

Houston Area Police Chief's Association

March 2023
Volume 21, Issue 3

HAPCA Newsletter

Next Monthly Meeting

March 28, 2023



Crime Stoppers


3001 Main Street, Houston Texas

Tuesday March 28, 2023 11:30 am

March Guest Speaker

Chief Will Johnson


Our February guest speaker will be Chief Will Johnson. Chief Johnson is currently the Chief for the BNSF Railway. Chief Johnson retired from the Arlington PD after serving a 23-year-career with the last 7 years as Chief. Chief Johnson is running for the 4th vice-president position of the International Association of Chief's of Police. Chief Johnson will share his vision and goals for the future of policing and how the IACP can assist as we navigate the current challenges in policing.



”

Will is a dedicated public servant and thoughtful police leader. His vision, wisdom, and unflinching integrity will serve all law enforcement in this important position.

Houston Area Police Chief's Association

ENDORSEMENT FOR WILL D. JOHNSON
IACP 4th Vice President  @Will4IACP

Please RSVP on-line for the March

HAPCA meeting.

DOOR CODE will be 31980#

Calendar of Upcoming Training and Events

April 11, 2023 8 am—5 pm,

Female Enforcers—Advanced mental, Physical and Tactical Skills

Harris County Sheriff's Office

Training Academy \$179

April 19, 2023 9 am—4 pm (EST)

Introduction to Interviewing and Interrogation for New Detectives

Zoom Training \$175 Group Viewing allowed

www.llrmi.com

May 16—17, 2023

Blue to Gold

May 16 Advanced Search and Seizure

May 17 De-escalation/Intervention

Lufkin, TX

More training opportunities at:

www.texaspolicechiefs.org

www.hccp2.com/trainingcalendar

<http://texaspolice trainers.com>

2023 Executive Board

- Chief Clemente Rodriguez, President, crodr@rice.edu
- Chief Kirk Riggs, Vice-President
kriggs@jerseyvillagetx.com
- Chief Paul Cordova, Secretary, pscordova@aldineisd.org
- Chief Jeff Bert, Treasurer
jberr@tomballtx.gov
- Chief Ray Schultz, Past-President, Rschultz@mvpdtx.org
- TPCA Liaison, Chief S. Cook
- Legislative Committee, Chief J. Bert



WWW.HAPCA.ORG

Request for assistance. The TPCA is still looking for donations of items to be raffled off to support the TPCA Fallen Officers Fund. If you can help, please contact any one of the Association Board Members.
Thank You

TPCA Foundation Prayer Breakfast and Silent Auction

RE: TPCA Foundation Prayer Breakfast
TPCA Foundation Silent Auction

Dear Chief:

Our April 4 – 6, 2023, annual conference is rapidly approaching. This year we again have an opportunity to support the Texas Police Chiefs Association Foundation (TPCAF) by recruiting organizations to sponsor a table at the 7:30 a.m., Wednesday, April 5, Prayer Breakfast at the Fort Worth Convention Center in Fort Worth. Contributors are asked to pay a fee of \$1,000 to sponsor a table of eight individuals.

The Prayer Breakfast has been a popular venue over the years. This year's event speaker is Sheriff Bill Waybourn, Tarrant County Sheriff. I am asking you to solicit businesses in your area to participate in this endeavor by sponsoring a table. Sponsors will be individually recognized both at the breakfast and in the program.

Money from sponsors will be used throughout the year to financially assist families of law enforcement officers in Texas that have lost their lives in the line of duty, support the Accreditation Program, and our low-cost specialized training endeavors. It is possible to designate contributions solely for survivor benefits should someone desire to do so.

We will again sponsor a Silent Auction at this year's conference. Once again, your help is needed to make this a success. For this event I am asking you to solicit a wide variety of either service or retail items, i.e., gift cards, passes, etc., having a minimum value of \$50.00. Remember, the items must be of use or interest to people around the state. You can bring the item(s) with you to the conference, or we can make arrangements to have the donation(s) picked up ahead of time if that is more convenient. Please notify me of any auction items you acquire so the required paperwork can be completed prior to the auction date. If each of us provides at least one item we can count this as a successful fundraising effort.

Thank you for your help in finding committed sponsors and auction items and making this year's fundraising events even more meaningful.

