

**Charlotte Police
Department**

Memo

To: Mayor Armitage, City Council Members
From: Chief Brentar
Date: October 19th, 2020
Re: Filling Vacant Police Officer Position

On July 13th, 2020 a position within the Police Department became open with the resignation of a probationary officer. Due to the hiring freeze instituted by Council on June 8th, 2020, I am requesting that you allow me to fill this open position.

As you may recall during the recent budget discussions that Council voted to not eliminate a position within the Police Department in order to maintain the School Resource Officer position with Charlotte Public Schools for the 2020/2021 fiscal year budget. Since we have been budgeted for this position already, I am respectfully asking that you allow me to fill this position.

I have analyzed our schedules for the period of July 1st, 2020 through September 30th, 2020 looking at our manpower numbers. Remember, per union contract there must be 2 officers on duty at all times (this does include the Sergeants counting as one of those officers).

July- Dayshift- 18 of 31 shifts were at minimum, or **58%** of the time.

Nightshift- 20 of 31 shifts were at minimum, or **64%** of the time.

Relief shift- Usually works 12pm-12am to cover the busier times- 7 of 31 shifts, or **22%**.

****Note- This is with the School Officer working a regular shift to help cover****

August- Dayshift- 9 of 31 shifts were at minimum, or **29%** of the time.

Nightshift- 11 of 31 shifts were at minimum, or **35%** of the time.

Relief shift- 10 of 31 shifts to cover busier times, or **32%** of the time.

September- Dayshift- 19 of 30 shifts were at minimum, or **63%** of the time.

Nightshift- 16 of 30 shifts were at minimum, or **53%** of the time.

Relief Shift- 9 of 30 shifts to cover busier time, or **30%** of the time.

****Note- This is with the School Officer working in the school. ****

During these months our department was dispatched to **2074 calls for service**. We only had 12 officers available to take these calls as one (1) officer is in the FTO program who doesn't count as a scheduled officer and this excludes myself and the detective who does not work the road. That is an average of **172 calls per officer during this time period alone**. This doesn't take into account the required paperwork or the necessary follow up that needs to be done in order to complete the call. Sometimes it takes days/weeks/months to complete these cases. The fatal crash at CB's bar is a prime example as our detective is still investigating this case from August 8th.

Our statistics for Part I crimes (most violent) for the months of July 2020, August 2020 & September 2020 are up from 2019. **July's Part I crimes are up 4%, August's are up 11% and September's are up 27% compared to 2019**. Our detective has already taken the same amount of Criminal Sexual Conduct cases this year as he did last year and we still have 2 plus months left to surpass those numbers.

In essence, what this means is that we have become a reactive department as we don't have adequate time to address other concerns that our residents have (speeding, quality of life issues, zoning, etc.) in a timely manner. We will address these issues when we can but they get pushed off as we have to prioritize our call load (life over property).

The other issue that arises from being this busy is **officer burn out**. You cannot keep asking these officers over and over to perform at that high of a level and not expect them to become burned out by doing so. Other major issues will start to develop not only in their professional lives but their personal lives as well. Divorce and alcohol/substance abuse are just a few examples of what can and will happen when officers get burned out. This then has a direct effect on their performances when they are here working. If you want them to perform at their very best then they need help with more staffing to lessen the workload.

On top of all they are doing we then have to fit training (some of which is mandatory) in somewhere as well. The training of officers is absolutely necessary to keep them apprised of law changes, tactics, equipment, etc. so that they can do their jobs to the best of their abilities.

This then brings me to the topic of overtime. So far for fiscal year 2020 (July-September) the amount of overtime we have paid puts us on track to be around the maximum amount of overtime that has been budgeted. There is no guarantee though as we can't predict what types of cases we will have going forward. With limited staffing we also may run into budget issues if officers are off for any extended amount of time (if someone contracts COVID, injury, etc.). With the amount of work they are doing and the propensity for burn out to occur, the amount of sick time the officers may use most likely will go up which causes more overtime since we are at minimum staffing the majority of the time. More officers will equal less overtime being paid to cover sick time, vacations, training, etc. when offices are off.

If you were to allow me to fill this open position immediately it still won't help out on the schedule until 4 months after someone is hired as they have to go through the Field Training Program in order to work on their own. If this position is not able to be filled, I will be forced to take the School Resource Officer out of the school to help cover shifts. This will then reduce the amount that the school will reimburse us for that position currently and then eliminate any future reimbursement for the school year.

School Resource Officer Stats

During the month of September 2020, Officer Carroll handled a total of 28 incidents as the SRO. They are as follows: 2 – Sexual Assaults, 1 – Non-Agg. Assault, 2 – Intimidation/Threats, 1 – Public Peace, 5 – Delinquent Minors, 1 – Parking Violation, 8 – Suspicious Situations, 1 – Suicide Attempt, 5 – Assist Citizens, 1 – Assist Other Agency, and 1 – Assist ECSD.

These statistics are not all encompassing of what Officer Carroll does in the schools. He assists the staff with many other tasks throughout the day and is there to be a resource for the children to go to if needed. He helps conduct drills (lockdown, fire, etc.) so that the staff can be better prepared in the event of an emergency. He does this at all buildings throughout the district. If he is not there to handle these calls, then the dayshift officers will have to handle these as well.

I am therefore requesting that you allow me to fill this position. Should you have any questions please let me know.