer program to raise up future law enforcement applicants, as well as use female officer in the program to enhance female participation.
- Use SRO to encourage students to explore a law enforcement career.
- Use ethnic recruiters to approach ethnic community groups.
- More human diversity, sensitivity and customer relations training are needed.
- More conflict resolution, verbal judo & communication training is needed.

- More training of public is needed to explain department's procedures and how cases are handled from the onset, to prevent unrealistic expectations by citizens.
- More in-service training regarding follow-up and call back follow-up protocol.
- Use volunteers to do follow-up calls.
- Citizen Advisory Board: suggest that the mayor appoint the chair and that each commissioner appoint two (2) members. Not all appointed by the chief. Total of 11 members.

#### 4) *Emergency Call Center*

- Process for calls: (a. Caller; b. Dispatcher; c. Priority of calls, d. Information are all needed to process calls)
- Call center will cater to all citizens' needs.
- Additional training is needed for call takers.
- Call takers and dispatchers need training on how to handle "difficult" "emotional" and "rude" callers.
- Sanford Police Department have more input on hiring & retaining callers and dispatchers.
- Need info. Re: # of calls coming to dispatcher.
- Need to educate the public on 911 process and protocol.

#### 5) *Handling of Non-Emergency Calls*

- Educate the public regarding non-emergency issues.
- Numbers needed for non-emergency calls (e.g. 311 or 211).
- Can a window of time be given re: response time?
- Utilize the Internet and phones more; use community service officers to free up officers for emergencies.

#### 6) *Better Communication & Interaction Between SPD & the Public*

- Consider a citizen news column or quarterly letter; it should be informative with contact information, crimeline numbers, email contacts; establish a liaison with the community.
- Newsletter can be mailed w/water bill.
- More neighborhood watch programs; more CAB community dialogue days; encourage meetings to interact in collaborative groups – groups can hold meetings at the new SPD complex.
- Make a commitment to each other (SPD & community). It is very important to respect chain of command and that the Chief is kept aware of community concerns and comments.
- Police Department Website: could give access to statistics, which would be a database with up to date information, contact information and emails.
- Better communication and interaction in person, face to face, in writing, on a computer; it is instant up-to-date, nationwide and today's means of communicating.
- More police are needed on the streets walking vs. in cars. They need to be able to walk, talk and interact with residents.

- CAB: instead of all business people there needs to be more common everyday citizens who live in neighborhoods as representatives on the CAB.
- CAB needs to communicate more with the community via radio, churches (announcements) and postings, so that more common residents can get involved.
- Can involve more young people if you communicate more often and come back to the community more often - can't be a one-time event by SPD.
- Need to work on how to get more people involved and committed (don't always offer food – it's an insulting gesture with racial overtones).

## **Day of Dialogue Participants' Expectations Going Forward**

- Administration does not treat all areas of Sanford the same, Goldsboro is treated differently; expecting that to change where all of Sanford is treated equally and fairly.
- The level of police service needs to be the same for all of Sanford.
- Expect to see a larger turnout from the community. Residents/citizens need to invite people to attend these types of meetings. More capacity building is needed.
- Expect the development of a quantifiable list that the Chief could use to do strategic planning and develop an action plan for SPD.
- Expect SPD to reduce or eliminate some of the public's negative concerns about department.
- Expect that the juvenile crimes will be handled more positively.
- Expect the community to get more involved and support the SPD.
- Expect that the 50/50 partnership concept to get to the general population for things to work together.
- Expect to get more neighborhood watch programs started, community becoming more involved and maybe more ride along by citizens with police to see other side.
- Expect more personalization by officers and to hearing less negatives re: SPD, initial contact is vital.
- Expect SPD officers to be courteous and to act as if all citizen calls are important and matter.
- Expect more police involvement in Georgetown area; have seen less involvement since officer Little was promoted.
- Besides developing an action plan with quantitative and measurable goals, would also like a response to those suggestions that are not feasible and why not

# Day of Dialogue

## Participants' Evaluation of Session

On a scale of 1 – 5 with one (1) being the lowest and five (5) being the highest, please rate the following statements.  
 1 - Strongly Disagree 2 - Disagree 3 - Neutral 4 - Agree 5 - Strongly Agree  
 If you gave a rating of less than 4 (Agree with the statement) to any statement below, please explain.

Top number is the count of respondents selecting the option.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Bottom % is percent of the total respondents selecting the option.					

