City of Tulsa

Public Safety Task Force Recommendations

Presented December 6, 2012

Background:

On Good Friday, April 6, a string of killings occurred in North Tulsa that left three dead and two injured. This after the March 13 brutal home invasion that left 85 year old Nancy Strait sexually assaulted and beaten to death and her husband of 65 years Bob Strait shot in the face with a BB gun. These two crimes occurred on the heels of a retreat that Mayor Dewey Bartlett and City Council members attended to create goals and a common vision for the city of Tulsa. It was agreed that making Tulsa a safer city was a top priority.

On April 13 the Public Safety Task Force was created – three members appointed by the Mayor and three members appointed by the City Council. The task force was charged with giving actionable recommendations to becoming the safest city in America to the Mayor and Council by December 1, 2012. The task force began meeting on April 30 and has held meetings twice a month. Time has been spent listening to law enforcement, fire representatives, 911 Director and researching best practices within our city and like communities across the country.

Before work began, the task force researched criteria for defining a safe city:

- Forbes Magazine ranks the 40 largest metropolitan statistical areas in four categories of danger:
    - Violent crime rates as measured by the FBI's Uniform Crime Report
    - Workplace death rates as measured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics
    - Traffic death rates as measured by the National Highway Traffic Safety Adm.
    - Natural disaster risk as measured by SustainLane.com
- Business Insider ranks municipalities by violent crimes including murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault per 100,000 people. However Tulsa was not included in this survey results.
- CQ Press Study compares violent crime rates in 400 US cities, with an additional score category for motor vehicle theft. The other publications examined did not factor in property crimes. Tulsa ranked 378 out of the 400 cities surveyed.
- Men's Health created a Safest Cities for Children list compared 100 cities in the following areas: (Tulsa ranked 96 out of 100)
    - Accidental death rates for kids ages 5 to 14 measured by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
    - Number of car-seat inspection locations per child measured by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
    - Sex offenders per capita measured by state and national registries
    - Percentage of abused children protected from further abuse measured by US Department of Health and Human Services
    - Strength of child-restraint laws and bike-helmet laws measured by the Insurance institute for Highway Safety

Findings and Recommendations:

As we embarked on this journey, it became evident that this task force was charged with a very large goal. We realized that the eyes of the community were looking at us to "fix things," and we saw an opportunity to make a dramatic impact on our community. Some of the issues facing our community are overwhelming and will take all citizens working together with city officials to make Tulsa safer. We quickly buckled down and reminded ourselves that we were a **citizen** group. We were asked to serve and provide **a citizen's point of view** as to what a safe Tulsa should look like. We agreed that we should make recommendations based on our perceptions and allow others with operational expertise to decide how the recommendations should to be implemented.

The Public Safety Task force respectively submits the following four recommendations that need immediate attention to make Tulsa a Safe City:

1. Improve 911 Public Safety Communications
2. Improve Coordination of Community Based Prevention and Safety Intervention Programs
3. Improve Public Perception of Tulsa Safety
4. Increase Funding for Public Safety Infrastructure

Task Force Members:
Carol Bush, Executive Director Crime Commission
Reuben Davis, Tulsa Attorney and TCSO Reserve Deputy
Paul Gallahar, Former Tulsa Fire Marshall and Chair of the Oklahoma Fire Marshall Commission
Kevin Matthews, retired Administrative Chief for Tulsa Fire Department
Regina Moon, CEO Tulsa Red Cross
T. Hastings Siegfried, Vice Chairman NORDAM and Chairman of the State Chamber of Oklahoma

Special thanks to Council Aide Amy Brown, Deputy Chief Darrell Webster, Deputy Chief Scott Clark and Rich Hall.

