



Public Safety, Courts and Civil Service Committee

September 8, 2022

Members Present

Dustin Zvonek, Chair
Danielle Jurinsky, Vice Chair
Steve Sundberg, Council Member

Others Present

A. Coombs, J. Marcano, J. Twombly, J. Batchelor, D. Oates, A. Robnett, C. Atkinson, T. Buneta, D. Lewis, A. Botham, S. Risner, A. McIntyre, D. Wilson, M. Hays, M. Bryant, R. Moody, B. Joyce, T. Edwards, M. Hanifin, A. Garcia, N. Colwell, J. Moon, M. Wasserburger, C. Bennett, C. Tassin, D. Carrel, K. Leyba, S. Day, B. Wesner, J. Heckman, J. Prosser, P. Schulte, J. Schneebeck, M. Crawford, I. Evans, S. Sundberg, A. Lawson, M. Cain, J. Nicholas, R. Pena, W. Lippman, M. Smith, C. Cerinich, C. Carlson, A. Soustek, M. Chapman, M. Hildebrand, J. Bajorek, J. Lanigan, E. Knight, C. Juul, F. Goodrich, M. Sears, M. Nelson, S. Aurakzai-Foster, K. Stuart, J. Ehmann, B. Van Sickle, Y. Emeson, C. Hills, S. Newman, R. Jackson

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 8:30 a.m..

2. Approval of Minutes

July 14, 2022 and August 11, 2022 Minutes approved.

3. Consent Items

3.a August 2022 Police Attrition Update

3.b August 2022 Aurora Fire Rescue Attrition Update

3.c August 2022 Aurora911 Staffing Update

No Questions.

4. General Business

4.a Retail Theft Ordinance

CM Jurinsky and Pete Schulte presented the Retail Theft Ordinance which adds a section to the Motor Vehicle Theft Ordinance. It states that theft offenses involving retail theft with an amount of value taken over \$300 will have a minimum of a three-day jail sentence. The court cannot set aside or suspend the three-day jail

sentence and it will need to be served at the Aurora Detention Facility. P. Schulte suggested adding a section for repeat or violent offenders. There was feedback received regarding three days not being much of a deterrent and suggestions to lower the minimum amount. However, it was pointed out that staff may amend the ordinance should it be deemed necessary in the future. Further feedback will be obtained from the Havana BID public meeting. CM Jurinsky will be bringing forward separate ordinances aimed to further deter crime in the city.

CM Zvonek: Okay. I have one question and I think it goes to Chris Howell's comment about violent and repeat offenders. My assumption is if between what Chief Carlson and Chief Oates have put together on the APD side and trying to find these prolific retail theft or thieves, if we have people who are doing it in a habitual fashion and it reaches a certain threshold, or if there's any sort of violence involved that would reach a level of charge that could go to county. Am I right in saying that?

P. Schulte: Yes, that is correct. Obviously, I'm not going to speak for our wonderful judiciary at the Municipal Court, I'm hoping that now that we're out of code, and everything else, and if they have habitual offenders that are coming through that, obviously the three days is for no extenuating circumstances. That's usually the first-time offenders. But I have a feeling the judges are not just going to be given three days on habitual offenders if they do consequences of jail time. So, I like the idea. One of the things is this is something that we've never done before. So maybe follow the data and see what happens. And hopefully, we can see a reduction in these types of offenses. And this is really organized retail theft, right? That's really what we're targeting and that's why we're talking about the threshold or anything else. So hopefully when there is a sunset provision in the ordinance, just like in the Motor Vehicle Theft Ordinance, we can kind of gauge. But I know Councilmember Jurinsky will be checking the data on this and coming back to the Council if we need to make it any tweaks.

CM Zvonek: And one other question, I guess, for Cassidee, as you're putting together the effort to work with our retail partners, and try to identify people who are part of this organized, this ordinance, do you see this as a helpful tool to your overall effort?

