

## Agenda

### Mayor's Task Force on Re-imagining Public Safety

7 p.m. January 14, 2021

[Town of Hillsborough YouTube channel](#)

Due to current public health concerns, the Mayor's Task Force on Re-imagining Public Safety will conduct this meeting remotely using Zoom. The public can view and listen to the meeting via live streaming video on the town's YouTube channel.

Compliance with the American with Disabilities Act interpreter services and/or special sound equipment is available on request. If you are disabled and need assistance with reasonable accommodations, call the Town Clerk's Office at 919-296-9443.

1. **Roll call**
2. **Audience comments not related to the printed agenda**
3. **Welcome**
4. **Items for decision**  
Minutes: Dec. 10, 2020 meeting
5. **Presentation: Mental health calls and the Hillsborough Police Department**  
Chief Hampton will give an overview of
  - A. Local data regarding mental health-related calls
  - B. Anecdotal examples of these types of calls
  - C. Training received by HPD officers to assist in these calls
  - D. Opportunity for task force members Q & A
6. **Items for discussion**  
Articles on alternative mental health response
7. **Set date for next meeting**
8. **Adjourn**

## Minutes

### Mayor's Task Force on Re-imagining Public Safety

7 p.m. Dec. 10, 2020

[Town of Hillsborough YouTube channel](#)

Present: Mayor Jenn Weaver, Marina Alcazar, Judit Alvarado, Sujata Bijou, Patricia Harrison, Chloe Johnson, Rod Jones, Jason Knapp, Hathaway Pendergrass, David "Hooper" Schultz, and Allison Zirkel

Absent: Shannon Blue, Keith Cook, Tracey Little, Marc Xavier

Staff: Police Management Analyst Eli Valsing, Chief of Police Duane Hampton

#### Opening of the meeting

Mayor Jenn Weaver opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

#### 1. Public charge

The mayor did not read the public charge.

#### 2. Audience comments not related to the printed agenda

None.

#### 3. Agenda changes and approval

None.

#### 4. Welcome and introduction from Mayor Weaver

##### A. Why are we here?

Mayor Jenn Weaver welcomed everyone and thanked them for participating. Weaver as background shared and reviewed the Resolution Denouncing the Killing of George Floyd and Outlining Next Steps for Dismantling Systemic Racism in Town Government and Establishing Community Accountability for Police Department passed by the Town of Hillsborough Board of Commissioners June 8, 2020. Weaver emphasized the actionable items of the resolution. Items 6-8 direct the town manager and the chief of police to propose opportunities for public input from residents related to race in local law enforcement, to propose options to engage the board and Hillsborough residents in a review of policies and procedures, and to present options for a community policing review board. Weaver said that the task force was formed to contribute to the process of addressing these steps of the Resolution. Chief Hampton, Town Manager Petersen, and Weaver in the months following the passing of the resolution spent time listening to the community and researching examples of policing review boards from other communities. They concluded that community input would be very important in deciding how this sort of review board might look like in Hillsborough.

##### B. What is our purpose as a task force?

Police Management Analyst Eli Valsing  
127 N. Churton St., PO Box 429, Hillsborough, NC 27278  
919-296-9540 | [eli.valsing@hillsboroughnc.gov](mailto:eli.valsing@hillsboroughnc.gov)  
[www.hillsboroughnc.gov](http://www.hillsboroughnc.gov) | @HillsboroughGov

To deeply consider what it means for every member of our community to feel safe, to take advantage of this unique opening in the conversation to re-imagine public safety for Hillsborough and help define what that means. After exploring this topic this task force may make recommendations to the Hillsborough Board of Commissioners, which could include policy or budget recommendations as well as recommendations on how to set up and operate a police review board.

C. What is our purpose for tonight?

Weaver said that the purpose for this meeting is for the task force members to get to know each other by introducing themselves and discussing their ideas for task force success in an effort to learn the purpose of the task force and to build trust. In addition, the meeting will be a chance to share ideas about meeting norms and the task force structure.

**5. Introductions**

Each task force member, the Mayor, and staff took a few minutes to introduce themselves by answering the following questions: What brings me to this task force? Who am I accountable to? What is something about yourself no one would know?

**6. Group Norms**

Mayor Weaver suggested the topic of re-imaging public safety is directly tied to the topic of racial justice and could be considered a Crucial Conversation, which is a school of thought that acknowledges important topics that can be fraught with conflict and emotion in conversation, and yet are very important to have. Weaver shared a draft document with a list of norms, or rules, intended to help keep the group together and moving forward. Task force members had the opportunity to suggest additional norms for the list. Weaver will revise the list to include the members' contributions and distribute it to the group in advance of the next meeting.

**7. What would success look like for this task force?**

Mayor Weaver asked each task force member to respond to 2 questions. 1. In your wildest dreams, what does a community that is safe for everyone look like? 2. What is a smaller scale success that the task force could accomplish that would allow you to feel you had not wasted your time by participating?