I. 911 Public Safety Communications

Challenge: Public Safety is not just police and fire agencies answering the call to protect and serve. It starts with the call for service being answered effectively. When citizens call for help, they are often times the victim of a crime or they are witnessing a crime in progress. They are often scared and feel that they are in a critical situation that demands immediate attention and reaction from city services. Emergency 911 calls were once answered by the Tulsa Police Department. In 2009, the city Information Technology division began managing the 911 center in an attempt to consolidate services and become more efficient. In December of 2011, the 911 Center became its own entity with new management. Some improvements have been made in the last 9 months but it appears that the department is not operating in an effective manner and needs immediate attention. The Public Safety Task Force has listened to many stories from citizens concerning their frustrations with the current system:

- "*Last night because of a domestic dispute in my block, and the possible endangerment of an infant, a neighbor of mine called 911. And was put on hold. He waited and waited. Finally there was a response (I think he also tried the nonemergency number) and no explanation was given for the delay. I thought some changes in the 911 servicing department had been made? This is really ridiculous. To be put on hold when a life may be hanging in the balance?*"
- "*The problem with 911 distresses me as do the recent problems with EMSA. I think I have become accustomed to having folks I can reach and depend upon in emergencies. I think I believe that's what my tax dollars should help provide. This doesn't seem to be the case now and it looks like citizens are just on their own to solve some major life-threatening situations.*"

The task force has identified some key areas of concern as it pertains to 911:

- Calls are dropped or are not answered
- Unacceptable hold times
- Lack of urgency in the call or the issue
- Low morale by call takers as they do not feel a part of the team
- Public perception is that calls are answered by police or fire directly, rather than a public safety call center
- Due to unacceptable response times, citizens are not calling 911 to report serious issues. Instead, they are calling the Uniform Division directly, an officer's cell phone, Crime Stoppers, their Alert Neighbor Captain, the neighborhood security officer if one exists, or a family member/neighbor.

- Due to a high number of citizens avoiding 911, call data is flawed and reflects lower call volumes than would be received by a properly functioning center. This flawed data has further implications when used to predict public safety manpower levels and assignment needs.

✓ **Suggestions for improvement:**

- Address insufficient staffing levels
  - Current Staffing – 98 positions
  - Down 32 positions compared to 2002 staffing (130 positions)
  - 911 should emphasize recruitment and retention of bi-lingual call takers

- Reduce non-emergency calls to 911
  - Since 2009, non-emergency calls have made up more than 45% of the total call volume to 911.
  - Non-emergency calls tie up limited resources and delay services to legitimate emergency callers.

- Improve Employee retention and morale
  - Modify call taker training and progression so that each City call taker specializes in either police or fire. Promote call takers within their specialized field, rather than requiring call takers to cross-train. Encourage team building between call takers and their respective public safety branches (police or fire) so that they recognize their critical role in providing access to the City's public safety infrastructure.

II. Coordination of Community Based Prevention and Safety Intervention Programs

Challenge: Tulsa has a rich history of philanthropy and volunteerism. From the early 1930's when the Community Chest was created to help those in need to Mrs. Bartlett's mentoring program, millions of dollars and volunteer hours have been spent to make Tulsa the safest city to raise a family. However, many citizens do not know how to access services or even that they exist. The task force feels that our community would feel safer if there was a more coordinated effort to promote some of the crime prevention programs that are being implemented. This would goal would enhance the relationship between Public Safety Points of Contact (police, fire, EMSA) and families. This coordinated effort would involve educators, private and non-profit organizations, and models of success that would be replicated in all four corners of our city. The coordination of these efforts should not lie within the city government but should be within the community. It is suggested that the **Crime Prevention Network** (formerly the Crime Commission) spearhead and coordinate this strategy for the community at large.

✓ **Suggestions for improvement:**

- **The Crime Prevention Network** would create a ***Crime Prevention Services Coordinator*** that would work with identified stakeholders, public officials, and citizens to facilitate the prevention of gang membership as a lifestyle choice. This would be achieved by coordinating inter-agency planning and educational sessions, coordinating surveys and data collection efforts, developing joint funding opportunities, and conducting public relations initiatives that increase the community's knowledge and support for potential gang members in our community. There would also be opportunities to address emerging issues and monitor trends with a focus on prevention and reduction without recidivism.

