

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT 2020 ANNUAL REPORT



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Chief of Police



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MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Middle Township Police Department began year 2020 excited to build upon a continued historic reduction in crime, expanded community policing efforts, and increased Police Youth engagement. Just a few months into 2020, we needed to pivot quickly to address the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the safety of our Officers while continuing to deliver public safety services to the residents of Middle Township.

As we moved into the summer, the murder of George Floyd prompted protests nationwide, including here in Middle Township. On June 1st, there was a protest at the intersection of Route 9 and Route 47 which led to the closure of the intersection for several hours. We managed our response to the protest utilizing the Incident Command System from a nearby Command Post with law enforcement staged from neighboring jurisdictions. Chief Leusner was the Incident Commander and Captain William Adams was the Operations Commander on site. The protest ended peacefully in a prayer circle with the help of local clergy which included Pastor Dawson and Pastor Toney from the S.O.A.R Church working along with Prosecutor Sutherland, Mayor Donohue, and Chief Leusner. There was one arrest, no injuries nor property damage as result of the protest.

Shortly after the protests, a Social Justice Committee was formed working with the County Prosecutor and local law enforcement to improve Police community relations. Middle Township Committee also created the Law Enforcement Community Engagement Committee, by ordinance, a total of 9 members to assist in expanding our Community Policing efforts here in Middle Township.

Despite these challenges, the men and women of the Middle Township Police Department rose to the occasion, and crime in Middle Township declined again to a new low in 2020, a total of 294 offenses, a 13% reduction from 2019.

COVID-19 Response

In March, we needed to move quickly to take steps to address staffing, policies, and equipment to operate during the pandemic. We took the following steps:

- All the members of the Special Services Unit, Street Crimes Unit, and most members of the Major Crimes Unit were assigned to the Patrol Division. We then increased our Patrol Squads to eight from four. Essentially, one side of the patrol division worked a 14-day schedule, while the other side of the patrol division was in quarantine. This allowed us to rotate Officers in when needed if an Officer became infected or needed to quarantine because of a close contact with a confirmed positive person.
- All employees followed temperature taking protocols before each shift.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

- All secondary employment was suspended by order of the Chief of Police.
- We aggressively pursued and procured personal protective equipment, hand sanitizer, and cleaning supplies.
- We purchased a Bio Blast Sprayer to disinfect the back of our patrol cars, processing rooms, the court room, and other large areas.
- We adjusted our investigations to interview and interact with citizens in non-emergency situations on the phone and virtually when possible.
- We launched an online reporting option where residents could report a non-emergency incident through our website.
- We prioritized our traffic enforcement efforts to areas with a direct link to public safety.
- The Chief of Police and Command Staff attended a daily COVIDSTAT briefing with the New Jersey State Police and other law enforcement agencies throughout the state. These calls were conducted seven days a week through March, April, and May. The briefings covered various Executive Orders from the Governor and provided an avenue for clarification on the interpretations of various orders. These calls were followed by a Cape May County Chiefs of Police conference call.
- We entered confidential flags into our computer aided dispatch system to alert Officers who were dispatched to an address where there was a confirmed positive case.
- In total, Chief Leusner issued ten directives between March 17th and April 17th to manage our response.

Police Youth Engagement

The Middle Township Police Department recognizes the significant impacts and risks to children who experience traumatic events. Children who experience significant amounts of toxic stress, as a result of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), are more likely to have poor health, educational, and social outcomes. Police are in a unique situation to play a pivotal role in mitigating these impacts through trauma informed and responsive police practices and making referrals to our partners to help these children build resiliency.

The pandemic presented serious challenges to our on-going Police Youth Engagement efforts. This required us to develop ways to stay connected with youth in a safe manner during the pandemic. The first initiative was “Story Time with a Middle Township Police

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Officer”, a series of recorded videos of a police officer reading a story. We released a video each week on social media until the end of the school year and shared the link with the Middle Township School District.

Second, we made the difficult decision to cancel our Annual Police Summer Youth Camp. We were faced with many hard decisions over the course of 2020, but this was one of the most difficult. After careful consideration, we cancelled our Youth Camp and decided to offer smaller events in partnership with Cape Assist for the youth of Middle Township to stay connected with our Officers. We offered four events in different locations throughout the Township that included a t-shirts giveaway, free ice cream, trading cards, water bottles, games, and personal interaction with our Officers. Cape Assist provided information on community resources, youth asset building information, and cliff notes for parents on how to effectively talk to youth.

In 2018, we launched a new partnership with the School Districts in Middle Township to assist youth exposed to traumatic events. The program is called *Handle with Care*. It requires officers to notify the school when a child is present at a traumatic event before the bell rings the following day. The purpose of the program is to provide awareness to the teachers and staff, so they can support the student if necessary; rather than compound the trauma by discipline. None of the details of the incident are disclosed other than the fact that the child was present during a traumatic event. In 2020, Middle Township Police Officers made 43 *Handle with Care* referrals to school districts.

