

**Police Chief's Progress Report Re:  
Joint Executive Order No. EO2020-005**



**August 17, 2020**

Mayor Spicer:

I am writing to provide a progress report regarding the implementation of the reforms set forth in [Joint Executive Order No. EO2020-005](#), which mandates the adoption of common sense reforms to the Framingham Police Department's use of force and related policies.

Pursuant to the aforementioned order, I initiated a thorough review of the following policies:

- [Conducted Energy Weapons](#), Policy No. 100-35
- [Expandable Baton](#), Policy No. 100-30
- [Kinetic Energy Impact Weapon System](#), Policy No. 100-33
- [Oleo-Resin Capsicum Spray](#), Policy No. 100-13
- [Use of Force](#), Policy No. 100-4

This comprehensive review included scheduled meetings with the public and Police Department members, to give both internal and external stakeholders an opportunity to provide input. We have met with community partners to discuss racial diversity, bias, discrimination, equity, and racial justice in Framingham. We are looking forward to participating in future meetings regarding these topics.

Through a collaborative process with both police unions, all of these policies were updated to fully incorporate the principles expressed in the "[8 Can't Wait](#)" campaign. These policies are posted on the Department's website. All officers received training on the updated policies and additional training is planned for the future. We are aggressively pursuing grant funding for training regarding cultural sensitivity and the [elimination of bias in policing](#).

We have actively participated in recent discussions, both internal and external, regarding renewed calls for police oversight and we look forward to continuing these important discussions.

In an effort to increase awareness regarding some of the Department's key programs and initiatives, which are related to the philosophies embodied by the Executive Order, I respectfully offer the following:

#### **POLICE-MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP**

- In 2003, the Framingham Police Department initiated a co-response police-mental health partnership known as the [Framingham Jail Diversion Program](#). This overwhelmingly successful program embeds highly trained mental health clinicians within the Department, so that they respond alongside Framingham Police Officers to police calls and those involving mental health issues. The on-scene presence of a clinician at many of our calls for service has been invaluable and this program has been successfully replicated in 15 communities in Massachusetts. Given the success and effectiveness of this program, the Department has expanded it to include a 4<sup>th</sup> clinician who is scheduled to start in September of this year. We have also expanded weekend coverage throughout the summer.

## **ACCREDITATION & POLICY UPDATES**

- The Framingham Police Department earned initial accreditation in 2005 and has been re-accredited every three years thereafter. In February of 2020 we were awarded our 6<sup>th</sup> re-accreditation by the [Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission](#). This independent commission assessed the Department's policies and standards, training, management, administration, operations, and support services, to ensure that the delivery of police services is at the highest level of professionalism. It confirms that the Department is following "best practices" as identified by this State Commission.
- Upon the release of the [President's Taskforce on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing Report](#), the Department's Senior Command Staff identified areas for improvement and new initiatives in the policies and procedures of the FPD. The goals were to build trust and legitimacy in the community and enhance the working environment that prioritized procedural justice, both internally and externally. We will continue our work in this area.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- We have trained a Department Member to provide in-house professional development on important topics such as procedural justice, racial bias, and equity in policing. He has instructed all officers on these topics and we are looking forward to expanding this training in the near future.
- The Department sponsored two officers to attend a week-long train the trainer conference on de-escalation techniques that can be used by patrol officers in conflict situations with citizens and suspects.

## **RECRUITMENT & DIVERSITY**

- In 2018, the Department produced a [recruitment video](#) in an effort to increase diversity and recruit qualified police officer candidates and we are updating our recruitment brochure.
- We are coming out of the outdated civil service system, which will allow us to increase diversity and attract highly qualified candidates by targeting our recruitment efforts. This important change will allow the Department to more efficiently and effectively hire and promote candidates. We will be able to recruit desirable candidates from other police departments as well as from criminal justice programs at colleges and universities. We are looking forward to working with the Massachusetts Association of Minority Law Enforcement Officers, the Massachusetts Association of Women in Law Enforcement, and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives to increase diversity.