- The Crime Prevention Network would strive to decrease gang violence in Tulsa, with a goal of reducing gang recruitment by 20% in 3 years. Initial efforts would focus on shutting down the feeder of young black men (ages 10-12) for recruitment into the gang lifestyle by:
    - Working with current stakeholders – Metropolitan Tulsa Urban League, Workforce Oklahoma, Tulsa Public Schools, 100 Black Men of Tulsa and the Women with the 100
    - Focusing efforts of these stakeholders in low income areas, schools with large numbers of free and reduced lunch recipients.
    - Supporting and growing existing mentoring programs, job placement programs, and tutoring programs that target this age group in a designated area.
    - Taking model of success to other areas of Tulsa in a culturally acceptable format with the same goals.

III. **Public Perception of Tulsa Citizen Safety**

Challenge: The task force believes that despite statistics and facts to the contrary, a public perception exists that Tulsa is not a safe city. Images and reports highlighting violent crime in the city, without a comparable level of exposure for the total picture of criminal activity, create an inaccurate view of the Tulsa public safety landscape. Repeated "myths" or inaccurate statements made for public consumption become prevailing impressions when they are not refuted or framed more accurately in equally visible arenas. For every myth ("Tulsa is an unsafe place") there is a fact ("There are areas in Tulsa that are less safe than others") and for every generalization there can be a more refined, accurate point.

"Tulsa is an unsafe city" is one of those generalized statements when you consider this snapshot:

- Aggravated assaults, with a firearm by gang members, were down 15% from 2010 to 2011.[1]
- The number of those associated with gangs is currently estimated at 2,000 in Tulsa- about half the national average for a city of Tulsa's size. [2]
- The city's homicides are on pace to be at a similar level as last year.[3]
- The murder rate is on a three-year downward trend.[4]
- Violent crime is down 10% year-to-year.[5]
- Overall crime is at its lowest rate in a decade.[6]

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[1] Canfield, Kevin. "Tulsa Police Chief Chuck Jordan Gives Report on Gang Violence to City Councilors." Tulsa World [Tulsa, OK] 20 July 2012.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Darling-Brekhus, Keith. "America's Crime Rate is at its Lowest since 1963." Examiner.com. Clarity Digital Group, LLC, 21 May 2012. Web. 5 Nov. 2012. <http://www.examiner.com/article/america-s-crime-rate-is-at-its-lowest-since-1963>.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

Taking a longer view of Tulsa crime statistics, from 1995-2011:[7]

- Total reported crimes decreased 7%
- Crimes per 1,000 residents decreased more than 11%
- Violent crime decreased more than 9%
- Property theft decreased nearly 7%
- Larceny-theft decreased nearly 7%
- Aggravated assault decreased more than 18%
- Motor vehicle theft decreased nearly 45%
- Homicides increased by a total of 19 in this time period
- Robbery increased more than 15%
- Burglary increased more than 21%

✓ **Suggestions for improvement:**

- Myth-busting Information Campaign: The Crime Prevention Network (formerly the Crime Commission), with assistance from the Mayor's office/staff, should lead this effort designed to eradicate myths about Tulsa crime and provide a true, accurate picture of citizen safety in the community. A strategic plan created and executed by a public relations firm will provide targeted messaging. Aided by the Crime Prevention Network board of directors, the Executive Director will inform and educate about the realities of Tulsa public safety through the use of the following venues:
    - Media Tour- interviews with radio, print, web and television
    - PSA Campaign- local media managers will be asked to provide air play for spots crafted by a production company
    - TGOV Broadcasts- provide citizens with behind-the-scenes views of law enforcement at work , i.e., broadcast the footage taken during a citizen's ride-along with police, and utilize this channel to provide ongoing information about the reality of Tulsa's public safety picture
    - Social Media- use this platform to provide consistent, on-going factoids about public safety, crime statistics, successes experienced by local law enforcement in making Tulsa safer, etc.