This *Handle with Care* program was ultimately adopted by the New Jersey Attorney General who mandated the program to be instituted by every Police Department in New Jersey. Middle Township’s program was a model to help launch the program statewide with Chief Leusner, Middle Township School Superintendent, Dr. David Salvo, and School Resource Officer Julio Ruiz playing a significant role in the statewide mandatory training session for every police officer in the state.

The Department was able to continue delivering most of the school based prevention programs. Please see the Proactive Policing Strategies section below for more information.

Proactive Policing Strategies – Intervention, Education, Prevention

In 2020, we continued to focus efforts and resources on Intervention and Education/Prevention. Our partnership continued with the Lighthouse Church’s CURE ASAP (Christians United for Recovery - Advocating for Substance Abuse Program). The ASAP program allows us to assist citizens with obtaining help with their addiction. This program compliments our Public Advocate Program in the Municipal Court through a partnership with Cape Assist, where we have been connecting people with services since 2014. In 2020, the Public Advocate assisted 36 people and helped to connect them with various services. The Municipal Court conducted very limited sessions due to the pandemic, but we restarted the program virtually with limited hours to assist residents in

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

obtaining help. Patrol Officers continued to carry Narcan and deployed it 41 times in 2020. We deployed Narcan 41 times in 2019, 39 times in 2018, 26 times in 2017, 26 times in 2016, and 13 times in 2015.

Furthermore, we continued our school based prevention programs. Our L.E.A.D. Program (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) in the 5th and 7th grade was started but then suspended because of the pandemic. We successfully delivered the #NOTEVENONCE Prevention Program again to the 10th grade students at Middle Twp. High School and our “Operation Prevention” to the 4th grade students in Elementary #2.

The Project Medicine Drop in our lobby continues to be used frequently by our residents. In 2020, we collected 504 pounds of prescription medication through our Dropbox located in the lobby of the headquarters compared to 769 pounds in 2019.

Community Outreach

In the area of Community Outreach, we attempted to stay connected with our residents through smaller events and virtual events. We held two Cops and Coffee events in 2020 before the pandemic. These events are usually held monthly at different businesses and they allow residents and police officers to meet one another over a cup of coffee to discuss problems or concerns. We made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 National Night Out in August due to the pandemic.

In September, Township Committee created by Ordinance the “Middle Township Law Enforcement Community Engagement Committee”. The Committee’s mission is to give a voice to a diverse group with a shared mission - to foster trust and mutual respect between the police, and the community. This Committee consists of nine members appointed by the Township Committee and is made up of a balanced mix of local clergy, educators, a representative from the Concerned Citizens of Whitesboro, a member of the local chapter of the NAACP, a representative from the Township’s Social Service partners, and three appointed members that reside in Middle Township. The panel includes a liaison for the MTPD, who furnishes the committee with quarterly data on police interaction in the community, updates on new and existing programs, and partner with the committee to enhance communication and understanding of available resources.

The Police Department participated in smaller events in 2020 and set up booths at the following events:

- Cape May County Juneteenth Celebration in Whitesboro
- The Progressive Black Initiative Labor Day Reunion celebration
- Lighthouse Church Trunk or Treat Event
- Kindle Ford’s Octoberfest Community Event

We also participated in the following Community Outreach programs in 2020:

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

- Chief Leusner and Mayor Donohue held a Virtual 21st Century Policing Town Hall in June to share the various community policing initiatives, training programs, and policies of the Police Department and answer questions from the public.
- Shop with Cop program at Christmas where we partnered with Ocean Inc. and the Progressive Black Initiative. This program paired a child with a Police Officer who then went shopping together at Wal-Mart in Rio Grande. The program was a great success.
- We participated in “No Shave November” for a sixth year in a row, and the proceeds went to Cpl. Ron Miller’s family.
- The Middle Township Police Officer Association had another successful year with the Toy Drive and Thanksgiving giveaway.
- We continued to raise awareness of the dangers of Distracted Driving by promoting our magnets that are displayed on vehicles throughout Middle Township.

Rio Grande Efforts

The Rio Grande Substation continues to be a very busy place. In 2020, residents and visitors came to the Rio Grande Substation 172 times to speak with an Officer compared to 224 in 2019. Our partners, Cape May County Probation and New Jersey State Parole, utilized the Rio Grande substation on a regular basis and helped us drive as much law enforcement presence in the area as possible.

Our Data Driven Approach to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) initiative, which focused specifically on Rio Grande, showed a decrease in Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) offenses in the Rio Grande area in 2020.