Sincerely,

Chief Barbara J. Childress (Ret.)
TPCA Foundation Chair

Remember: The Texas Police Chiefs Association Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) organization

Corporate Sponsors of the Month



Off Duty Management is dedicated to supporting and protecting law enforcement agencies, their officers, and community businesses by offering a fully customizable, centrally administered no-cost solution that manages all aspects of off-duty programs and keeps agencies in full control mitigating risk and liability.



IT Lift is a highly skilled and focused team of business leaders, developers, and marketing specialists that drive results for small to mid-size organizations who struggle with tasks normally done by dedicated IT departments. We streamline and automate processes so they can be managed by internal staff for a fraction of the cost of traditional IT Services.



REPORTING ACCURATE TRAFFIC STOP DATA: EVIDENCE-BASED BEST PRACTICES

ONLINE LIVE-STREAM

Wednesday, April 19 | 8:00am - 4:00pm, Central



LIVE, Virtual Workshop

Diversity Awareness Training for Police Departments/Law Enforcement

Date: Thursday, April 19th
Time: 12 p.m. - 1 p.m. EST
Format: Zoom

Ranked No. 1 in the country in law enforcement diversity training

Below are the topics of discussion in this live webinar:

1. Addressing Implicit Bias Inside and Outside of the Department
2. Seeing How Stereotypes Impact the Relationships with Colleagues and the Public
3. Effectively Engaging Diverse Communities

Presenter:

Dr. Sonel Y. Shropshire
President, The Academic Network, Inc.
www.theacademicnetwork.net

With over 23 years of experience working with over 2,000 police departments, Dr. Shropshire is one of the leading experts on diversity awareness trainings.

Registration Cost: \$99
Limited virtual seating.

Please register via email. An official invoice, with secured payment link, will be issued in securing your virtual seat. A receipt will be immediately provided for your records.



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PRESENTS

Live Interactive Webinars with Randy Means

Strategic Planning

For Heightening Overall Individual & Organizational Professionalism in a Law Enforcement Agency

Advanced Command Staff Training

Strategic planning makes possible the otherwise impossible. Most agree that strategic planning is a good idea but many do not appreciate what distinguishes strategic planning from ordinary, good planning. A broad long-term plan can achieve major goals that would be difficult or impossible to do in a shorter term and without associated planning and scaling. It also allows additional definition and communication of agency values, vision, mission, goals and objectives to both internal and external stakeholders.

The ability to blend agency goals with a realistic projection of available resources and potential liabilities allows formulation of an integrated response to a predicted future environment. Scaling of project dynamics can make the project fit the organization and its environment. This one-day webinar will identify criteria for defining and achieving vastly improved overall individual and organizational professionalism ... and associated outcomes.

The program will include detailed recommendations for creating an evaluation system that will actually work and fulfill its purpose - recognizing outstanding performance and remediating performance problems.

Strategic Planning

March 30, 2023

9:00AM - 4:30PM ET

The city of Wichita released a final report that offers a dire portrait of Kansas' largest police department

Mar 11, 2023



By Chance Swaim, Matthew Kelly, and Michael Stavola
The Wichita Eagle

WICHITA, Kan. — A third-party assessment of the Wichita Police Department found a cop culture described by officers as "broken," "dysfunctional" and "horrible."

The city of Wichita released a final report from Jensen Hughes on Friday afternoon that offers a dire portrait of Kansas' largest police department. The report shows discord within the ranks, a lack of direction, regular encounters with biased coworkers and unusual loopholes in the Fraternal Order of Police contract that allow officers to avoid discipline.

In the rare case an officer gets suspended, the report found, Wichita's FOP contract allows officers to stay on the streets by trading in bonuses and vacation time. To improve accountability, the report recommends a renegotiation of the union contract.

The national police consulting firm Jensen Hughes was hired by the city to conduct an operational assessment of the culture of the Wichita Police Department in the aftermath of a mishandled internal investigation into text messages that were racist, sexist, homophobic and casual about violence against civilians. The messages were shared by members of the SWAT team, including Wichita police officers and firefighters and Sedgwick County deputies.

The report found about 35% of surveyed officers indicated they had seen biased behavior within the organization, according to the report.