C. Carlson: Yes. I mean, I think it'll absolutely be beneficial. I think it will have an impact on, even if it's somebody that isn't quite prolific, but somebody that might be the deterrent that they need to quit the behavior. We've had some identified prolific shoplifters that we're actually working on filing cases, working with our retail partners. So, kind of since we kicked off this initiative, we've had some great communication. And I'll also be at that Havana board meeting today as well to talk with those partners. So, I think it'll be a great tool for sure.

CM Jurinsky: I have a question for Chief Carlson, will you stay in touch with me? I mean, as this goes into law, I would just like to know the data, too. Is there a ton of people that we're catching or theft between that \$100 and \$299 range? I want that data as well to see if I do need to come back and make adjustments to this, because we're going to start at the \$300. But will you please stay in touch with me?

C. Carlson: Yes. And we will continue to evaluate the data as well. One of the things we're looking at is it might be multiple offenses over a period of time that the retailers are saying this person has hit us. They've got the evidence to back that up, they've hit us four times. Each time was \$200 a pop or something like that. And maybe that would be something that we could work on and evaluate. Okay.

CM Jurinsky: Thank you.

D. Oates: First off, I totally agree with Cassidee, at some point, serving even a modest amount of jail time has an impact when the history and the knowledge around the city among these criminals is that you do not serve jail time when you're arrested. So, I think in concept, this is a great idea, and we'll have to see how the implementation goes. And Councilmember Jurinsky, you're exactly right that we need to track very carefully the data, pay attention to that \$300 threshold, the difference above and below, and how that might impact future policy decisions you folks make. The other thing is, we've mentioned it in the past and we'll be discussing it again today at the Havana BID meeting, I guess there's been so much frustration among some of these retailers that they have not been reporting as many of the crimes as they should. And we need data on our end to identify the worst of the worst. And so that's a theme that Cassidee is going to be addressing this afternoon is we need a renewed emphasis on the part of our retailers to be sure that we are notified of these events. And that will help us greatly. So that'll be one of the themes that we'll be addressing this afternoon at the meeting.

P. Schulte: So, the other thing is this does not apply to all theft offenses. I want to be clear that the ordinance actually adds any definition to our code that actually defines what retail theft is. And it's only those items that are offered for sale by both businesses that are registered for us as retail outlets. So, I want to be clear, because I know there's been some talk in the press about, oh, my gosh, all theft in Aurora. It's just right now we're just talking about retail theft. And the other thing is, is one of the other things that I know by talking to one of my bosses or the deputy city attorney, Julie Heckman, over at prosecutions is over time, we have to have the loss prevention officers from these retail stores and these small businesses, they have to show up to court. And if they keep and this kind of goes hand in hand with the failure to appear or necessary already on the books that we passed earlier this summer, that we want to give an incentive for the retailer or for the stores to show up to court, because I don't want part of the 52%, as Mr. Wilson would like to tell us about, how many cases get dismissed and what kind of limit that is that because a witness is not showing up. So, we're hoping this will kind of go hand in hand with the policy that the PD is doing, what Council's is doing to encourage. I don't want to talk performance hacking but I believe that the criminal prosecution side will work with the police department to try to streamline the process for especially smaller businesses that don't have a big loss prevention department where they can get the information that they need to make sure they show up the court and kind of fix that process.

CM Zvonek: Yes, I think that's a great point. I think that when this ordinance is implemented and in place, I think an educational campaign to retailers will be helpful. I know that in the meeting this afternoon on the Havana BID, our DA is

going to be there, the DA from the 18th. And he has some great examples of other municipalities that have really focused on this. And he's been able to prosecute cases and get significant jail time for some of these habitual retail offenders. And so, I'm hopeful that with this in place, we can say there really isn't any amount of theft that's too small. We want you to come forward, we want you to make sure you're reporting it because we have both, whether it qualifies for as a state charge at \$1,000 threshold, I think is where they start. Anything below that, we have a municipal charge that we can bring forward. So, there is an incentive for them to bring forward because as we all know, retail is so critical to the city, it's 64% of our budget comes from retail, from sales tax. We don't want these retailers, big or small, leaving our city because of the fear of theft and loss. So, I appreciate Councilmember Jurinsky for bringing this forward. And if there's not any other questions or comments, is there any objection to moving this forward?