- In 2020, we had 119 offenses compared to 122 in 2019.
- We use 2012 as our baseline year for measuring success in our DDACTS program due to launching DDACTS on January 1, 2013. In 2012, we had 307 offenses.

The Street Crimes Unit Officers were reassigned in March to the Patrol Division to ensure proper staffing levels during the pandemic. They returned to the Street Crimes Unit assignment during the summer months. In the fall, two Officers were assigned again to the Patrol and two to the Major Crimes Unit to assist with staffing issues. In their limited time assigned to the Street Crimes Unit in 2020, the Officers made 8 arrests and executed 3 Search Warrants. They seized \$925.00 in cash as well as heroin, methamphetamine, cocaine, K2 Spice, marijuana, and prescription medication.

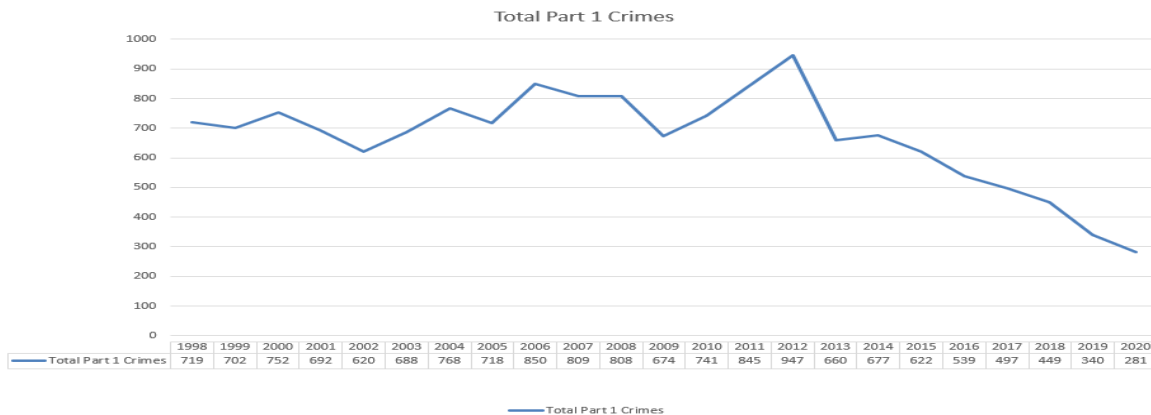
MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Criminal and Traffic Activity

The Total Uniform Crime (UCR) reported crime number was down 13% in 2020, with 294 offenses compared to 339 in 2019. We saw a reduction in non-violent crime with 246 offenses in 2020 compared to 306 in 2019. We did see an increase in violent crime, with 45 offenses reported in 2020 compared to 33 offenses in 2019. There were zero homicides in 2020.

Traffic activity within the Township saw a decrease in total crashes with 726 crashes in 2020 compared to 911 in 2019. Injuries as result of crashes also decreased with 101 in 2020 compared to 122 in 2019. The number of traffic fatalities went up in 2020, with 4 fatalities compared to 1 in 2019. Motor Vehicle Summonses were down in 2020 with a total of 1,776 summonses compared to 3,032 in 2019. Driving While Intoxicated arrests increased, a total of 112 in 2020 compared to 101 in 2019.

Uniform Crime Reporting 1998-2020



Rio Grande Protest Prayer Circle



MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Table of Contents

Organization & Personnel	9
Calls for Service/Criminal Activity	10
Traffic	15
Police Data Initiative	17-20
Administration	21
Patrol Division	22
Detective Division	24
Street Crimes Unit	26
Forfeiture Fund	27
Special Services Unit	28
School Resource Officer Program	32
Records Division	33
Communications	34
Internal Affairs	36
Code Enforcement/Animal Control	37-39
Training and Education	39
Special Units	41-47
Accreditation Program	47
Community Outreach	52
Achievement Goals and Objectives: 2020	54
Proposals: 2021	Appendix A
Goals/Objectives: 2021	Appendix B

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

ORGANIZATION & PERSONNEL

Current Sworn Employees

The list below reflects the Department sworn personnel as of January 19, 2021.