**8. Who else do we need to hear from (subject matter experts)?**

Weaver proposed that this agenda item would be managed in the next couple of weeks outside of the meeting. She will be in touch with task force members with a specific question as to the types of data or information they might need going forward.

**9. Next meeting date and time**

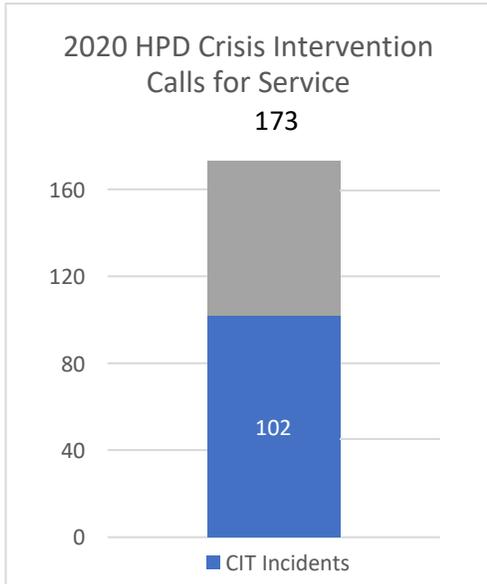
7 - 9 p.m. January 14

**10. Adjournment**

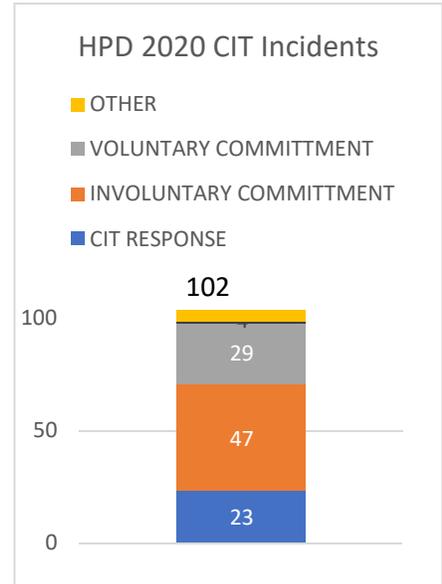
Mayor Weaver adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

## Hillsborough Police Department Crisis Intervention Response - 2020

Police officers frequently interact with individuals in mental health crisis, in part due to the decline of public mental health budgets. In 2020, the Hillsborough Police Department (HPD) received 173 calls for service (911 calls) related to mental health, overdose, suicide attempts, or involuntary commitment (IVC). These calls resulted in 102 interactions with individuals in crisis, or 1 every 3.6 days. In 2019 the HPD filed 72 incident reports as a result of crisis intervention calls, putting the rate of increase from 2019 to 2020 at 38%.

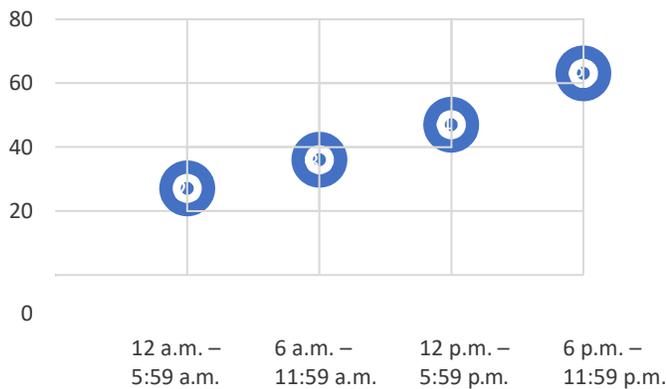


The 102 interactions are documented with incident reports and assigned an offense code. Of these incidents 69% result in the subject being hospitalized, either voluntarily or involuntarily.



When reviewed by the time of day and the days of the week, we see a mostly even distribution, with the number of cases being higher in the afternoons and evening hours. The law enforcement crisis intervention model is most successful if community partners are available for referrals and this analysis helps to understand the necessity of 24/7 availability on the part of community partners.

HPD, 2020 Crisis Calls for Service by Time of Day



HPD, 2020 Crisis Calls for Service by Day of Week



Crisis calls include a range of situations and they frequently result in subjects being transported to the hospital. Typically, a family member or friend is concerned for the subject and calls 911 to enlist assistance with erratic or self-harming behavior. A few examples from 2020 follow:

Example 1. A woman called 911 to ask assistance because she was having suicidal thoughts. She was at her daughter's apartment but was not able to tell the dispatcher exactly where the apartment was. After searching based on vague descriptions for 25 minutes the daughter called and gave the exact location. She was transported to the hospital for evaluation and treatment voluntarily.

Example 2. Officers respond to a call regarding a young man with mental issues carrying an axe. When they arrive, he gives them the ax and does not seem violent or likely to harm himself, although he does seem to be in crisis. The officers tell his family the process for obtaining an IVC, which they do the same day. Officers locate the young man under the I-85 bridge and transport him to UNC-Chapel Hill.

