



City of Sierra Madre Agenda Report

John Capoccia, Mayor
Gene Goss, Mayor Pro Tem
Rachelle Arizmendi, Council Member
Denise Delmar, Council Member
John Harabedian, Council Member

Nancy Shollenberger, City Clerk
Richard Mays, City Treasurer

TO: Honorable Mayor Capoccia and Members of the City Council

FROM: Elaine I. Aguilar, City Manager *EA*

INITIATED BY: Elisa C. Cox, Assistant City Manager *EC*
Larry Giannone, Public Safety Director *LG*

DATE: February 9, 2016

SUBJECT: Sierra Madre Law Enforcement Update

SUMMARY

The City of Sierra Madre currently has nine full-time vacancies in the Police Department. This report provides information about the current status of police services in the community, timing of the vacancies and possible causes, and what the City is doing to recruit new staff. Information is also provided regarding temporary patrol assistance while the City recruits and fills vacant positions in the Police Department.

ANALYSIS

Background

The Sierra Madre Police Department is budgeted for 20 full-time employees, including the Police Chief and Captain. In addition there are several part-time employees who compliment the full-time staff. Over the course of several months eight full-time employees (in addition to one previous vacancy), three part-time Community Service Officers, and one part-time Police Officer, have resigned. There is the possibility that the SMPD may lose a few more employees in the upcoming months.

Why are Employees Leaving?

Employees are leaving for a variety of reasons including retirement, opportunity to work for higher paying departments, and a perceived lack of job security in light of the scheduled decrease of the Utility Users Tax (UUT) and the pending revenue measure on the April ballot.

The timing for most of the resignations coincide with Budget reduction discussions associated with the decrease in the UUT and discussions regarding possible service level reductions, including the decision to further evaluate contracting with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Phase 2 Review) in October 2015. As shown in the chart

below, most resignations occurred after October 2015. Police Department employees sought employment opportunities elsewhere to ensure they would have a job and be able to care of their families.

Primary Title	Termination Date
Dispatcher	01/09/2016
Sergeant	01/04/2016
Sergeant	12/02/2015
Part-time Community Service Officer	11/25/2015
Police Officer	11/08/2015
Part-Time Police Officer	11/06/2015
Police Officer	11/02/2015
Part-time Community Service Officer	09/11/2015
Part-time Records Clerk	06/29/2015
Police Captain	05/16/2015
Dispatcher	05/02/2015
Police Officer	04/04/2015

Recruiting

The City filled the full-time Captain vacancy with an internal candidate, which moved the vacancy from Captain to Sergeant. The City has been successful in recruiting Dispatchers and currently has two in training and a third starting later this month. Unfortunately, there is only one Dispatcher that can currently train the new Dispatchers, therefore Police Officers are being pulled out of patrol to assist in training the new Dispatchers. It generally takes 16-20 weeks before a Dispatcher is able to work on his/her own.

The City has consistently had Police Officer vacancies since May 2014 (resulting from a combination of staff turnover and unsuccessful applicants). Unfortunately, the City has not been able to find enough candidates who are able to pass both the testing and background process. Historically, the City has struggled with recruiting Police Officers, primarily because of the City's lower salary schedule. Applicants tend to apply to departments that are better paying. The chart below illustrates that Sierra Madre's average base pay reported to the State Controller in 2014 was 20% below the average of our neighbors; the total reported compensation was 14% below average.

2014 Average Police Officer Compensation Reported to State Controller

City	Base Pay	Overtime & Other Pay	Total Wages	Retirement	Medical	Total Benefits	Total Comp
Arcadia	96,518	65,150	161,668	45,988	12,866	58,854	220,522
Monrovia	87,986	36,378	124,364	31,124	8,855	39,979	164,343
Pasadena	109,052	14,522	123,574	38,981	15,251	54,232	177,806
San Gabriel	79,015	35,854	114,869	35,727	16,834	52,561	167,430
San Marino	80,376	21,456	101,832	31,459	7,271	38,730	140,562
So. Pasadena	98,757	35,117	133,874	19,516	7,920	27,436	161,310
Mean Average	91,951	34,746	126,697	33,799	11,500	45,299	171,996
Sierra Madre	73,909	31,614	105,523	32,062	9,732	41,794	147,317
% Difference Below	20%	9%	17%	5%	15%	8%	14%

The chart above is the “average” pay and benefits for each of the cities’ Police Officer positions only, based on the State Controllers report. (To calculate the numbers for this chart, all of the “Police Officer” compensation numbers were added together and divided by the number of Officers. No other positions were included, such as: Sergeants, Lieutenants, etc.) There are other compensation studies that would provide more accurate data, but it was not possible to complete such a study in time for this report.

The chart below just lists the starting pay for Police Officer positions, for cities that are currently recruiting.

City / Police Officer	Advertised Starting Pay
Pasadena	\$75,670
Arcadia	\$71,400
Monrovia	\$69,552
San Marino	\$69,504
San Gabriel	\$66,060
Sierra Madre	\$53,221

To compound the City’s struggle in recruiting Police Officers, cities that had reduced hiring during the recession, began recruiting with the upturn of the economy and there are more positions available than in the recent years. Cities throughout the San Gabriel Valley are experiencing higher-than-normal turnover.

The City has been using part-time Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Officers to backfill through an agreement with LAPD for a number of years. The program was initially very successful during the Great Recession when LAPD had limited overtime shifts; however, as overtime has increased, the LAPD officers are not as available to fill-in. Nonetheless, the City has recently hired three additional part-time LAPD Officers; their current training and schedules will allow for them to assist two or three times a month. The new part-time officers are scheduled to start this month.