Outcome:

Move forward to Council Meeting.

Follow-up Action:

None.

4.b Weekend Court Mandate – HB22-1067

Judge Shawn Day presented this item. Starting January 2023, the new mandate from HB22-1067 requires courts to hold bond hearings within 28 hours of a person being brought to any detention facility for a municipal hold. There will be no holiday or weekend exclusions for the new mandate. It was brought forward to the FSIR Committee and was opposed due to absence of funding. The cities will incur the requirement to hold the bond hearings and pay for the hearings. The cost incurred for 63 days will be \$421,207. This will include 52 one-day weekends and 11 holiday weekends. There will be more presentations on the budget impact on September 20th and at the Budget Workshop.

Outcome:

Information Only

Follow-up Action:

None.

4.c Public Safety Action Plan Update – Various

Jason Batchelor, Daniel Oates, Chris Juul, Saadia Aurakzai-Foster, and Jessica Prosser provided an update on the Public Safety Action Plan.

Fully staffing the Aurora Police Department and providing ongoing and industry-leading training

A second recruitment effort is being considered for the Atlanta area and is planned for October. The Epic Recruiting contract is providing deliverables for the recruiting videos and the website is being updated. The next group of recruits is 221b with 11 individuals graduating in the middle of December.

CM Jurinsky: So, with these recruiting videos and stuff, my fear is that some of these other departments that we're trying to recruit from, I mean, if they look up Aurora if they look at the Aurora PD, I mean, we don't have the best track record of our city's elected officials supporting the police. So, I just wanted to say if it would be helpful, from the three of us, to add a video of us saying something in this recruitment video and all three of us, just something, we'd love to have you, whatever the script may be, I'm certainly willing to do that. And I'm sure my two colleagues on this Committee are certainly willing to do that. So, I'm just throwing that out there if something like that would be helpful to help recruit.

C. Juul: Yes, I would tell you that I think that we would certainly be happy to have your support and we appreciate that offer. So, I'll talk to the team and we'll see about the logistics behind that and figure out how to make that happen. I appreciate that. Thank you.

CM Sundberg: I apologize. I didn't read the numbers of attrition versus how many officers we've gained. What is the net number of gain or loss in the department? In the last month?

C. Juul: I'll ask Mr. Schneebeck if he can weigh in on that. I don't know about the exact attrition numbers versus the folks that we brought on board the last month.

J. Schneebeck: We did not start an academy. We've lost seven during the month of August. I have to look it up. I don't think I had a reinstatement start during the month of August. So, it's a negative seven as a net because there's no adds.

J. Batchelor: So, what I would draw your attention to Councilmembers, it's Jason. So, year to date, we're at a net of 20 losses. So, sort of John did a nice summary there on their attrition update. We've had 36 total adds through the end of August, so 25 basics, two laterals and nine reinstatements. So, for 36 total ads and then we've had 56 losses. So that includes 31 resignations, 16 retirements, four medical retirements, two folks that have dropped out. And then we've had two terminations and one death. So, sort of a total of 56 losses. So, year to date, we're at a net 26 down.

CM Sundberg: Thank you for those numbers. And then with respect to the outside recruiting out of state, I like the idea of thinking outside the box there. How is that worked out thus far?

J. Batchelor: So, we've had strong interest out of our efforts in New York. So, I'll let Chief Juul talk about that. But we've seen, I think, approaching 20 candidates come out of our New York effort. So again, those are, I think, strong efforts. So, John, I think to add in terms of that or give some exact numbers.

