

## POLICE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

### TO OUR DUVALL COMMUNITY

Hello to you all! We hope this update finds you all well, and that it will provide comfort in knowing that our Police Department continues to increase their readiness during these trying times, so all of you can continue to have confidence in the men and women that serve you.

It has been a difficult year for all of us, resulting in less community outreach and public information sharing with you, and for that we are certainly regretful. Our Police Department prides itself on our ability to engage the community in a positive, meaningful way; in a continued effort to enhance community engagement and awareness and striving to instill continued confidence in our ability to provide a fun, safe environment for all.

In early 2020, we were all faced with the devastation of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and as we near the end of the year, we are still living with these affects, including public facility closures, resulting in limited services for our community. While we still maintain a 24 hour per day, 7 day per week patrol coverage, responding to calls for service, we have had cause to limit access to our police facility, as we continue our efforts in protecting our staff from this pandemic. We realize this has been a big adjustment for some of you. It has been equally difficult on our staff, as we certainly miss the interactions, engagements, frequent visits to businesses, stopping in neighborhoods to say hi and engaging with you and your families, and of course, not having the ability to engage with students, in a school setting. We are hopeful this pandemic will pass soon, but until then, it is imperative that we continue with preventive measures to ensure our

staff remains healthy and able to respond to serious needs and crisis in our community, should the need arise.

As we progressed further into the year, our nation was shocked by events that brought a great deal of civil unrest, as well as long overdue discussion regarding police reform, and social inequity. These are very important subjects that we want you to know we take seriously as a law enforcement agency. Our Police Department has always been aware of these issues, and for many years, have worked hard to ensure we are recruiting and hiring men and women that fall in line with strong moral and ethical values, cultural diversity and awareness, and an overall sense of true commitment to community awareness, engagement and participation. While we still have a lot to learn, we are leaps and bounds ahead of others, and we are proud of these efforts.

Recognizing the need for continued education and training, as well as communication sharing with our community, we have spent a great deal of time this year focusing on enhanced training and research into the best practices in law enforcement, as they pertain to the current environment in our country. Most recently, all of our staff have completed training in Implicit and Explicit Bias, De-Escalation, Force Mitigation and will soon be training on our Duty to Intervene, should an officer observe another, using excessive force. Additionally, police administration is working with the Eastside Police Chiefs, Coalition of Small Police Agencies, Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs, and the King County Sheriffs & Police Chiefs Association to increase

the overall efforts in establishing consistent, integrity based protocols relating to officer involved shootings, enhanced efforts toward increased de-escalation training, and overall police reform in our state. As these efforts progress, we will certainly keep you informed.

For several months, our department has been wanting to host a community meeting (Town Hall) event to personally engage with you, providing for opportunity to detail our local efforts and display our preparedness to insure things that continue to happen, nationally, do not happen in our great community. Sadly, it appears that COVID-19 will continue to derail such an event, for the unforeseeable future, but we will get something scheduled, as soon as safety protocols allow us to do so. In the meantime, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate in reaching out to us. Since COVID-19 became prevalent, our department has deployed an online reporting system, on our City's website ([duvallwa.gov](http://duvallwa.gov)) and many of you have been using it. Please continue using this platform for reporting non-emergency crimes, but always call 911 in any/all emergencies. When in doubt, call 911!

In recent weeks, our current Police Chief, Carey Hert, announced his upcoming retirement, after 25 years in law enforcement. Chief Hert will be leaving our department, effective June 30, 2021. Until then, he continues working with other police administrators, city leaders, and other department directors, through an effective transition plan that will provide for a seamless transition for the City. Over the past several years, our Police Department has been instrumental in establishing a highly effective succession plan, encouraging and insuring continue self-development of their staff. This has proven effective in their retention efforts, transition efforts, and overall fiscal management efforts for our community.

Our Police Department would like the welcome Officer Luke Hill to the department. Officer Hill has a diverse work background including, law enforcement, marketing, security, and construction. Officer Hill enjoys hiking, spending time with his family, woodworking, watching Minnesota Twins baseball and riding his motorcycle. He is excited to get to know the community of Duvall and

serve its citizens. Officer Hill will begin his Field Training in early November.

Our Police Department has received questions as they relate to our School Resource Officer position, so we wanted to a minute to explain the importance of this program. It is not uncommon for people to assume that the mere presence of a position like this, in our schools, suggests there are problems that exist, or that the School Resource Officer is in our schools as a disciplinarian or simply looking to find students doing something wrong. This couldn't be farther from the truth.

Our School Resource Officer has a unique role in our schools and our community. Our School Resource Officer is a liaison between our schools and our law enforcement community, and a mentor for students and school staff, while providing an array of services and resources for both. While our School Resource Officer is equipped to respond in the event of a critical incident at our schools, or to restore order as needed, these incidences are extremely rare. As such, our School Resource Officer partners with school staffing, and oftentimes is afforded the opportunity, or asked to guest lecturer in classes pertaining to a variety of topics that affect our students. These topics include things such as bullying, internet safety, drug and alcohol abuse, etcetera, adding a resource for staff and student questions regarding law enforcement and security, creating a positive association between the police and the community. Finally, our School Resource Officer teaches the D.A.R.E. curriculum for elementary students, throughout the district.

If you would like to know more about our School Resource Program, or any program that our department offers, please do not hesitate in reaching out to us.

While this has been a difficult year for all, full of uncertainty, we would ask that everyone continue being mindful of others, respectful toward one another, and continue working together as a community, to continue making Duvall a safe, fun-filled environment for all to enjoy. We are hopeful to get back to a sense of normalcy in the coming year, and want to wish all of you a peaceful, safe, and happy Holiday Season! **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!**