- Myth-busting Presentations to Media Management and Editorialists: Crime Prevention Network representatives and Public Safety representatives should meet individually with managers of media outlets, their content decision-makers, editorialists and those crafting commentary. The intent will be to communicate a total view of the reality of Tulsa's public safety landscape through the presentation of facts, figures, statistics, and the positive generalization that can be inferred from that material. This should not be a one-time meeting but the first step in an ongoing dialogue to ensure a fair and accurate view of Tulsa public safety is continually provided to citizens.

[7] United States. FBI. Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report: January-December 2011.

- Alert Neighbors Advocacy: With hundreds of "Alert Neighbors" organizations spread throughout Tulsa, these groups are at the core of two opportunities to address the public perception issue. First, the thousands of Tulsa citizens comprising this group are, by their nature, the very group that should first be educated on the reality of Tulsa's public safety status. Second, armed with that information, these citizens can then become "Ambassadors for the Truth" within their spheres of influence and in the networks of people they touch. They will have many opportunities to correct public misperception with statements of fact and the positive generalization about Tulsa's public safety that can be inferred from those facts. This grassroots-level advocacy will be a powerful component in the overall strategy addressing public perception and attitudes about public safety.

IV. Increase Funding for Public Safety Points of Contact

Problem: Over the past decade municipalities across the country have seen increased demands on city services while tax based dollars have decreased. The simple economics of supply and demand apply and causes stress to the community. Making Tulsa a safer place to live, work and play will increase the livability of our community. If we are a safe community, economic development will also increase. Businesses and families will want to move to America's safest city to raise their children, build their future and enjoy all the city has to offer.

Tulsa's current budgeting process is completely dependent on the economy. All city services rely on sales tax revenue. As the city continues to sprawl into outlying communities, we are becoming a commuter community – in other words, families live in the suburbs but drive into the city to work but spend their dollars in their home community. This has had a dramatic impact on sales tax revenues.

This past budget cycle Tulsa realized a balanced budget as the economy improved. However, in three, four or five years from now we could be in an economic downturn that would dramatically cut services again. We need to address this issue while economic times are good so that we are prepared for the next recession.

✓ **Suggestions for improvement:**

- Address insufficient staffing level in the Tulsa Police Department
  - Current staffing – 780 positions
  - National average – 830 positions (2.5/1000 citizens)
  - Salary & benefits per position - $59,692
    - For equipment costs, see Appendix I

- Address insufficient staffing level in the Tulsa Fire Department
  - Current staffing – 676 positions
  - National Fire Projection 1710 Manning Standard – 824 positions (4/apparatus)
  - Salary & benefits per position - $46,817
    - For equipment costs, see Appendix II

- Address insufficient staffing level in the 911 Public Safety Communication Center
    - Current staffing – 98 positions
    - 2002 staffing – 130 positions
    - Salary & benefits per position - $43,744

- Create a task force that researches alternative funding sources for public safety. This could be a public safety tax, mileage or combination of several funding sources that would alleviate the dependency on volatile sales tax revenue. Many cities have incorporated creative funding and it is recommended that the task force look at best practices.

First Year Cost of Police Officer

Assumes No Equipment Available or in Inventory

Range Items & Supplies:

Description	Quantity	Price per Item	Total
Ballistic Vest	1	$ 700.00	$ 700
Glock 22C	1	$ 467.00	$ 467
Rifle	1	$ 900.00	$ 900
Shotgun	1	$ 662.00	$ 662
Slings/Side saddles for Shotguns	1	$ 35.00	$ 35
Magazine Pouch	1	$ 23.00	$ 23
Extra Magazine	1	$ 19.00	$ 19
Glock Light	1	$ 85.00	$ 85
Gas Mask w/Carrier	1	$ 235.00	$ 235
Handcuffs	1	$ 40.00	$ 40
Hearing Protection	1	$ 18.00	$ 18
Duty Ammo 40 caliber - box	1	$ 17.00	$ 17
12 gauge 10 rounds	1	$ 5.00	$ 5
Targets -40 caliber & 12 gauge practice ammo	1	$ 1,800.00	$ 1,800
Total Range & Related Costs			**$ 5,006**

Office Supplies & Misc.