C. Juul: Yes. I can take that, sir. So, Yes, we're looking at we have a lateral academy scheduled for October 24th to start. Currently, we have 15 people in progress. We will not net 15 people, but that's how many have submitted applications and are at some point within that process as far as backgrounds, personal history, statements, et cetera. So, of those, it's about half and half in New York and also some local, there's the Lewisville, Glendale, Colorado State Patrol, somebody from Charlotte-

Mecklenburg is in there. Las Vegas, Denver. So, there's we have kind of a wide range of folks that are in the hopper for the October Academy. Like I said, 15, we won't net that. And then with regard to the academy after that, that starts January 16th. We're looking at eight current applicants, most of those six out of eight are New York that has to defer from the October Academy just from timing. They couldn't quite take care of their personal requirements to show up in October, so they requested January. And then also the Albuquerque and the Atlanta trip are designed to continue to supplement the numbers for this January class as well.

CM Zvonek: Other questions on this topic, which is the Staffing for The Aurora Action Plan? If not, then I want to go into the Youth Violence Update because I know that with Christina gone, there's a little bit of transition. One of the other things that I think would be helpful to talk about is I know that in conversations with Chief Oates about motor vehicle theft and the number of kids, juveniles that we see stealing cars, I know that that isn't directly related to our Youth Violence Programming. But again, it's part of, I think, our overall challenge in the city, which is kids committing crimes, whether it's stealing cars or shootings, or I think that this is something that we have to look at. And I know that we might we're somewhat limited in options of what we can do. But I think there might be reason for us to put together a strategy to work with some of our state lawmakers to address some of these challenges. But anyway, if you wouldn't mind, Jessica or whoever would give an update on the Youth Violence program.

Restore and expand the Aurora Gang Reduction Impact Program to address youth violence

The Youth Violence Prevention Program (YVPP) has an opening for a YVPP Manager and is currently screening applicants. The interviews will be finalized in the next few weeks. YVPP will be meeting with the National Public Safety Partnership Group to discuss their assessment. The team is working closely with the 12 NOFO grantees regarding the funding that was spent.

Address public health and safety challenges from encampments along highways, businesses, and neighborhoods

The number of properties that are CDOT and non-CDOT has been broken down. There will be a meeting with CDOT to talk about the key interchanges and work on emergency abatement procedures. The new pallet shelters were received and are in place for people transitioning out of encampments. There are currently several people on the waitlist for the regular pallet shelters. There is a need for additional staffing as there is a limited ability for abatement in some of the camps. Currently, there is a one-week turnaround from the date that a complaint is received. Staff will post the camps on Thursday or Friday and will conduct abatements the following Thursday, Wednesday, or Thursday when contractors and officers are available. Typically, staff conducts one to three abatements per day depending on the size and complexity.

CM Zvonek: Thanks, Jessica. I was just looking at this number. So, the 411 notifications, can some of those be duplicative? So, it could be ten people saying, hey, we just saw this one here. Yes, okay, that's helpful. And of the 25 or six that accepted shelter, have we had to not abate because we don't have enough beds?

J. Prosser: No, we've not run into that situation.

CM Zvonek: Great. I just plan to ask every month, make sure that we haven't run into that situation, which is good to hear. Other questions for Jessica on this item?

CM Sundberg: Thank you, Jessica. Just a quick question regarding the abatement process. Does the city ever proactively go out and post notices or do we wait for citizens or others to request that?

J. Prosser: We do sometimes. Typically, so when our employee that is out posting camps, when he's out and about in the city, if there's something that we come across that is a problem that's not already on the kind of complaint list, we can certainly do that. Similar to the way we approach code enforcement as well as we're out in the community already seeing things. Typically, it's probably on the list already, but sometimes there are instances where that can happen.

CM Zvonek: Thank you. Other questions for Jessica? Okay. Jason, I guess the last thing I wanted to cover we didn't touch on this part was the data-driven side of this. And this might be for Chief Oates with the DART team. And I know that there's recently some news articles about their team and the way they're using data to determine where to deploy. I just wondered if there's some updates on that. And then also on motor vehicle theft, with the ordinance now in effect, I know that when Chief Oates once said to me that it's best not to look annually, but to instead look over the last four weeks, I believe there's a new report out today that's going to show that Aurora is the third in the nation for motor vehicle theft at year to date. And so, I'm just curious as to do we have any data on motor vehicle theft and how the DART team is doing in response to trying to track down motor vehicle thefts in our city?