Chief of Police

Christopher Leusner

Captain

William Adams

Don Nelson

Lieutenant

Robert Shepherd

James Loftus

Jennifer Delanzo

Detectives

Det/Sgt. Clint Stocker

DFC Daniel Martin

Kurt Saettler

Thomas Flounders

Special Services Unit

Sgt. Mark Higginbottom

Cpl. Phil Johnson

Cpl. Eugene Castellano

Cpl. James D'Alonzo

PFC Julio Ruiz

PFC Martin Lindholm

Class II George Eskander

Class II John Mihal

Class II Christopher Baczek

Class II Andrew Eskander

Class II Kenzee Delgado

Class II Kyle Matthews

Class II Christian Quaranta

Patrol Sergeants

Brian Murphy

Tracey Super

Joshua Bryan

Leonard Larkin

Corporals

Ronald Miller

David Hagan

Michael Pastore

Jason Sweitzer

Street Crimes Unit

Sgt. Ken Martin

Cpl. John Norton

Patrolman

PFC Matt Martino

PFC Daniel Geiger

PFC Armondo Jones

Jeffrey Salvesen

Raymond Bradley

Brian Vergantino

Justin Vitola

Shawn Karge

Michael Reardon

Benjamín Stiefel

Jonas McInnis

Thomas Ritterhoff

Mark Bakley

Dylan Young

Trevor MacCormack

Shawn Rocca

Thomas Runyon

Blake Martindale

Gregory DeCecco

John Hotaling

Pamela Gittle

Christopher Russ

Jenna Cuomo

Patrick Vendetta

Kerri Schrader

Michael Smith

Alyssa Jones

Joseph Trombetta

Joshua Musick

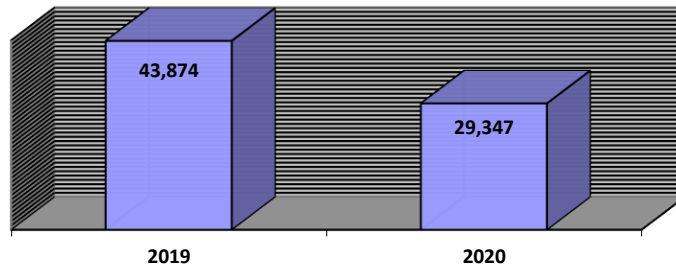
The following officers retired from the Middle Township Police Department in 2020:

Cpl. Fred Crawley, Detective First Class Allan McClure and Lt. Doug Osmundsen.

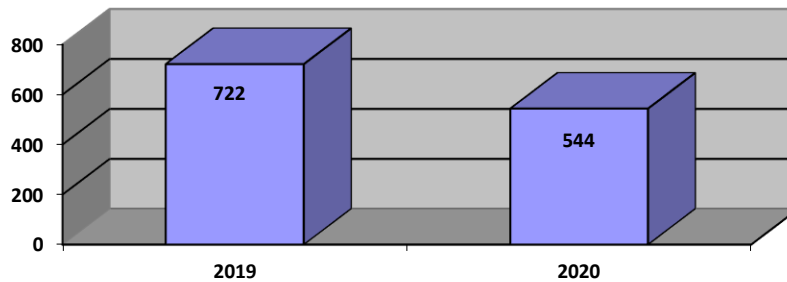
MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

CALLS FOR SERVICE & CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

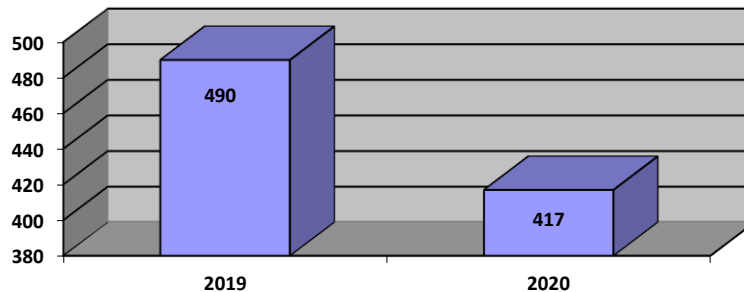
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Calls for Service:	43,874	29,347	-14,527



	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Arrests:	722	544	-178



	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Indictable Complaints	490	417	-73



MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)

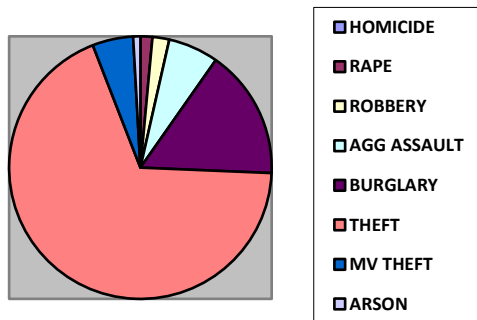
The Uniform Crime Reporting is a nationwide, cooperative statistical effort of more than 17,000 City, County and State law enforcement agencies reporting data on crimes brought to their attention. It was established in 1930 to gauge the state of crime in the nation. There are main offense classifications known as Part I Crimes, used as part of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program.

Below is a list highlighting the crime classifications and the respective number of offenses for Middle Township for the past two 2 years.