"If culture is defined as common norms, values, beliefs and behaviors of individuals within an organization, the current internal culture in WPD is unhealthy, and at times toxic," the report found.

The firm found members of "WPD care about their community and believe the community supports them."

"While officers want to embrace a community policing philosophy, due to perceptions that they do not have enough staff members assigned to patrol, officers are concerned with their inability to respond effectively to calls for service," the report says.

The report aims to provide a detailed assessment of the management and organization; promotional processes; organizational culture; code of conduct; internal affairs and discipline; best practices for citizen review boards; and relationships between the Wichita Police Department, human resources and the city's law department.

"The difficulty in the development of a positive work culture likely stems from an organizational inability to harness the individual strengths of the members of the department to work for a common purpose and the lack of a common set of organizational values," the report said.

"Members of WPD speak openly about their unhappiness working within the agency," the report says, "yet they still express their desire to remain in policing, causing some to seek employment elsewhere."

Fewer than one in five officers surveyed by Jensen Hughes said they strongly support the current direction of the department, and "it appears that the lack of support may come from not knowing if a clear and specific agency direction exists."

Many officers struggled to describe the overall culture, the report says.

"When individuals were able to come up with responses, they often used terms such as 'broken,' 'dysfunctional,' 'horrible' and 'negative' in their descriptions," the report says. "These words are associated with feelings of fear, uncertainty and mistrust."

Jensen Hughes issued several key findings, including that the "current organizational environment has diminished the level of trust between rank-and-file officers and command staff," a finding that comports with findings of a focus group study by Wichita State University reported by The Eagle in January 2022.

Part of the problem has been "the lack of transparency and communication in decision-making" by Wichita police department leaders, Jensen Hughes found.

Surveys and interviews with members of the department "reveal rank-and-file officers perceive matters relating to disciplinary proceedings, promotional processes or adherence to standards of ethical behavior are not always handled in a fair and equitable manner," the report says. "This may be the result of unclear policy, misapplication of policy, or the lack of transparency and communication in decision-making."

Jensen Hughes called on the city manager to empower new Chief Joe Sullivan to create an assistant chief position and choose his own executive team. "Since the new chief has been affiliated with WPD for a short time, he may come to learn that individuals assigned to these positions may not be the right person at the right time to assist him in achieving his desired vision for the agency," the report says.

"Leading an organization the size of the WPD cannot be done alone. It is essential that the chief be provided the ability to surround himself with competent supporters to champion his efforts."

LOOKING FOR DIRECTION

Jensen Hughes found the department has many individual officers looking for direction.

"The ranks of the department are filled with willing, capable individuals that lack a sense of direction that a clear mission focus and strategic plan will provide," the report says. "The creation of a values-centered mission with achievable, actionable goals will assist with reorienting individual perspectives toward a shared sense of purpose.

"Without a plan, there is no consensus on what community policing is, how it should be implemented, who is responsible for it or how outcomes should be measured."

The report is unforgiving in its assessment of the community policing strategy, characterizing it as incoherent and calling for a written substitute that clearly outlines expectations.

"Although efforts to assign officers to community policing activities may be laudable, WPD's community policing efforts do not appear to be guided by a coherent department-wide strategy, and those officers assigned to community policing reportedly rarely respond to calls for service," the report states.

It recommends pulling sworn officers off of administrative work that civilian staff could handle and increasing patrol officers' involvement in community policing.

Another issue highlighted in the report is "numerous examples" of crime victims and witnesses waiting days for a response from police detectives who generally only work daytime hours during the week. It recommends assigning night detectives to address the lag time, which "erodes public confidence, hinders cooperation during investigations and reduces investigative efficiency."

OFFICER ACCOUNTABILITY

Jensen Hughes applauded some of Wichita's recent efforts to increase police accountability, including a move to allow elected officials to appoint members to the Citizens Review Board. Previously, the city manager appointed the entire board.

But there's still a lot of room for improvement, including the amount of information that is publicly disclosed about complaints against officers and internal investigations, the report found.

The summaries of internal investigations and discipline provided to the CRB by police "continues to lack sufficient detail for members to assess the seriousness of the complaint and to determine if it falls within one of their focus areas," the report says. "The WPD should provide a more robust summary of the origin and nature of the complaint or include a copy of the completed complaint form."

