

MEETING MINUTES
Marion County Public Safety Coordinating Council
at the Board of Commissioners Hearing Room
1115 Commercial St NE
Salem, Oregon
January 8, 2013

Attendees: Walt Beglau, Ray Byrd, Mark Caillier, Jayne Downing, Tom Ewing, David Ferre, Don Frederickson, Alison Kelley, Pete McCallum, Todd McCann, Ed McKenney, Jerry Moore, Jason Myers, Anna Peterson, Scott Russell, Mike Runyon, Tom Sermak, Chuck Sybrant (for Faye Fagel), and Susan Tripp

Guests: Elan Lambert, Oregon National Guard

Staff: Don Russo

Chair - action items

At 4:00 pm, Sheriff Jason Myers called to order a meeting of the Public Safety Coordinating Council. Minutes of the December PSCC meeting were approved unanimously.

Public safety preparedness for mass violence events

Sheriff Myers said that Commissioner Milne asked the council to discuss how well prepared is Marion County for incidents of mass violence, as seen recently at Clackamas Mall and Newtown, CT. He explained several ways that public safety officials in Marion County prepare. One method is Marion County's Threat Assessment Team that has operated since 1998 with members from law enforcement, school districts, mental health, judicial courts and others. The team meets weekly to assess information about potential threats and prepares a safety plan for each. He cited incidents where the team has responded before incidents occurred. Ray Byrd added that he feels Marion County is fortunate to have such a team, and is one of only a few counties using such a team. A management plan is developed for each potential threat. Mr. Byrd said the team was active at the time of the Clackamas event, but the suspect the local team was investigating was not the person who committed the violence at Clackamas Mall.

Sheriff Myers said a second method is the Crisis Intervention Training offered in Marion County since 2006. About 315 have completed the training to help law enforcement officials respond appropriately to crisis cases involving mental illness. He said the Crisis Outreach Response Team works to follow up with people diagnosed with mental illness after they have encounters with law enforcement. Marion County employs mental health professionals in the county jail since 1997 to help them reenter the community after release. The School Resource Program has been very successful in working to respond to potential threats in the schools. He said there have been scenario-based training sessions on how to respond to active shooters.

Don Frederickson said that all recent cases have involved young men with mental health problems, and thinks it is increasingly important for mental health staff to work closely with law enforcement. Chief Jerry Moore said there are often hints of potential trouble and it is important that people report such hints so law enforcement can intervene before an incident. Tom Ewing expressed the difficulty parents face when they know there is a problem with a child, but parents face a high burden of proof before help is available. Mark Caillier said the Health Advisory Board is working with the new coordinated care organization to help prevent cases in the emergency departments. Judge Susan Tripp asked for the schools to do more with those youth who show signs they need mental health services. The families need access to services, she said. Mr. Byrd responded the Salem-Keizer School District has had grant funding for many years from Law Enforcement for Youth to support the Student

Threat Assessment Team with funds that can be used to help engage students in positive school activities, mental health evaluations and other needs, but the team is only activated when an incident occurs.

Pete McCallum asked about concealed weapons in schools. Sheriff Myers responded that applications for concealed firearms permits are increasing, and those granted permits are a law-abiding group of people. Mr. McCallum said that as a former school administrator, he opposes arming teachers in schools, and thinks it is safer to keep guns out of schools. Chief Moore stated that there are dangers to carrying a weapon; his concern is that people with concealed weapons permits risk serious complications if not trained frequently in how to secure a weapon and when to use a weapon. Ed McKenney said there is huge responsibility involved when a person carries a weapon.

Sheriff Myers announced a workshop on January 18 at the Oregon State Capitol about the mentally ill in the criminal justice system. He said the full-day session is an opportunity to discuss current issues with state legislators. He encouraged members of PSCC to attend so the council can discuss next steps at future meetings.

Walt Beglau said the workshop will examine the infrastructure around mental illness, as well as the appropriate tactical response of law enforcement when incidents occur. Chief Moore said if an incident occurs today in Salem, the first three officers who arrive will respond immediately with the objective of stopping the threat. Rapid response is the first choice as opposed to waiting, for example, for a SWAT team to arrive.

Chief Moore recommended watching a video called “RUN. HIDE. FIGHT. Surviving an Active Shooter Event,” available on YouTube. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5VcSwejU2D0>

Prescription drug abuse and heroin abuse

Walt Beglau said there were ten confirmed heroin overdose deaths in 2012 in Marion County, plus five more pending toxicology reports; this would total 15, which is three times the number of deaths in 2010. Mayor Peterson asked if there had been resistance expressed by the medical or pharmaceutical sectors. Alison Kelley said some older physicians who have seen waves of public opinion change over the years are now getting weary of the mixed messages, while younger physicians want to be engaged in reducing the availability of prescription opiates. Hydrocodone is now the most prescribed drug, said Mr. Beglau, and he expects the pharmaceutical industry will fight to protect their sales.

Governor’s Commission on Public Safety

Sheriff Myers said there were items on the final report of the Governor’s Commission on Public Safety that some members of the council could not endorse. A decision was made to forward the report to the legislature rather than vote to endorse any of the policy recommendations. Leadership from various associations intend to be involved in the legislative process to advocate for their concerns, he said. Tom Sermak noted that the final report advocated several times that any savings from prisons should be reinvested in public safety.

Oregon’s Joining Community Forces Recognition Program

Colonel Dave Ferre gave an overview of programs the Oregon Military Department provides for veterans returning from active duty to our communities. He said the war is over, and the Department of Defense is withdrawing forces. There are over 200 programs in Oregon that offer assistance to veterans. Oregon National Guard is the lead proponent in implementing Oregon’s Joining Community Forces Recognition Program.

Elan Lambert introduced herself as the special projects officer for her department, Oregon National Guard J9, and showed a slide presentation and video to explain the Joining Forces project. She will give a similar presentation on Wednesday, January 16 to the Board of Commissioners. Joining Forces is an effort to bring together many helpful programs that can assist veterans. The mission is to foster and sustain formal, continuing relationships

with communities in order to increase the quality of life, well being and readiness of service members, veterans and their families.

Public safety representatives are an important part of the steering committee that plans the launch of a local program and creates an action plan. She said that interaction among concerned parties is helpful. The Community Covenant signing ceremony is a physical action that designates the commitment of a local group and its members. Within the state of Utah, for example, 106 communities have already held Community Covenant signing ceremonies, she said.

MOTION: Public Safety Coordinating Council supports launching a Joining Community Forces Recognition Program in Marion County. Motion by Ed McKenney, second by Tom Sermak. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Mid Valley Women's Crisis Services

Jayne Downing expressed that because her 40-year old agency has seen a huge increase in need for services over the past three years, they do not have adequate space to see the growing numbers of women who seek help in a crisis. The agency applied and won funding from a federal community development block grant through the City of Salem, and now her agency is launching a fund drive to raise the remaining needed funds. Over \$400,000 has been received to date, but the goal is \$800,000. The current facility will be sold and a new building purchased. The agency has no debt and will continue to avoid debt. Administrative cost is kept between 4% and 9%, she said, so funding can be used directly to help women in crisis. She asked members of the council to contribute.

Adjourned

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

Next meetings

The Public Safety Coordinating Council will meet Tuesday, February 12 at the Boys & Girls Club in Salem. On March 12, the council will meet at the Oregon State Legislature.

Minutes by Don Russo