Description	Quantity	Price per Item	Total
Postal Meter costs for Class	1	$ 12.50	$ 13
Hanging File Folders	8	$ 0.43	$ 3
File Folders	4	$ 0.40	$ 2
DVDs	10	$ 0.50	$ 5
Various Imprinted Presentation Binders	3	$ 7.00	$ 21
Notebook Paper	2	$ 3.00	$ 6
Okla Veh, Criminal, Alcohol, & Drug Book	2	$ 15.00	$ 30
Spanish Language Reference Material	2	$ 5.00	$ 10
Pens	2	$ 0.50	$ 1
Pencils	2	$ 0.25	$ 1
Misc. Office Supplies	1	$ 10.00	$ 10
Total Office Supplies			**$ 101**

Uniform & Equipment:

Description	Quanitity	Price per Item	Total
Flashlight	1	$ 95.00	$ 95
Breast Badge	1	$ 54.00	$ 54
Hat badge	1	$ 44.00	$ 44
Citation Holder	1	$ 26.00	$ 26
Expandable Baton	1	$ 100.00	$ 100
OC Spray	1	$14.00	$ 14
Black Nameplates	2	$ 10.00	$ 20
Heart Monitor	1	$ 90.00	$ 90
Template (accident)	1	$ 18.00	$ 18
Stop Sticks	1	$ 350.00	$ 350
XTS-3000 Walkie Talkie Batteries	2	$ 30.00	$ 60
Black Underbelt	1	$ 39.00	$ 39
Holster for Flashlight	1	$ 25.00	$ 25
Duty Belt	1	$ 78.00	$ 78
Holster	1	$ 161.00	$ 161
Cuff Case	1	$ 24.00	$ 24
Magazine Pouch	1	$ 24.00	$ 24
Portable Radio Carrier	1	$ 30.00	$ 30
ASP Holder	1	$ 26.00	$ 26
Belt Keepers	3	$ 10.00	$ 30
OC Spray Holders	1	$ 18.00	$ 18
Ball Cap for Range	1	$ 13.00	$ 13
Rollotape	1	$ 75.00	$ 75
PT Shirt	2	$ 9.00	$ 18
Reflective Safety Vests	1	$ 62.00	$ 62
Uniform Pants	2	$ 81.99	$ 164
Winter Shirt	2	$ 56.00	$ 112
Summer Shirt	2	$ 60.00	$ 120
Tie	1	$ 5.00	$ 5
Jacket with Removeable Liner	1	$ 75.00	$ 75
Metal Name Plates	1	$ 10.00	$ 10
American Flag Commendation Bar	1	$ 3.25	$ 3
TPD Shoulder Patch	10	$ 1.00	$ 10
Whistle	1	$ 6.00	$ 6
TPD Jacket Breast Patch	1	$ 1.50	$ 2

First Year Cost of Police Officer

Assumes No Equipment Available or in Inventory

Namestrip for Jacket	1	$ 5.00	$ 5
Raincoat	1	$ 100.00	$ 100
Dress Hat	1	$ 54.99	$ 55
APO Long Sleeve Gray Shirt	2	$ 30.00	$ 60
IFAK Pack (Trauma pack)	1	$ 80.00	$ 80
B.A.T. Kit	1	$ 30.00	$ 30
Finger Print Kit (Supplied By Ollie Harris)	1	$ 56.00	$ 56
Rain Cap Cover	1	$ 4.00	$ 4
Total Uniform & Equipment Costs			**$ 2,391**