Improve data collection, utilize hot spot analysis, and improve efficiency through data analytics

In the last 28 days, violent crime is down 15%, overall major crime is down 22%, and motor vehicle theft is down 30%. Despite having an impact on crime, it may not all be attributable to the DART Team. One factor includes school restarting which limits the opportunities for youth to engage in mischief. Further data obtained will determine the effectivity of the DART Team. Currently, APD has conducted over 60 arrests. A more comprehensive report on the DART Team and crime-related issues will be presented next month.

CM Zvonek: I think that would be helpful, especially to continue to whereas we discussed during the debate over the Motor Vehicle Theft Ordinance is whether or not that could actually have some sort of a deterrent effect in addition to what you all are doing. I'd like to continue to track that. And then also relative to if we can, whether it's Denver or the state at large, I know that again in the report that came out today, talked about the top cities in the nation for motor vehicle theft and Colorado had four of the top ten with Denver and Aurora being number two and three in the country in terms of per capita motor vehicle theft. So, a huge challenge for us, and I want to continue to see that be tackled because the economic impact to the victims, I mean, statewide, you're talking about over 48,000 cars were on pace to be stolen in Colorado this year. Economic impact of well over

\$1,000,000,000. Big issue. I appreciate what you all are doing and I'm hopeful that the combination of what the DART team is doing and our ordinance, that we can continue to see the trend that we see in this previous 28 days. Like you said, how much of it is related to kids going back to school or what other circumstances? We don't know. But just continuing to have this part of this update, I think would be very helpful. Other questions for Chief Oates or anybody else on this topic?

CM Sundberg: Just a quick clarification and that 28 days, did I read that correctly? 560 cars were stolen in Aurora in 28 days.

J. Batchelor: You want to pull that back up, please?

CM Zvonek: Yes, I believe that was the number.

M. Hildebrand: Here. Councilmember, I can answer that. Yes. The previous 28 day was 560. The current 28 day was 392. So that's where the decrease reduction of 30% came from. So, in the past month, 392, the prior month to that 560.

CM Sundberg: Wow. Okay. Thank you for that clarification. That's enormous.

CM Zvonek: And what this doesn't show, Councilmember Sundberg, is the secondary crimes that are committed with motor vehicle theft, which statewide is up over 520%. That's just violent crimes, not counting property crimes, drug related crimes, violent crime, secondary offenses in motor vehicle theft, up over 500%. So, again, this is a critical topic. I want to make sure that we continue to talk about it because it just is more it's in front of us, the more likely we're going to continue to focus on it.

D. Oates: And if I could, you'll recall from our initial presentations on what DART was about. DART is primarily focused on three kinds of crimes nonfatal shootings, very serious aggravated assaults, robberies, and motor vehicle theft, precisely because so many of the first two offenses are being committed with people who come to and from the scene of those crimes in a stolen vehicle. So those are the three primary focuses of the DART team.

Outcome:

Information Only.

Follow-up Action:

None.

4.d APD – Colfax and Beeler Initiative

Cassidee Carlson presented this item. Colfax and Beeler were identified as areas of concern regarding crime. Year to date, there have been four homicides in a half-mile radius of the area. Some factors that led to increased crime in the area include the effect COVID had on the ability to jail individuals, homelessness, and Denver closing their problem motels pushing clientele into Aurora. Calls for service in the area are expected to be over 5,000 which is more than what has been received in the last two years. Should crime-related issues remain, another homicide is expected, in addition to an increase in assault and shootings. Due to these, patrol has been working the area. The DART deployment has had an impact and units