To improve, the city should invest in the CRB, the report says.

"The CRB needs a dedicated budget and staff person so it can expand its community outreach efforts; develop its public reports; host its own virtual platform to stream its monthly meetings; and maintain its own website for its minutes, agenda, public reports and other relevant information to fulfill its mission."

Other city decisions send the wrong message, Jensen Hughes found.

Under the city's FOP contract, it pays each officer a conduct bonus of \$4,160 on average, for not violating city policies.

"If every sergeant, detective and officer is eligible, the cost of these payments to the taxpayer is \$2.7 million (each year)," the report said. "This is a large sum of pay for expected behavior."

When they are disciplined, Wichita officers can also use their conduct pay to cut time from suspensions. For every two months of their conduct bonus they give up, they can knock one day off their suspension, meaning "they could nullify a six-day suspension and remain at work" while still being eligible to work overtime and outside uniformed-security jobs.

They can also trade in up to 10 vacation days to avoid being suspended.

Jensen Hughes recommends renegotiating the union contract to get rid of those carve-outs.

"Removing the provisions that allow trading vacation for suspension, offering Code of Conduct Standard Differential Pay and the ability to forfeit that pay in lieu of a suspension should seriously be considered for renegotiation," the report says. "While these articles may seem to benefit the individual, they contribute to the overall feelings of unfairness and inequity within the disciplinary process that many employees claim exist in the department."

INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS

Before an officer is questioned about any alleged wrongdoing, they get an advantage that's unavailable to civilians under investigation by police.

They get to review the entire investigative file, which the report says allows them to "construct a story that may discredit or nullify any of the evidence."

This provision is included in the latest Fraternal Order of Police contract that was approved unanimously by the Wichita City Council in December 2021, despite concerns that the contract could protect bad cops.

The file usually has the complaint, witness statements and other evidence that may be used against them, the report says.

It's "not a common practice" to allow officers access to that file, the report found, and "viewing the file could taint the testimony given by the employee during the administrative interview."

The report broaches concerns within the department that favoritism runs rampant in the internal investigation of complaints against officers.

"The perception is if an officer is part of the 'in crowd' the complaint will be handled as a minor complaint and sent back to the bureau. If not, the complaint is considered more serious and handled by the [Professional Standards Bureau]," the report states, going on to say officers believe that if PSB investigates them, "they are going to find them responsible for something, even if it was not related to the initial complaint."

Jensen Hughes recommends clarifying policy on what complaint types are appropriate to be investigated by the PSB.

MANAGEMENT CONFLICTS

The report also mentions low confidence in the working relationship between the department and the City Manager's Office. Just 4% of surveyed officers "feel that the organization has a good working relationship with the City Manager's Office," the report says.

Communication problems between the department, the city manager's office, the law department and human resources have "created an atmosphere of mistrust and lack of coordination."

The conflict created by the lack of communication "erodes the public trust not only in the police department but in City governance in general," Jensen Hughes wrote.

Some officers complained about Mayor Brandon Whipple and City Manager Robert Layton wanting "to have more control of the police department than any other department in this city" and that "they feel like they do not have the support of the mayor or city manager."

Jensen Hughes noted that nearly 40% of the city's general fund budget goes to the police department, "by far representing the largest cost of any Wichita department."

"Additionally, policing comes with higher liability risks than other municipal functions, and the public is much more aware of issues in policing and instances of misconduct by officers than it is of issues for other city departments and their employees," the report says. "For those reasons, both the city manager and the chief of police should be working collaboratively to ensure public safety and to hold the police department and employees accountable to the public."

Layton — who creates the budget — and the City Council — which approves it, don't have direct control of the department's operations.

Officers "clearly indicated they would like to see the city manager, mayor, local prosecutors and WPD be on the same page regarding matters involving the police department," the report says. "

The report points out that the chief of police ultimately works at the direction of the city manager but said the "importance of this relationship cannot be understated."

When it comes to decisions about employee discipline, Jensen Hughes says the city manager and police chief should do everything they can to minimize outside influence, such as that alleged in a lawsuit by former Chief Ramsay and his leadership team. "If allegations of unfair practices or interventions are made, they should be immediately investigated."