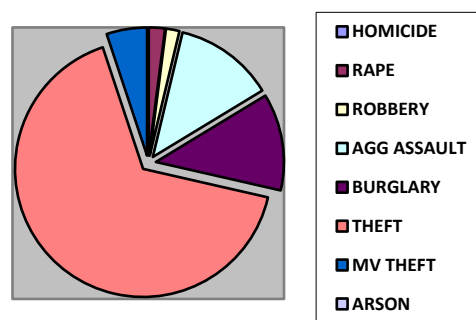
Offense: 2019		Offense: 2020		<u>Change</u>
Homicide	0	Homicide	0	0
Rape	5	Rape	6	+1
Robbery	7	Robbery	5	-2
Aggravated Assault	21	Aggravated Assault	37	+16
Burglary	54	Burglary	36	-18
Theft	232	Theft	195	-37
Motor Vehicle Theft	17	Motor Vehicle Theft	15	-2
Arson	3	Arson	0	-3
Total UCR:	339		294	-45
Violent Crime:	33		48	+15
Non Violent Crime:	306		246	-60

Note: This is an estimate based on our monthly reports; the official report is released by the New Jersey State Police.

UCR 2019



UCR 2020



Note: This is the final year of reporting crime through the Uniform Crime Reporting system. As mandated by the New Jersey State Police, we will be moving to the new National Incident Based Reporting System in 2021.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

The following list indicates the classification of the other types of calls for service, both criminal and non-criminal in nature. The following call types were handled by the members of the Police Department in 2020 compared to 2019.

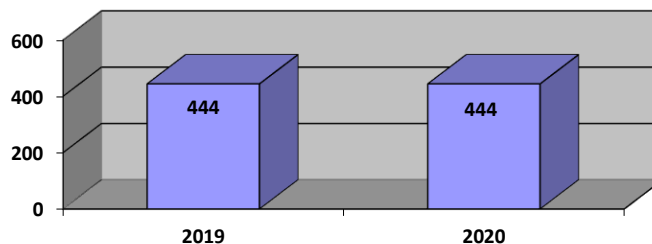
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Sex Offenses	27	27	No Change
Simple Assaults	155	138	-17
Medical Calls	3850	3501	-349
Fire Calls	895	857	-38
Death Investigations	50	42	-8
Disorderly Conduct incidents	947	1022	+75
Fraud, Forgery, Bad Checks	106	85	-21
Mal Damage Crim Mischief	70	64	-6
Missing Persons and Runaways	60	60	No Change
Assisting other agency incidents	461	451	-10
Property and Building Checks	12780	7730	-5050
Bias Incidents Investigated	2	3	+1
Directed Patrol	2813	1615	-1198
	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Investigation Reports:	1383	1133	-250
Supplemental Investigation Reports:	1692	1232	-460

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence is a serious crime against society and both law enforcement and the courts must aggressively address it. New Jersey has strong laws and protective measures for victims of Domestic Violence.

Middle Township is not immune from the problems and concerns of Domestic Violence. In 2020, Middle Township Police responded to **464** Domestic Violence incidents. In the year prior, Middle Township police responded to **444** Domestic Violence incidents.

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Domestic Violence:	444	464	+20

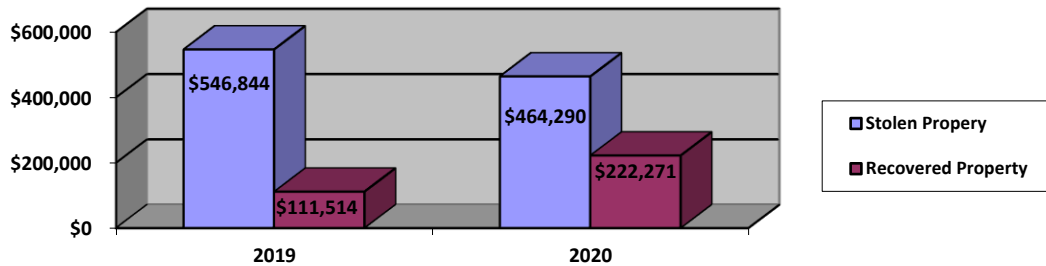


MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Property Stolen and Recovered

Property offenses include Burglary, Theft, Criminal Mischief, and Shoplifting. The exact amount of value in the theft related offenses are hard to determine as officers and victims usually estimate the value of property stolen and recovered. Below reflects the estimated value of property stolen and recovered for the year of 2019 and 2020.

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Stolen:	\$546,844.00	\$464,290.00	-82,554.00
Recovered:	\$111,514.00	\$222,271.00	+ 110,757.00



Officer Line of Duty Injuries and/or Crashes:

During 2020, there were 16 work related injury incidents reported. As a result of the injuries, two of the Officers missed time away from work.

<u>Officer</u>	<u># of Days Missed</u>
Officer Brian Vergantino	46
Officer Christopher Russ	15

Motor Vehicle Crashes While on Duty

Employees were involved in 11 motor vehicle crashes in 2020.