within the Special Ops Bureau have done high visibility operations and made arrests. The APD investigated businesses that may be contributing to the problem. One is The Carriage Motor Inn which had a problem with ongoing criminal activity occurring near or on the property. Two months prior to the last homicide, the PAR Unit started the nuisance process. The APD has been evaluating calls for service in the area and the seriousness of the crimes on the property. However, the owner of the Inn was issued a summons and worked with his attorney to sign a deferred action agreement. The nuisance process is a yearlong process that requires the business to comply with all parameters. The APD's PAR unit handles this and has a working relationship with other city partners including code, tax, and licensing. Another property investigated is the Riviera. The criminal nuisance property documentation is now in progress with the owners cooperating. The owners are looking to invest in 360-degree cameras and putting up a gate to help control criminal activity. The APD detected that the Family Dollar has individuals that visit and buy alcohol, loiter, and then engage in criminal activity. PAR, Code Enforcement, and Tax and Licensing visited the location to discuss how to address the issues. The owners have placed no loitering and no trespassing signs. However, the Family Dollar has been caught selling alcohol to a minor. To the west of the Carriage Motor Inn is a lot where vehicles pull in to do drugs and engage in prostitution act. An auto repair shop also uses the area as extra parking. Therefore, the APD has placed no stopping or parking signs in the area and will start enforcing ticketing and towing for individuals that park there. PAR officers met with Streets and PROS to identify better street lighting options in the area, as well as clean the overgrown trees and shrubs in the medians and along sidewalks. On August 17th, Live View Trailers were set up and deployed in areas that would be most effective. They serve as visual deterrents and also capture videos. PAR officers also visited and provided tools to two restaurants that have issues with individuals loitering and doing drugs. On 14th and Yosemite, there are properties in disrepair that have overgrowth which promotes criminal behavior. Temporary fencing and boarding the buildings were ineffective in the past. Redevelopment plans are pending city approval. The PAR and Code Enforcement have begun clearing the areas. APD is working with City Planning and Development Officials to abate the overgrowth, trash, and camps, and demolish buildings set on the properties. Last month, there was a notable decrease in crime PD will continue its crime mitigation efforts in addition to data collection. The Department has received positive communication from residents and businesses about its impact on crime.

CM Zvonek: Questions? I have one, Cassidee. Those mobile cameras, is there a need for them in other places? And if so, just a ballpark, what do they cost?

C. Carlson: Yes, they're not cheap. It's a really cool technology. ESS is definitely exploring this, whether we build our own or we continue renting them. It is on kind of our radar to continue pursuing these because they could be effective in many forms and moving them to other crime areas, moving them to the retail areas to deter theft. I think we've seen the value in them in a way that you're able to watch them live. For example, the DART guys, they could set off, watch a crime happen and then move in and then collect the evidence from that point. So definitely something we are exploring. ESS has taken the lead on what that looks like.

CM Zvonek: Okay.

D. Oates: I believe they're in the 25 to 30,000 range each and they're also light towers. They also light up the block. So, we have real interest in the technology. Obviously, there's costs associated with it. And so that's why we're experimenting with these, too.

Outcome:

Information Only.

Follow-up Action:

None.

4.e APD – Crisis Response Team Audit Response and Update

Courtney Tassin presented this item. The first audit recommendation dealt with 911 and their policies regarding developing trainings for mental health calls, service, and dispatch, and developing procedures to identify and handle mental health crisis calls for the Crisis Response Team (CRT) and CIT officers. C. Tassin was invited to join working groups for the Nursing Triage Line and identify how it can translate into the Colorado Crisis Line. Moreover, they have been working to implement a strategic plan for trainings, policies, and protocols. CRT offered to support Aurora911 in all capacities to ensure that all areas are addressed and in compliance with the audit. The second recommendation was to look for more effective ways to track mental health calls for service. Currently, there is no way to identify what a mental health call is resulting in deficits in deploying resources. The CRT has been working with Sergeant Caleb and Analyst Ruth Eisner to explore the best methods for tracking mental health calls for service. The new CAD allows the option to select at the end of the call if it was for mental health including event types. Aurora911 is evaluating a mental health crisis protocol to take to the Aurora Mobile Response Team (AMRT) and CRT. The third recommendation was to expand the collection of data points and track the additional ones. CRT has contracted the National Policing Institute (NPI) which will focus on the data collection and resource utilization of the program. The NPI is also providing technical support in relation to the internal audit and external program evaluation. The recommendations will be specific to identifying performance indicators, data collection measures, and data collection methods. The fourth recommendation was to request proposals to evaluate staffing options for clinicians and a case manager. This is to determine which option and partner best serves the city and community's needs. An RFP was posted on August 1st with proposals due on August 29th. The Evaluation Committee is filling out the conflict-of-interest forms and a decision will be made by the end of September. The goal is to be in contract by November.

