



PRESS RELEASE

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TO: Flash Alert

DATE: December 9, 2015

Police Department Assessment Report Complete

The City has received the completed assessment report on the Newberg-Dundee Police Department prepared by Strategic Policy Partnership. The assessment was conducted with the concurrence of the Police Chief and the Police Association. The assessment report can be accessed at the City of Newberg's Website under "What's New" at newbergoregon.gov.

Twenty-six in-person interviews were conducted between September 28-30 and five interviews were conducted by telephone for a total of thirty-one interviews. There are 49 employees in the department. The interviews included both sworn and civilian personnel of the department and were voluntary and confidential.

The questions ranged from those about the strength of the department, what employees liked about the department, to questions about supervision, training, and equipment provided by the department. The report states that a clear strength of the department is the people in the department. When asked what they liked most about the department, most respondents referred to the people they worked with and the ability to have time to engage the community for proactive police work.

When asked about equipment and training there was a more varied response. The overall consensus was that the department provided good equipment. Most all cited a need for more training and professional development opportunities. There were some areas where many felt that improvements could be made in the use of technology and enhancements to the vehicle fleet.

On the subject of supervision there were concerns regarding consistent management decisions and an interest in clearer standards for promotion and special assignments. Some participants also felt that management was not as receptive to suggestions for changes in the department's procedures and practices.

Interviewees were pleased that good work was recognized and honored by the department and that the community had a favorable view of the department. It was almost universally agreed that the department has the trust and support of the community.

The City Manager and Police Chief met with Todd Lyon the outside labor attorney who directed the preparation of the report by Strategic Policy Partnership in order to examine ways to begin to implement changes in the department that would address the issues identified in the report.

While we continue to review the Assessment Report and consider available options, we have identified a number of action items to continually improve the Police Department and the City. The City is planning to review the report with the Police Association to discuss any suggestions they may have concerning the Report. The preliminary list of changes we identified include:

- Training for supervisors and managers in a number of areas, including but not limited to, leadership, discipline, and evaluations
- Increase the number of supervisor meetings with specific agenda topics on improving consistent application of Department policies and procedures
- Send monthly/quarterly Police Department newsletters to employees
- Publicize standards and criteria for promotions and special assignments
- Solicit employee input concerning viable and available technological upgrades
- Development of a virtual or actual suggestion box for anonymous suggestions/ideas/concerns which is accessible only to the Chief and Human Resources

We are proud to report that since August, the Police Department had already implemented certain changes, including:

- Redistributing administrative duties to a single sergeant
- Provided additional supervisor training
- Created a volunteer training committee
- Re-started Union/Management Advisory Board meetings
- Increased officer staffing per shift

We are committed to improving the work experience at the Police Department and at the City. We appreciate the opportunity the Assessment provided us to evaluate the Police Department. We are confident that through the collective efforts of the employees, Association, management, and City Council, we will continue to make the City of Newberg a great place to live and work.

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