The City has hired a part-time retired Police Sergeant* to mainly focus on recruiting staff for the Police Department. One way is by working diligently with local police academies to hire new Police Recruits. Staff has visited multiple academies which has resulted in five applicants, all who graduate on or before May 3rd. Furthermore, for the first time in at least a decade, through the Recruit program, the City is offering to pay to put people through the Police Academy, in exchange for the Recruit to work for the City for three years after graduation. However, as you can see in the attached diagram, if the City hires a Recruit before he/she starts the Police Academy, it will take over a year before that employee is able to work on his/ her own. It generally takes Academy Graduates and lateral transfers 20 weeks before an employee can work on his/her own.

The City is currently publicly recruiting for Police Recruit, Police Lateral/Academy Graduate, part-time Community Services Officer, and part-time temporary Police Officer Retirees. As of February 4, 2016 there were a total of 178 submissions for Police Recruit, 114 of which have been approved for testing. Testing is scheduled at the end of this month. There are currently 18 applicants for the Police Officer Lateral / Academy Graduate position; testing will be scheduled once the City receives 25 applications. The City also has an internal recruitment open for Police Sergeants, testing will take place in March.

*It should be noted that the City is generally not permitted to hire CalPERS retired annuitants. However, the law has a few exceptions, one of which allows the City Council to appoint a retired annuitant for an interim or temporary basis to provide extra help during an emergency to prevent stoppage of public business or to perform work of limited duration, special projects, and have specialized skills required to perform the needed work. The City's current staffing shortage in the Police Department qualifies as an emergency. Under this clause the City is currently looking for qualified retired Police personnel to temporarily assist while the City recruits and trains full-time staff.

Who is Currently Patrolling the Streets?

The Sierra Madre Police Department is currently policing the City 24 hours a day, seven days a week with its current staff. Investigative and Management Staff are supplementing patrol operations as well as help from the part-time Officer pool. Full-time staff is having to sacrifice days off, scheduled vacations, and are picking up overtime shifts to ensure the community's safety. Although the current staff is managing to keep the community patrolled at this time, the current staffing model is not sustainable. In order to continue to provide patrol coverage 24/7 in town, as well as to ensure proper rest for the existing officers, staff is diligently working to find temporary assistance from another agency while the City rebuilds the Police Department.

Who could provide temporary assistance?

Staff originally reached out to the Cities of Arcadia and Monrovia to patrol the city from 6:00 pm to 6:00 am. Staff had a tentative agreement with the City of Arcadia, but due to

a recent up-tic in burglaries in Arcadia and the Arcadia PD not being fully staffed, the Arcadia City Council determined that they needed all of their available resources in their city. Staff contacted Arcadia first, because of their proximity and familiarity with Sierra Madre. Additionally Arcadia's Computer Aided Dispatch and Record Management Systems are the same as Sierra Madre's.

Staff has reached out to the cities of Monrovia, Irwindale, Azusa, South Pasadena, San Gabriel, and San Marino, and they are all facing Police Department staffing shortages and are unable to provide consistent coverage for the City of Sierra Madre. As the writing of this report, staff was still waiting to hear if the City of Pasadena could provide patrol services to the City of Sierra Madre.

Staff has contacted the Los Angeles Sherriff's Department (LASD), who is well equipped and prepared to provide this temporary service to cities in Los Angeles County. LASD was not staff's first call as the City Council had previously directed staff to work with LASD on a Phase 2 Review, as an alternative service provider should the City's General Fund Revenues decline to the point where the City could no longer offer in-house policing services. As a general business practice it would be better to keep the temporary staffing completely separate from the Phase 2 Review; however, the City's only option may be to have the LASD provide the temporary staffing. LASD is drafting a plan for Sierra Madre's services along with the cost for such services.

There are benefits of having LASD provide temporary staffing. Staff estimates that the City will need contracted services through March 2017 to recruit and properly train new personnel for dispatch and patrol deployment. (See the attached diagrams for the process of recruiting and hiring Department staff.) Though local chiefs might offer temporary assistance in the future; collectively they cannot provide the prolonged staffing the City needs.

The LASD Supplemental Service Contract will provide dedicated nighttime patrol coverage and would ensure that specific Deputies would be assigned to Sierra Madre during the contract period, and not just randomly selected Deputies. The Sheriff's contract is not subject to time constraints - the services can be provided for as long, or as short, as needed. Furthermore, in the event of an injury, sick call, traffic collision involving a Deputy, significant use of force, or a natural disaster, the Sheriff's contract will provide continued coverage in contrast to using local agencies' officers who could be pulled out of service, leaving the City short staffed.

Staff anticipates brining a Supplemental Service Contract for nighttime patrol, to the City Council for consideration at the February 23, 2016 meeting. At this time, the contract will most likely be with the Sheriff's Department.

PUBLIC NOTICE PROCESS

This item has been noticed through the regular agenda notification process. Copies of the report are available via the City's website at www.cityofsierramadre.com, at the City Hall public counter, and the Sierra Madre Public Library.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council receive and file this informational report.

Attachments (3):

1. Hiring Process per POST Requirements for Lateral Officer
2. Hiring Process per POST Requirements for Entry Level Officer (Recruit)
3. Hiring Process for Retired Officer(s) with Current POST Cert.