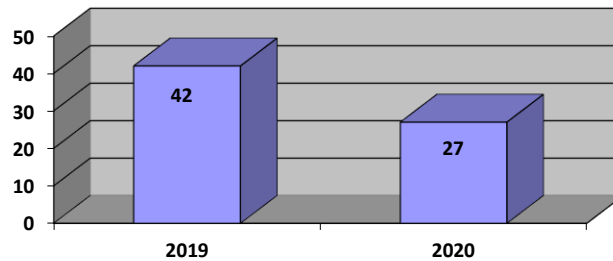
<u>Officer</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Synopsis</u>
Miller, Ron	February 9 th , 2020	Vehicle Struck by Raccoon
Trombetta, Joe	February 23 rd , 2020	Struck a vehicle making a U-turn
Sunderhauf, John	March 2 nd , 2020	Struck by another vehicle
Trombetta, Joe	March 11 th , 2020	Backed into another vehicle
Cuomo, Jenna	March 12 th , 2020	Made a U-turn causing a crash
Saettler, Kurt	March 31 st , 2020	Struck a tree
Vendetta, Patrick	May 1 st , 2020	Struck a curb
MacCormack, Trevor	July 26 th , 2020	Officer was rear ended
Amenhauser, Jim	August 27 th , 2020	Struck while sitting in traffic
Amenhauser, Jim	October 9 th , 2020	Struck a median and a sign
Eskander, Andrew	December 17 th , 2020	Struck a retaining wall

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Use of Force Incidents and Reporting

As required by law, each Officer who uses force while making an arrest, or while handling an individual with some form of force to gain compliance, must complete a state “Use of Force Reporting Form”. This report is supplied each year to the Cape May County Prosecutor’s Office.

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Use of Force Incidents:	42	27	-15



Of the 27 Use of Force incidents, 21 subjects were arrested and 3 subjects were injured.

Note: Each incident where Use of Force is used by an Officer is reviewed by the Captain, and the results forwarded to the Chief of Police.

Officers injured using force:	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
	7	7	0

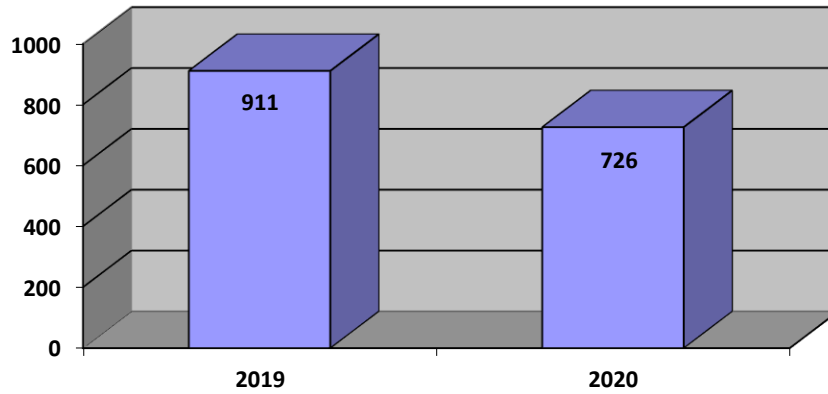
Police Pursuits:	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
	4	12	+8

Middle Township Police Officers were involved in 12 incidents involving motor vehicle pursuits; as a result of the pursuits, there were 5 people arrested and 3 crashes.

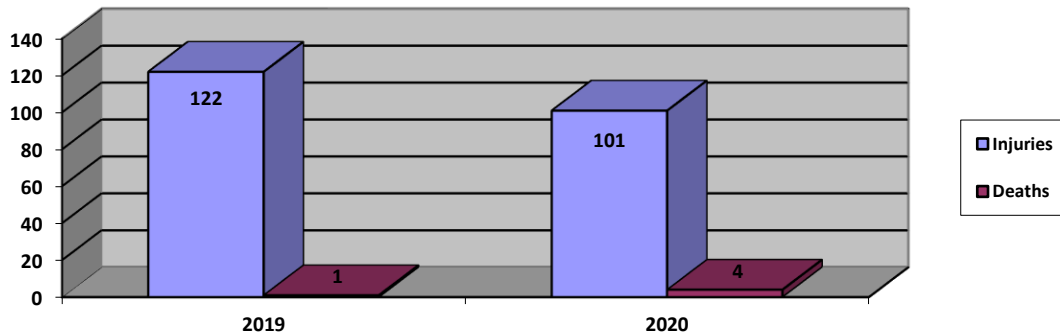
MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

TRAFFIC

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Motor Vehicle Crashes	911	726	-185