The report states that employee discipline decisions should not generally be made in public forums but that for situations that do require disclosure, the police chief and city manager should reach a consensus on methodology that "does not present discord between city officials."

BIAS IN POLICING

The top-to-bottom look at problems in the department was ordered by the city after an Eagle investigation into a text message scandal.

In the messages, officers sent a photoshopped image of a naked Black man sitting on the head of George Floyd, claimed affiliation with the extremist group the "Three Percenters" and talked about beating and shooting people.

The only officer originally suspended was one who called former Chief Gordon Ramsay a tool.

Multiple officers were suspended after the city reopened the case after the Eagle's story. The messages involved 14 Wichita officers, most who have served on the elite SWAT team, three deputies and two firefighters.

"Due to the public scrutiny of WPD in the wake of the SWAT texting scandal, a particular interest of the assessment is to determine the presence of biased attitudes towards members of other groups (racial, ethnic, gender, gender-identity, sexual orientation and politically) within the WPD," the report says.

About 35% of surveyed officers reported indicated they had seen that type of behavior within the organization, according to the report.

One in ten surveyed officers reported "sometimes" or "regularly" seeing the type of behavior unearthed in The Eagle story, the report found, and about 25% say they have seen that type of behavior, but rarely.

"In either case, it exists at a frequency that needs to be addressed but is not as ubiquitous as other problematic attitudes and behaviors described throughout this report."

Officers also complained about the department's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, one of former Chief Gordon Ramsay's major initiatives.

"Within WPD, some believe DEI efforts have been politically motivated and have resulted in underqualified individuals getting into the department or being put into positions they are not otherwise qualified for."

The report urges the city to keep up its DEI efforts.

It also recommends establishing standards for promotions that erase any doubt about qualifications.

As it stands, there is no minimum passing score for WPD's promotional exams. Jensen Hughes recommends setting a minimum passing score that ensures "anyone promoted possesses the knowledge necessary to perform their jobs."

"Moreover, setting a standard can raise the relatively low test scores achieved historically on the WPD's written promotional exams."

BETTER COMMUNICATION

The report also calls for the department to develop a comprehensive communications strategy that bolsters WPD's public information function. The department currently employs three sworn public information officers.

"The WPD should consider providing advanced training that is available for police public information officers and/or replacing or mixing these officers with professional media specialists managed by a sworn supervisor," the report states.

Internally, an effective communications strategy would provide a mechanism for department members to express their concerns and issues without fear of retaliation from the chief and command staff.

The report calls for an external communication strategy that prioritizes both outreach to communities that have a high level of police contacts resulting in use of force, as well as providing "positive accounts of what WPD officers are doing every day."





2023 CONFERENCE

TEXAS POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION



2022 **SKETER** FXR21LE VALUED AT **\$102,000**

GRAND PRIZE INCLUDES: YAMAHA VF250 MOTOR, DUAL CONSOLES, TROLLING MOTOR, HYDRAULIC JACK PLATE, UPGRADED ELECTRONICS, AND A CUSTOM COVER



Ticket Price: \$100 each



ONLY 1,500 Tickets are being sold



100% of proceeds fund the TPCA Foundation Officer Death Benefit



Winners need not be present to win

DRAWING TO BE HELD:

APRIL 6, 2023

Thank you
for supporting the TPCAF
Officer Death Benefits.

Our fallen officer survivors benefit is **\$10k**
\$190,000 in benevolence was paid out in 2022

[Click here to purchase raffle tickets!](#)



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www.texaspolicechiefs.org

Texas Police Chiefs Association | P.O. Box 819 | Elgin, Texas 78621 | 512.281.5400



benefitting



Play 'tug of war' with a High Water Rescue truck in support of Special Olympics Texas athletes.

Saturday, April 8, 2023
Rice University Greenbriar Lot, Houston, Texas
5600 Greenbriar Drive
\$300 per team to benefit SOTX athletes
Teams of 6

Registration 8:00 am • Opening Ceremonies 8:30 am • First Pull 8:45 am

FIND OUT MORE OR REGISTER:

www.givebutter.com/HighWaterTruckPull

Or scan the QR Code!

Hosted by the Rice University Police Department

