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The Mission of the Kansas City Missouri Police Department, in partnership with the community, is to protect life and property while reducing fear and disorder.

Vision

The KCPD is a premier police agency with a national reputation for excellence that provides innovative and equitable police service to its community through a highly motivated and engaged workforce.

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INFORMANT

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department

April 2011

Board ponders insurance changes

Cutting costs through a combined health insurance plan with the City of Kansas City, Mo., will not be done on the backs of members of the police department, Board of Police Commissioners President Patrick McInerney said at a tense meeting on the subject.

The City has been pushing KCPD to join their insurance plan for more than two years, stating it would save \$1.9 million. But those savings numbers were disputed at the March 24 Board meeting, which was packed with hundreds of department members.

Although she said all the meetings between the City and police about combining health plans were cordial and non-contentious, Deputy Chief Cheryl Rose said the March 24 meeting marked the first time City leaders seemed willing to negotiate on what a plan includ-



Benefits consultant Bob Charlesworth explained KCPD's analysis of joining health plans with the City while City Council members Beth Gottstein, John Sharp, and Interim City Manager Troy Schulte looked on, along with police employees.

ing KCPD would look like.

"In our work group, there was no negotiation," D.C. Rose said. "It was us coming on to the City's plan. I'm encouraged by what I hear today."

If police joined the current City health plan, Interim City Manager Troy

Schulte said \$350,000 would be saved annually by reducing benefits and increasing co-pay costs for department members. Mayor Mark Funkhouser pointed out it wasn't a savings but a cost shift directly to police employees. Another \$240,000 worth of prescription costs also likely would move directly onto employees, according to KCPD's benefits consultant.

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New tool targets impaired drivers

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department unveiled a new tool March 15 aimed at getting drunk drivers off the road, and it was immediately put to good use.

Police presented the new Mobile DUI Enforcement Center (MDEC) at a news conference behind KCPD's Metro Patrol Division Station on March 15. It hit the streets two days later and processed 42 arrests during a St. Patrick's Day DUI checkpoint, as well as another 10 at a checkpoint March 19.



Kansas City, Mo., significantly leads the state in alcohol-involved crashes, alcohol-involved fatal crashes and alcohol-involved serious injury crashes. About 63 percent of Kansas City's traffic deaths in

2010 were attributed to someone driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. KCPD worked to get these dangerous drivers off the road by making 1,749 DUI arrests in 2010.

The new \$395,000 Mobile DUI Enforcement Center was funded by a grant from

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Body Shop creates new KCPD show car

For the first time in more than 17 years, KCPD has a new show car to take to community events.

Police take the show car to dozens of events throughout the year. It's a favorite among children and provides an opportunity for police to build relationships with residents. The previous show car, a 1993 Crown Victoria, had to be towed to all of its appearances. The new one, a 2006 Crown Vic, will head out on its own.

Fleet Unit Supervisor Darrell Cooper said the 2006 Crown Vic is a former KCPD patrol car that was taken out of service.

"Rather than sell it, we took it in, put a paint job on it, put some wheels on it and did some work on the interior," he said.

Body Shop Supervisor Marvin Russell said all of the Fleet Unit's Body Shop section brainstormed about a theme for the new car. They decided it should be a memorial to officers killed in the



Body Shop Supervisor Marvin Russell showed off KCPD's new show car, which will soon be out at community events.

line of duty. The car features a large badge with a black mourning band on the front driver and passenger doors, stripes of the American flag all around and an eagle on the hood.

Fleet Operations Technician Michael Barton painted the flag portions, and Russell's nephew, Kimo Russell, airbrushed the flag's shading and the eagle. Carrell Brothers Colors even donated all of the paint.

"It came out really nice," Supervisor Russell said.

The Body Shop also put on a spoiler and some shiny new wheels. They took the stereo out of the old show car and installed it on the

new one, as well as cleaned up the interior.

"The guys in the Body Shop all took part," Russell said.

The new show car will start making more and more public appearances as the weather warms for spring and summer festivals and community events.

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Manager Schulte also said another \$320,000 could be saved by KCPD employees using a free City health clinic at 24th and Troost, but KCPD's consultant said that savings was closer to \$37,000 a year.

McInerney said it sounded like some of the savings numbers projected by the City were "90 percent off."

Schulte said the bulk of the projected \$1.9 million savings would be from back-office costs related to self insurance, including getting rebates from brand-name prescription drugs. Mayor Funkhouser said that savings could then be used toward merit

increases for police employees. The audience loudly disagreed with that idea, with many saying they'd need the raises to cover their increased health costs.

Board Member Lisa Pelofsky said she didn't like it, either.

"The premise is that there is this huge

balloon of money that will fall upon us," she said. "To some degree, it feels like the City is holding pay raises as part of the leverage."

Board Treasurer Angela Wasson-Hunt, however, said the department needed to push forward with joining the City's plan.

"I really believe it's the only way we're going to sustain ourselves," she said.

Sergeant Brad Lemon, Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 99 Vice President, told the Board that KCPD members had better health plans than the City because of a better health history.

"We take better care of ourselves than the pool across the street," he said, referring to City Hall. "... We should not have to bear the costs of other people's bad health."

He said up until the March 24 Board meeting, leaders of the City's Health Trust had not wanted to negotiate on the plan.

"We should not have to bear the costs of other people's bad health."