Vehicle and Related Equipment

Description	Quantity	Price per Item	Total
Vehicle	1	26,400	$ 26,400
Vehicle Camera System	1	6,000	$ 6,000
Prisoner Transport Cage	1	1,500	$ 1,500
Siren/Lightbar Controller	1	700	$ 700
Siren Speaker	1	125	$ 125
Lightbar (LED)	1	1,200	$ 1,200
Console Box	1	750	$ 750
Headlight Flasher	1	75	$ 75
Siren Kill Module	1	50	$ 50
Graphics Package	1	400	$ 400
3-way Outlet	1	25	$ 25
Gun Rack	2	600	$ 1,200
Laptop Docking Station	1	800	$ 800
Vehicular Radio Modem	1	1,500	$ 1,500
McAfee Software	1	200	$ 200
Toughbook Computer	1	6,000	$ 6,000
Mobile Radio	1	4,400	$ 4,400
Handheld Radio	1	4,800	$ 4,800
Moving Radar	1	3,100	$ 3,100
Handheld Radar	1	2,800	$ 2,800
Maintenance on Police Vehicle ($1,500-$4,500)	1	3,000	$ 3,000
Fuel Costs (400 miles per year, 13 MPG, $3.25 gal)	1	1,333	$ 1,333
Total Vehicle & Related Equipment			**$ 66,358**

Estimated Salaries & Benefits

Description	Quantity	Price per Item	Total
Academy Rate (July-Dec)	1	$ 28,405	$ 28,405
PD-01 Rate (Jan-June)	1	$ 31,287	$ 31,287
Total Salary & Benefits			**$ 59,692**

GRAND TOTAL	**$ 133,547**

BREAKDOWN BY ACCOUNT GROUP

ARMOR VEST	$ 700
OFFICE SUPPLIES	$ 101
NON-CAPITAL EQUIP	$ 2,945
OTHER-OPERATING SUPP	$ 2,232
CLOTHING	$ 1,520
VEHICLE & RELATED	$ 66,358
TOTAL EQUIP & SUPPLIES	**$ 73,856**
TOTAL SALARIES & BENEFITS	$ 59,692
	$ 59,692
GRAND TOTAL	**$ 133,547**

First Year Cost of a Firefighter

Description	Quantity	Price per Item	Total
Training Equipment			
Ropes Course	1	$ 32.50	32.50
Fuel Cost (vehicle)	1	24.50	24.50
LPG Class	1	77.00	77.00
LPG Fuel	1	25.00	25.00
Firefighter 1 & 2 Live burn	1	55.00	55.00
Firefighter 1 & 2 Certification	1	25.00	25.00
Initial EMS Instruction	1	15.50	15.50
Student Curriculum	1	74.58	74.58
Instructor Curriculum	1	26.82	26.82
Concrete Blocks	1	11.00	11.00
1/2" OSB	1	19.00	19.00
Prop Maintenance	1	50.00	50.00
Tools	1	20.00	20.00
Misc Shop Supplies	1	4.00	4.00
Total Range & Related Costs			**$ 459.90**
Office Supplies & Misc.			
Binders	3	4.86	14.58
Printing	1	21.86	21.86
Paper	1	9.50	9.50
Tent Cards	1	0.25	0.25
Misc Office Supplies	1	10.00	10.00
Total Office Supplies			**$ 56.19**
Uniform & Equipment:			
Pants	2	105.99	211.98
LS Shirts	2	102.99	205.98
SS Shirt	2	95.99	191.98
Shorts	2	18.99	37.98
Sweat Pant	2	38.99	77.98
Sweat Shirt	2	39.99	79.98
T-Shirts (RED)	5	13.99	69.95
T-Shirts Blue	5	13.99	69.95
Boots	1	104.99	104.99
Name Tag	1	11.00	11.00
Belt	1	15.99	15.99
Badge	1	58.00	58.00
Coat	1	1,230.00	1,230.00
Pant	1	769.00	769.00
Gloves	1	60.00	60.00
Flashover Hood	1	40.05	40.05
Suspender	1	25.25	25.25
Boots	1	283.00	283.00
FacePiece	1	280.80	280.80
Helmet	1	150.00	150.00
Total Uniform & Equipment Costs			**$ 3,973.86**
Salaries & Benefits			
Academy Rate (July-Nov)			14,970.00
FD01 Rate (Dec-June)			31,846.70
Total Salary & Benefits			**$ 46,816.70**

Total Cost of a Firefighter for the first year **$ 51,306.65**