The fifth recommendation was to create an MOU with the Aurora Mental Health Center. As of now, there has not been a signed MOU since 2018. However, an MOU has been drafted and reviewed by the legal team. The sixth recommendation was to develop better SOPs which include practices for CRT and clinicians and updated directives. The SOPs are now in the final reviewing stages. The team met with Michelle Crawford, the internal auditor, to ensure compliance.

The seventh recommendation was to create a CIT Steering Committee. It has been created and is comprised of leadership from the CRT, AMRT, Aurora911, Youth

Violence Prevention Program, APD and City Community Relations Department, Falck, Aurora Mental Health Center, Aurora Fire Rescue, Aurora Public Schools, CUPD, and local hospitals. There will be a CIT refresher course for officers that are CIT trained. This is expected to be done annually or as deemed appropriate. The last recommendation was to work with the Media Relations Office, Community Relations, City Communications, and Aurora Mental Health to identify additional methods for collecting feedback and raising awareness of the program. A new brochure is made to provide information on how to utilize CRT, when they are most appropriately utilized, how to contact them, and information about the Targeted Violence Prevention Program. A CRT Team meeting will be held next week to discuss the findings of the internal audit, the status of the program, and how it can be utilized. A logo was created as well. CRT is working with the Aurora Research Institute to identify appropriate ways to collect community feedback. Currently, the program has been grant-funded from various sources. However, in the 2023 budget, it will transition to being generally funded. There is funding for five clinicians for the CRT program and there will be a position for data collection and analysis.

CM Sundberg: Courtney, could you please reiterate the staffing levels of the CRT currently?

C. Tassin: Yes, thank you for that question, Councilmember Sundberg. Currently, we are still experiencing very critical levels of staffing. With Aurora Mental Health, we've experienced the same critical staffing that we have since the beginning of the program. Currently, we are at zero clinicians for our CRT team. We do have one case manager who's been wonderful and very helpful to provide that follow-up piece on the back end. But currently, we have one AMRT clinician and zero CRT clinicians.

CM Sundberg: Oh boy. So, we've lost a couple recently it sounds like then and it's due to attract new clinicians it sounds.

C. Tassin: To be completely frank, sir, the interest has never really been an issue. The pay has always been a large barrier. Every application cycle, we've got approximately seven applications. But when we get to the offer round, people do decline. Denver currently has 36 clinicians, so I'm not under the impression that the interest is the problem.

CM Sundberg: So, we could be losing people to another municipality, sounds like.

C. Tassin: We have. Back in August of 2021, we did lose one clinician to Denver.

CM Sundberg: What's the difference in pays, if you know?

C. Tassin: It's approximately 20 grand higher in Denver.

CM Sundberg: Something to consider. And so, with that staffing shortage, we can't really measure at this time response times to calls.

C. Tassin: That is correct. Now, we do still have extraordinarily mental health trained officers. They are further trained than the average CIT officer, they've received much more mental health and de-escalation training than the normal ones. So, they are still responding as a CRT unit. They are to prioritize mental health calls

that come through 911. They do also respond to regular patrol calls, but they are prioritizing those mental health calls. Obviously, that's not a CRT, that's not a co-responder team, but it's a CIT unit. And right now, we are looking at evaluating some potential options for bringing in clinicians.

J. Prosser: Councilmember Sundberg, I just wanted to add that that's exactly why we're doing the RFP. And so, we did receive four responses. We have not looked through them yet, but hopeful that we can shore up some of the issues identified in the audit through that, both for AMRT and CRT, for things like pay and benefits and retention strategies for clinicians.