Example 3. A suicidal subject is reported, and officers find him. He says he is going to jump off the I85 S. Churton bridge and the only way they can stop him is to shoot him. One of the officers continues to talk with him and he eventually allows them to transport him to the hospital. Given the immediacy of the situation it qualifies as an emergency custody, although no force was needed. Commitment papers are acquired after transport.

Example 4. Officers respond to a suicide call at the methadone clinic on Mayo Street. The subject had been discharged from the hospital and sent to the clinic to get his dose of methadone. Staff at the clinic was familiar with the subject and said they could not provide the methadone due to a known pattern of repeat overdose on methadone, or other non-prescribed medicines. Officers advised staff that without an IVC they had no authority over the subject, and it did not seem there was probable cause for an IVC, due to the subject being sober at the time. Subject agreed to go to the hospital voluntarily because that was the only option to obtain methadone, officers provided transportation for the subject, and clinic staff went to the hospital to explain the concern for a repeat of established behavior patterns.

#### *Use of Force*

In 2020, the HPD used force in 6 of the crisis intervention responses, which is a rate of 6%. All 6 incidents resulted in involuntary commitment, 2 of them were juvenile subjects, 2 of them were calls to assist another agency, and for 5 of them EMS was also at the scene. In the incident not involving EMS, child protective services were contacted for case information.

1. Call for assistance to EMS for attempted suicide. Subject did not want to accompany EMS to hospital. In the process of handcuffing subject kicked and bit, and reasonable force was used to gain control. Subject also kicked as EMS attempted to put their shoes on.
2. Call regarding subject passed out on bench, after huffing from a can and vomiting. Earlier in the day this same subject had been trespassed from Walmart due to passing out in the bathroom. Subject wakes up. EMS and Fire arrive. EMS wanted to transport to hospital considering this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> incident in one day. Subject tries to flee on bicycle, is stopped, brought to knees in order to handcuff, and transported to hospital on emergency commitment.
3. Called to home for IVC order. Mother met outside and warned her son/subject might flee or fight. Officers explain to subject they will take him to hospital. As they attempt to put him in handcuffs he flees, is stopped, brought to the ground, and handcuffed. After being placed in patrol car he bangs his head on back of car and tries to strike the cage. EMS arrives. Subject tries to remove handcuffs, injuring himself. Kicks door of car. Spits on Officer. Spit hood placed on subject. Subject restrained on stretcher. Subject has ups and downs throughout and was removed from all restraints after arriving at hospital.
4. IVC papers, taken out by mother, received for subject who had been reported earlier in the day as highly intoxicated. When officers respond, he is passed out asleep on the floor. EMS responds as well. After some time, he wakes up and starts eating food that is on the stove. Officers explain he will be transported

to the hospital and ask him to stop eating so they can take him. He refuses. Subject resists and is taken to the ground to handcuff and is transported to the hospital on a stretcher.

5. Respond to wellbeing check for Airbnb tenant, called in by owner. Subject was locked in bathroom, taking a bath, and huffing canned air. Officers enter and ask subject to stop huffing. Subject does not and officers take the can. EMS called and arrives. In the past 2 months same subject had been involuntarily committed by 2 other agencies. EMS clears subject of needing medical attention. Other tenant reports behavior was ongoing all day. Subject is downstairs and starts huffing again. Subject resists while officers take can and handcuff subject. Subject transported to magistrate's office for IVC request, which is granted. Hospital staff say subject should not be brought in for huffing again. Subject has not sought help after previous incidents. Subject is cited for inhaling a toxic substance and is transported back home.
6. Respond to a disturbance. The subject is juvenile and in a parked car with 2 adults. Another adult is on porch of house and is subject's legal guardian. Subject wants to go with woman but is told it is not possible. Subject gets out of the vehicle, is angry, throwing his shoes and yelling. Attempts to leave on a bike and is blocked. Gets a dog on a leash with aim of attacking officers and is forced to let go of leash. Gets a laptop and yells song lyrics, it is taken away. Gets broom stick and is hitting a pole with it. Officers assist subject to sit on porch. Subject asks officers to shoot them and wants a knife to stab himself. IVC papers are obtained. Meanwhile subject calms down and is transported to hospital without further complaint.

### *Training*

Law enforcement training that focuses on dealing with people in crisis is offered in the basic academy, and post-academy as part of some annual in-service training, and in specialized courses.

- In the basic academy there is a 24-hour Individuals with Mental Illness and Developmental Difficulties course that specifically address interacting with these populations. In addition, similar themes are woven into blocks on use of force and responding to victims and the public, as well as other blocks.
- Annual in-service topics are set by the State. The topic areas change from year to year, but typically include a block on mental illness response every year or every other year.
- One focused tool is a course called Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). CIT is a week -long class offered through a partnership of law enforcement, community colleges and mental health providers. The course involves hands-on scenario training and focuses on resources and escalation. This course is typically only offered 1-2 times a year, and we can typically only get 1-2 officers into each session. At this time, 68% (13/19) of our patrol officers have completed this training. Our goal is to have 110% of our staff CIT certified.