## **TRANSPARENCY & COMMUNICATION**

- We increased data collection regarding use of force and we have posted the results of our most recent use of force audit on the Department's website. We will update our use of force analysis on an annual basis. We contribute our use of force data to the National Use of Force Data Collection Project operated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- We have updated our [policy on unbiased policing](#) to emphasize our commitment to unbiased, equitable treatment of all persons and to prohibit all biased based profiling. We have posted the statistical data regarding field encounters on our website and we will update this on an annual basis.
- Through the collective bargaining process, with both police unions, we have modified the contracts to reflect the best practices regarding the acceptance of citizen complaints. The contracts previously required the Department to accept only written citizen complaints against police officers. That prohibition has been removed and replaced with language that the US Department of Justice has identified as reflective of the best practice for accepting complaints against police officers.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- The Department began the process of restructuring the Safety Division to develop a Community Engagement Unit that will seek to enhance the culture of the organization by promoting outreach and education to community members.
- The Department has developed initiatives to strengthen community partnerships and community policing strategies, such as the Police Athletic League, Opioid Prevention Initiative, Rape Aggression Defense Training, and Policing the Teen Brain.
- The FPD developed the Framingham Youth Development Collaborative, an interagency group that came together to discuss local issues involving high-risk youth. The purpose of the FYDC is to reenergize, refocus and re-dedicate Framingham's commitment to positively developing and maintaining youth wellness, safety and health. The Collaborative includes representatives from agencies such as SMOC, Wayside, Advocates, the Framingham Public Schools, YMCA, the United Way, the Metrowest Health Foundation, and the Middlesex District Attorney's Office.
- The Department continues to partner with the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program. Students are hosted at the Framingham Police Station and members of the Department often participate as speakers and attend their graduation ceremonies.
- We recently joined "[Bigs in Blue](#)," which is a one-to-one mentoring program that connects youth with police in communities throughout our nation, building strong, trusting, lasting relationships.

- We have worked collaboratively with the leadership of the Framingham School Department to achieve more clarity regarding roles and functions of our School Resource Officers and our information sharing protocols.
- The Department will host a Framingham Youth Police Academy to foster engagement and understanding between the Department and Framingham’s youth.
- The Department previously hosted a Citizens’ Academy with an emphasis on participation by minority groups in the community. When Covid subsides, the Department looks forward to hosting another citizen’s police academy class.
- In 2015, the Department launched “Coffee with a Cop” and “Coffee with the Chief” initiatives in order to increase community engagement. Once the Covid pandemic subsides we will resume these meetings.
- We look forward to establishing a monthly community hour with an officer at the Callahan Center to assist senior citizens with potential safety and security issues as well as awareness of ongoing scams targeting the elderly.
- The Department is member of the Framingham Community Connections Coalition which is a comprehensive coalition formed to identify and address the unmet needs of children and their families in Framingham and the surrounding area regarding child abuse, neglect, substance abuse, and other social problems.
- The Department established a reading program where officers read to students and we look forward to resuming this program in the future.
- We look forward to making better use of the Department’s website and social media to inform the public on efforts and initiatives as well as statistics, policies, and reports.
- We are exploring and investigating the possibility of equipping officers with body-worn cameras.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION OF FRAMINGHAM POLICE OFFICER UNION’S SUGGESTIONS**

- As soon as staffing allows, we will implement a Problem Oriented Policing (POP) unit. This new unit will allow the Department to more effectively address a broad range of problems with an understanding that our function is not simply to enforce the law, but to deal with problems effectively—ideally, by preventing them from occurring in the first place and by preventing them from reoccurring. This unit will deal with behavior health and neighborhood issues by applying proactive problem-solving approaches.
- We are expanding the Jail Diversion Program by hiring additional Clinicians as described above.

- The Department is aggressively exploring opportunities to provide reality based training, which uses simulations based on realistic situations which an officer might expect to encounter.

#### **FUTURE PLANS**

- With the appointment of our new Police Chief, the Department will update its strategic plan to prioritize training and recruitment of a diverse workforce that is reflective of the community. This plan will reflect the philosophy that police officers should first act as guardians as opposed to warriors.

The Framingham Police Department is made up of a professional and hardworking group of men and women who take their jobs seriously and strive for excellence. We are looking forward to building on our successes and strengthening our partnerships so that we are fully responsive to the community's needs and priorities. While we are extremely proud of the progress we have made in recent years, we continue to strive for improvement and we view reform as a "work in progress." We are firmly committed to increasing our community engagement efforts and we look forward to further conversations with the community.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Ronald S. Brandolini,*

Acting Chief of Police