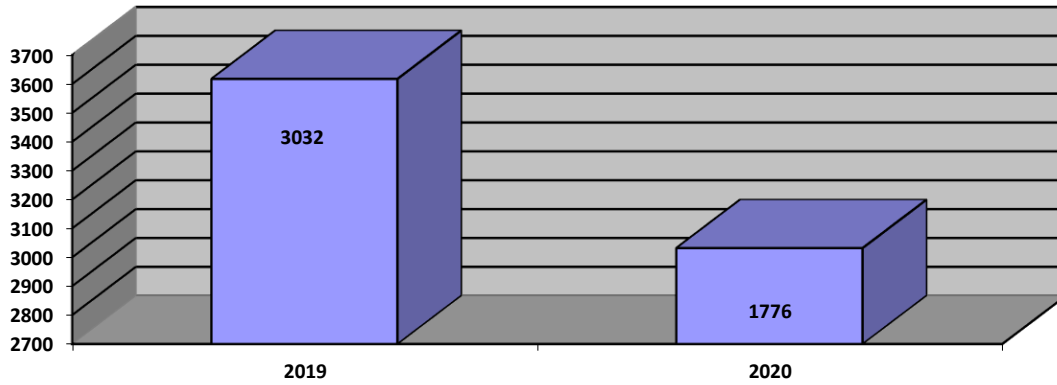


Injuries:	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Deaths:	122	101	-21
	1	4	+3

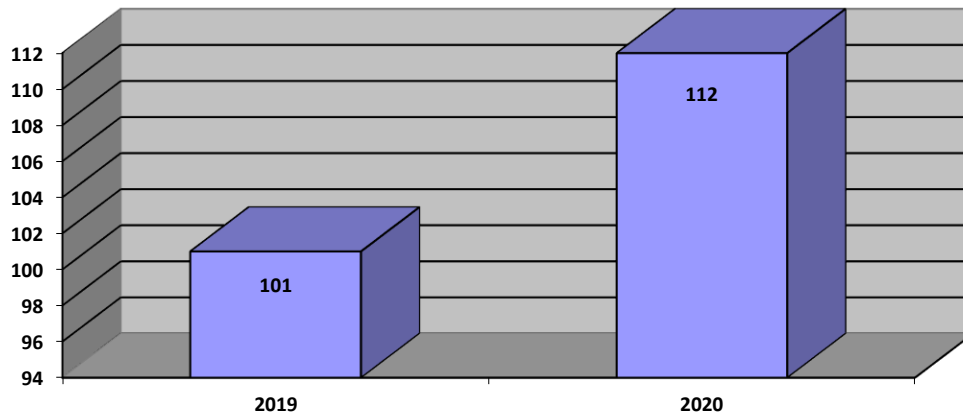


MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Motor Vehicle Summonses issued	3032	1776	-1256



	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
DWI Arrests	101	112	+11



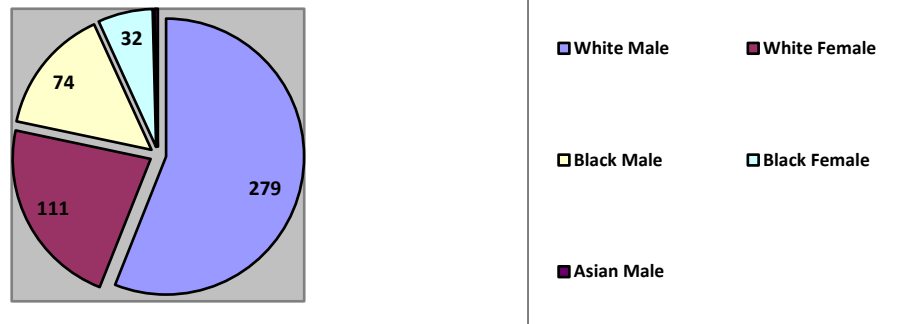
MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICE DATA INITIATIVE

The purpose of this section is to share additional data with the public to increase transparency, accountability and trust with our community. The additional sharing of data is one of the recommendations of the 21st Century Policing Report and the National Police Foundation. The data shared below is a gender and race/ethnicity breakdown for Arrests, Use of Force incidents, Motor Vehicle Stops and Sworn Officers of MTPD. The most recent Census estimates for Middle Township is also included.