Total number of participants in the session based on the sign-in sheet was 37: (11 SPD, 25 Citizens and 1 Reporter). The number eligible to complete the evaluation survey was 36 representing the Officers and the citizens. Based on the comments the 25 responses were from the citizens. The number that completed surveys was 25 of the 36 participants representing a response a rate of 69.4%

1. I felt free to express my opinions	0	0	0	1	24
				4%	96%

- 1) Good flow in small groups. Could have used more time to better structure input & set mechanisms for implementation
- 2) We were an open and accommodating group

2. The dialogue moved us towards open and honest exchange on police community relations.	0	0	0	6	19
				24%	76%

- 1) Good start

3. This Day of Dialogue was needed.	0	0	1	6	18
			4%	24%	72%

- 1) We need more, at least one every six months
- 2) Unknown to me
- 3) Initial step towards creating a positive exchange - Should be quarterly
- 4) We listened responded and assimilated various points of view
- 5) Any/all honest exchange is necessary
- 6) Yes - have this annually!

### 4. What was the most helpful thing(s) you learned from the Day of Dialogue?

- 1) Many methods to improve community based policing
- 2) How SPD operates
- 3) That there is a major lack of communication between the citizens and police officers
- 4) Actually how dispatch & call taking for 911 works and how calls are handled & processed
- 5) Communication is essential towards effective policing
- 6) We all can get along if we try
- 7) I learned a lot ..... I learned my CSA#
- 8) Actual numbers regarding what the police dept does.
- 9) Operations of the Sanford Police Dept. and perceptions of the community
- 10) Having a chance to talk with Officers in a setting that encourages great casual dialogue
- 11) Role of CAB
- 12) Perspectives of different communities
- 13) Breakout groups
- 14) SPD cares
- 15) Community Expectations an Miscommunication occurring
- 16) Understanding of the role/responsibilities of partnerships for safety/quality of life issues and meeting SPD personnel and city staff
- 17) Internal workings & issues facing the SPD

- 18) The community is concerned, but very supportive
- 19) Financial constraints and varying perspective will greatly affect outcomes/resolutions
- 20) The issues raised by the citizens ...what the concerns are
  - SPD stats - # of officers, # of crimes, # of cases
  - Chief Tooley wants to have open dialogue with the Sanford community & desires improvement
- 21) More info on CAB
- 22) SPD Vision

5. Would you be willing to contact the Chief of Police or the Citizens Advisory Board in the future with any thoughts and or suggestions to improve police community relations? Yes or No. If No please explain.

- 1) Yes, the only way to resolve a issue is to be a part of the solution
- 2) Chief Yes: CAB? I didn't know we had one - why call
- 3) Yes Chief
- 4) Yes --Very much so
- 5) Yes
- 6) Yes
- 7) Yes
- 8) Yes
- 9) Yes - Most Certainly!!
- 10) Yes
- 11) Yes
- 12) Yes
- 13) I feel our City Leaders still don't understand what's needed in some areas of the City.
- 14) Yes
- 15) Yes- Chief has an open door policy
- 16) Yes - Chief: No CAB who is responsible for reporting back and diversity; agenda missing in this group
- 17) Yes
- 18) Yes - I am a member of the CAB
- 19) Yes - I hope we'll hear what happens with the info discussed today
- 20) Yes
- 21) Yes

6. Additional thoughts on the session are welcomed.

- 1) Need more citizens in session. Advertise events/sessions
- 2) Do this more, it is really needed. Please make sure that they heard us in your report.
- 3) We need to have another meeting similar to this one
- 4) Continue this Community Dialogue –Thanks
- 5) CAB needs to be appointed by City Commissioners, not Chief of Police since they are commenting on his agency and staff; need one position appointed by the Mayor two positions by each Commission district. Meet bound tenure as set by city commission
- 6) The second half interaction was the best part and most useful and productive - Thanks
- 7) It is good to know that the City is willing to look at police dept as a business providing a service to customers
- 8) Provide City - wide youth forum for and by youth service providers outside. Sharing community policing with similar community models
- 9) Regular events such as this are welcomed
- 10) I've never heard of these types of meetings/workshops being held anywhere
  - This is a credit to Chief Tooley & the City Officials - Thank you for starting this dialogue
- 11) MONEY WELL SPENT!

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

City of Sanford Employee Satisfaction Survey Results 2006

City of Sanford Employee Satisfaction Survey Results 2008

Commission for Florida Enforcement Accreditation, Inc.

Sanford Police Department Yearly Statistics for 2006-2008

Public Administration Services: Report on the Comprehensive Management Study of Sanford Police Department

Florida Department of Law Enforcement: Investigation of Kenneth Bentley 2008

Complaint

Commissioner Williams, March 20, 2008 Memorandum regarding concerns expressed pertaining to the Sanford Police Department

Sanford Police Department: Commendation or Complaint Brochure

Sanford Police Department – PP 01-01: Administrative Investigative Procedure (INOI) & Discipline

Investigation Summary – Allegations for 2006-2008

Articles in the Sanford Herald