CM Sundberg: Thank you.

C. Tassin: And we did implement a retention bonus for our two remaining Aurora mental health staff at this time, very significant retention bonuses. So, we are hopeful that that will keep them with us. In conversations with them, they're very happy being a part of the program. I do believe that the RFP brings some anxiety for clinicians is just the uncertainty of what that looks like for their job. So, we are very supportive. We obviously want everyone to stay, but we want people to take care of themselves too. But great question.

CM Zvonek: Courtney, will the moving to general funded help with giving more certainty to the clinicians that this is something that we're going to prioritize and not be dependent upon grant funding for?

C. Tassin: Thank you for that question, Councilmember Zvonek. Yes, I firmly believe that being in a very stable source of funding does bring some relief to people who are in a grant-funded position. I am hopeful that this will drastically increase the number of applications that we receive and the number of offers accepted.

CM Zvonek: And Jason, just a follow-up to the budget, given that the disparity between us and Denver, I assume that we're going to account for that in our recommendation for the 2023 budget so that will be at least on parity.

J. Batchelor: Yes. We use the numbers that Courtney provided that really put us in a much better competitive position. Just to be clear, the clinicians are not city employees, so we don't necessarily have the final say on what those wages are. That would be our provider. But that's one of the things that we want to make sure we've got enough money there so that they can be competitive in their offers.

C. Tassin: And I would also like to add, in addition to the funding sources, we did apply for a grant through the Department of Homeland Security for their Targeted Violence Prevention Grants program. We are hoping that that will continue to fund the targeted Violence Prevention Program, as well as expand it a little bit by including a case manager that is specific to that team. And we're awaiting that answer.

CM Zvonek: Courtney, I just have one last question. And I know that we use Aurora Mental Health for our provider, for clinicians. Are we able to use other providers if need be?

C. Tassin: We are currently exploring that right now. We're looking at the contracts currently had with Aurora Mental Health and exploring if there is a no compete or something preventing us from utilizing a temporary source in the time being.

CM Zvonek: Okay. Yes. I just think that having a greater pool of resources if they're maxed, which would be understandable. If there's other places that we could go to get those clinicians and obviously be helpful to make sure we have full staff. So, I wanted to say thank you for your team's responsiveness to the audit. I joked last time that whenever I hear Michelle give an update, it gives me a little bit of heartburn. But I am grateful, and I know that I'm sure my colleagues share the same sentiment that I'm happy to see you guys took this audit and responded because this is an important program for our city. And so, thank you.

C. Tassin: And thank you all so much, Council, for your support for this program, not only within the budget but advocating for it within the community. So, thank you all very much and thank you, Jason Batchelor and director Jessica Prosser.

Outcome:

Information Only.

Follow-up Action:

None.

4.f APD – Cherry Creek School District Donation to APD School Resource Program

Daniel Oates presented this item. Six officers were returned to the three high schools in the Cherry Creek System in 2022. Cherry Creek School District has made a \$185,000 donation to support the School Resource Officer Program. This donation is funneled through the Aurora Police Foundation. It is being spent on equipping patrol cars with devices and tools to get into any locked door and should be deployed by mid-semester of this year. APD is arranging keycard access or special key for every patrol car to allow officers into any APS and Cherry Creek Schools. Moreover, the money will be used to send all SROs to the national conference in Indianapolis next year. Lastly, the superintendent requested documentation that explains the roles, responsibilities, and support between the school district, police department, and city. There is a draft which outlines responsibilities for the department, city, and school district. This will go to Council for information and support.

Outcome:

Information Only.

Follow-up Action:

None.

5. Miscellaneous Matters for Consideration

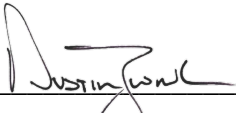
None.

6. Confirm Next Meeting

Next meeting confirmed is October 13, 2022, 8:30 a.m. via WebEx.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:48 a.m.

APPROVED: 
Dustin Zvonek, Chair