- Sergeant Brad Lemon
Vice President, Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 99

News in Brief

Moldovans learn U.S. human trafficking laws



Six delegates from Moldova visited the Kansas City Police Department on March 25 during their trip to the United States to learn about how the justice system here handles human trafficking. They were part of the Open World Program, a Congressional initiative that brings leaders from former Soviet countries to the United States to build understanding, get new ideas and develop leaders. The delegates—who work in victim services—met with Sergeant Brad Dumit, Vice Section Supervisor, who explained how KCPD investigates and prosecutes human trafficking cases and that some of the cases KCPD has investigated have had ties across the globe. He said he would provide the Moldovans with as much training material about how to approach and treat human traffickers and their victims as possible.

1930 Squad named L.E. Unit of the Year

For the second year in a row, the Missouri Narcotics Officers Association named KCPD's under-cover Street Crimes Unit 1930 Squad its Law Enforcement Unit of the Year at the group's annual March conference. This award is given to units that exhibit "exemplary performance resulting in positive impact on a community or the law enforcement profession."

Tip-A-Cop raises \$10K for Special Olympics

More than 40 police officers volunteered to be wait staff at three Corner Café locations throughout the metro area on March 12, and in so doing raised more than \$10,000 for Special Olympics Missouri.



IMPAIRED DRIVERS, CONT. FROM P. 1

the Missouri Department of Transportation. It will allow Kansas City Police to combat drunk drivers at sobriety checkpoints and other impaired driving enforcement operations. Officers will be able to process up to five impaired drivers at once and administer breath alcohol tests.

The MDEC also has built-in computers that will be connected to the department's network. For officer and arrestee comfort, it also has heating and air-conditioning, as well as a restroom. Its interior was designed to be cleaned easily.

The MDEC replaces a 24-year-old recreational vehicle KCPD had retrofitted to use as a command post at sobriety checkpoints.

"The Mobile DUI Enforcement Center will replace the Mobile Operations Sobriety Testing vehicle currently used," said Sergeant Ron Podraza, supervisor of KCPD's DUI Section. "The outdated MOST is an RV fabricated to serve as a breath testing vehicle. The MDEC was designed to serve as a DUI enforcement center during sobriety checkpoint operations."

Sergeant Podraza said the MDEC is intended to last well into the future.

"Knowing that funding for this type of vehicle only comes along once in a generation, the MDEC was built with longevity in mind," he said. "The MDEC will serve our citizens for many years to come, combating the scourge of impaired drivers."

KCPD will continue to use the smaller, ambulance-sized Breath Alcohol Testing (BAT) Van it received in 2008 in smaller DUI enforcement operations, such as "wolf pack" saturation patrols.

In addition to its use at checkpoints, Kansas City Police also plan to take the MDEC to community events for the public to tour.



Officially Speaking ...

Awards

Special Unit Citation
Drivers Training Section
Sex Crimes Cold Case Squad
Street Crimes Unit Under-Cover Squad

Life-Saving Award
Deputy Chief Cyril Ritter
Officer Michael Vulje

Meritorious Service Award
Retired Supervisor Yolanda Perry

Meritorious Service Award
Officer Rhonda Schulte

Distinguished Service Medal
Officer David Bodenhamer
Officer Travis Corum

25-Year Rings

Master Police Officer Raymond Powell
Forensic Specialist Robert Smith

Retirements

Officer Douglas Ousley
Officer James Patrick Shea
Officer Keli Theison

Obituary

Retired Major Marylyn Brauninger

Garden deters crime, creates community

What once was a vacant Westside building housing vagrants now is a source of community pride, vegetables and chickens.

This is the second season of the Westside Community Action Network (CAN) Center's community garden at 20th Street and West Pennway.

"The community members get to know each other, kids are learning, and we're reducing crime and creating community," said Officer Matt Tomasic, who came up with the idea for the garden with Officer Octavio "Chato" Villalobos and Westside CAN Director Lynda Callon. "... There is no downside to this."

The garden features 30 plots, all of which are claimed by community members. It sits where a building was torn down more than two years ago. The site owner lets Westside CAN use the land for free. Community members grow garlic, carrots, spinach, pumpkin, watermelon and more. A butterfly garden attracts monarchs, and old tires painted primary colors house flowers and vine plants. Because there is no plumbing at the site, all water comes from rain barrels colorfully painted by local school children. The garden's first beehive is due to arrive in mid-April.

"The primary purpose of the bees is

to increase the harvest," said Ezekiel Amador III, community member and beekeeper. "... Then in August, we'll harvest their honey."

Also on the site: chickens. Officer Tomasic said local schools hatched the eggs but then didn't know what to do with the chicks, so the garden took them in. Westsider Cosmé Pantoja built them a sprawling enclosure with donated materials and tends them daily. The six hens

and two roosters produce eight eggs a day.

Amador and Marcella Morales-Gaona, another Westsider and gardener, lead workshops for residents and their children to learn more about growing plants. Gaona said they've had no problem with theft or vandalism both because the site is fenced and because the community takes pride in the garden.

"The beauty of it is when it's warmer, people are here until dark," Officer Tomasic said. "If they're not working, they're socializing until 9 or 10 o'clock at night."

Amador said community partnerships – like with KCPD – are what make the garden happen.

"People don't even see the officers as having a police connection," Amador said. "To them, they're just neighborhood and community guys."

One KCPD connection is evident at the garden right now, however: two large piles of manure produced by the horses of the Mounted Patrol Section to be used as fertilizer.

"This is the good stuff," Morales-Gaona said. "We've been waiting on this."



Photo courtesy Ezekiel Amador III

Ezekiel Amador IV visited the Westside community garden's chickens last summer. Vegetable beds, a large rain barrel, and tire planters are in the background.

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