

Police Chief Update

Fall 2018

As many of you are aware, in October 2017, at the request of the St. Anthony Police Department (SAPD), representatives from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Community Orientated Policing Services (COPS) Office met with representatives from the SAPD and the Saint Anthony Village City Manager for a technical assistance consultation. The purpose of the consultation was to identify potential areas of technical assistance that could be provided to the SAPD and the community, based on the information and community feedback that was used to create the original goals and objectives document publicly released by the COPS Office in March of 2017, following our initial participation with the COPS Office Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA) program. As a result of the consultation, the SAPD provided the COPS Office with a technical assistance request letter which contained a list of Technical Assistance Priorities (TAP) that we felt would help us best achieve our community stakeholder identified goals and objectives.

The COPS Office approved our request for participation in the retooled Collaborative Reform Initiative for Technical Assistance (CRI-TA). A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was entered into with the COPS Office and the St. Anthony Police Department reestablished working within the CRI-TA program in January of 2018. Prior to our first meeting, the CRI-TA site team drafted a work plan that encompassed monthly (week long) technical assistance site visits and focused on our TAP priorities. This work plan was ultimately unveiled to our community during a police department open house held this past February.

The DOJ CRI-TA site team made monthly visits to our police department to provide technical assistance and connect our personnel with subject matter experts. The ultimate goal was to increase our capacity and bandwidth within our agency as we pursued the development of a department strategic plan which was unveiled to the public this past June during an open house. This document, our supporting mission and vision, along with historical information regarding CRI-TA can be found on our website by visiting www.savmn.com.

On the afternoon of Tuesday, July 10th, 2018, members from the Department of Justice COPS Office site team (Federal Site Lead, Project Director and Site Specific Project Manager) arrived at the police department for their last site visit as part of the CRI-TA.

The first purpose of this visit was to receive technical assistance with regard to one of our department goals established to improve our response to mental illness calls for service. We met with representatives from the school district, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and the Ramsey County and Hennepin County crises response units in order to make sure that we are aware of all the services that are available. This meeting served to help strengthen our partnerships with community providers who can assist in the delivery of services in order to give our officer's as many tools as we can to enhance our ability to engage these very challenging service calls. In addition, these action steps compliment training our staff has received in the areas of crises intervention team (C.I.T.) training and de-escalation training.

The second purpose of this visit was to close out the CRI-TA process at the department level. Lt. Diegnau, Capt. Spiess and I met with the site team and took a comprehensive look at each Technical Assistance Priority (TAP) as well as corresponding goals/objectives. After a thorough review, it was

determined that the TAP focusing on data driven decision making needed additional technical assistance in order to close. Following a formal request, the COPS office authorized an additional two day site visit to focus on this TAP, which was completed in mid-August. The end of August brought a close to CRI-TA. The COPS Office will now take the month of September to close the contract based on the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding. We look forward to receiving a closeout letter from the DOJ COPS Office in the near future.

This two year Collaborative Reform process has been challenging to say the least. I have remained positive and encouraged by all members of the police department staff and their commitment to the city they serve, the police department and our identified strategic goals and objectives. I strongly feel that this journey has enhanced our department and has built upon the professional growth and development of all of us.

I am happy to report that we are making great progress in terms of technology and transparency. At the time this article was submitted for printing, we will have begun the process of outfitting our police vehicles with new HD squad cameras. New squad mounted laptops have arrived and were recently programmed by Roseville IT and Hennepin County IT. As of the third week of August, we have received our shipment of Panasonic Officer Body Worn Camera's (BWC). Our officers are eager to begin employing this technology.

We have begun the process of working with various equipment installers to ensure this equipment is installed properly and is capable of being used in ways that will enhance the capability and transparency of our agency and officer's. In addition, we have worked through technical assistance and product vendors to create training that will aid to ensure that our officers are familiar with the new and upgraded equipment, along with coinciding policy regarding its use.

There is no question in my mind that our police department is staffed by professional, well qualified, eager and dedicated staff that care about the communities they serve. During my last meeting with the site team, one member reflected that the site teams and technical assistance providers have never approached the CRI-TA with the St. Anthony Police Department as a "reform project". They viewed the project in terms of taking "good to great" and welcomed working with police officers who were eager to enhance their skill set.

The St. Anthony Police Department will remain committed to the goals and objectives outline in our police department strategic plan. This document is not seen as a static document. It was established to be road map for our future. It will aid in focusing our resources, making data driven decisions and evaluating how we take inputs from community stakeholders and apply them in ways that will improve the overall quality of life by preserving the peace and safety of our community.

"The police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence".
Sir Robert Peel

We will remain aware that community trust grows and legitimacy improves when we (as police officers) treat individuals and groups with respect and exercise authority in a manner that is perceived as fair and just.

Respectfully,

Jon Mangseth, Police Chief