Arrests Race/Ethnicity Breakdown

TOTAL ARRESTS: 544

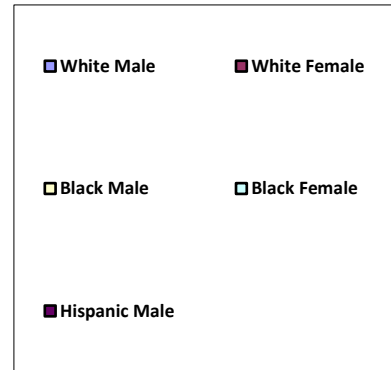
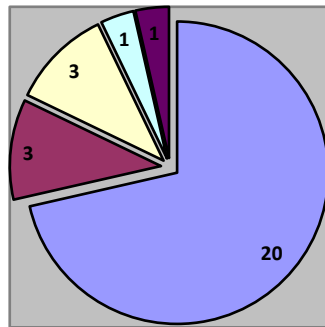


RACE/ETHNICITY	MALE	FEMALE
White	279	111
Black	74	32
Asian	2	0
Hispanic/Latino	35	11

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Use of Force Race/Ethnicity Breakdown

USE OF FORCE TOTAL: 28

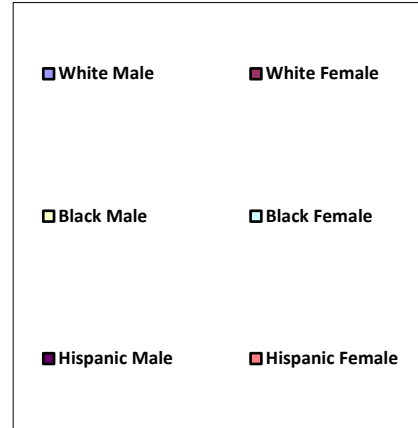
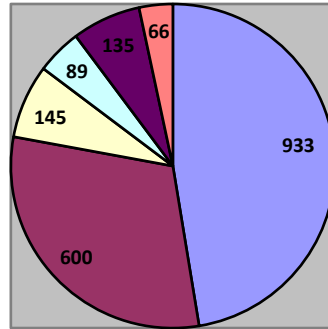


RACE/ETHNICITY	MALE	FEMALE
White	20	3
Black	3	1
Hispanic	1	0

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Traffic Stops by Race/Ethnicity

Traffic Stop Total: 1995

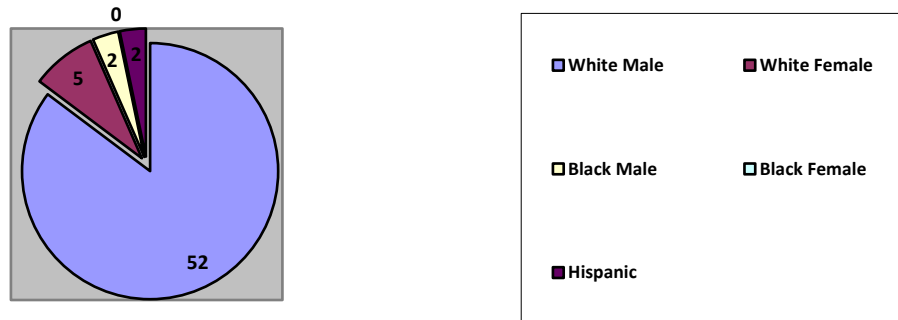


RACE/ETHNICITY	MALE	FEMALE
White	933	600
Black	145	89
Unknown	4	3
American Indian	3	2
Asian/Pacific Islander	8	7
Hispanic	135	66

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Middle Twp. Police Dept. Police Officer Gender/Race Breakdown

MTPD Sworn Officer Gender/Race



RACE/ETHNICITY	MALE	FEMALE
White	52	5
Black	2	0
Hispanic	2	0

Middle Township United States Census July 2019 Population and Demographic Estimates

2019 Population Estimate	18,175
Race/Ethnicity Breakdown	
White	75%
Black or African American	12.30%
Asian	1%
Two or More Races	2.60%
Hispanic or Latino	9.90%

Source:

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/clarktownshipunioncountynewjersey,middletownshipcapemaycountynewjersey/PST045219#>

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATION

The Police Administration was expanded in 2016, as part of a restructuring with the addition of the Street Crimes Unit and assuming the Code Enforcement function. The Administration includes 6 Officers, including the Chief. The Officers are: Chief Christopher Leusner, Captain William Adams, Captain Donald Nelson, Lieutenant Robert Shepherd, Lieutenant James Loftus and Lieutenant Jennifer DeLanzo.



The Chief of Police is responsible for the day to day operations of the Department: to administer and enforce rules, regulations, and special emergency directives, to the discipline of force and its personnel, to prescribe duties and assignments, delegate authority for efficient operation of the force, issue policies and directives, meet with the community, civic and religious groups, prepare grants, prepare and manage the Police Department's Budget, and to report at least monthly to Township Committee.

The Operations Captain is responsible for the following areas: Public Information Officer, Accreditation Manager, manage Standard Operating Procedures and Rules and Regulations, manage payroll, manage in-car cameras/body cameras (Watch Guard System), Traffic Committee, Infectious Control Officer, manage Alcotest Units manage radar units/tuning forks, NJ Learn Coordinator, Emergency Management Officer, Traffic/DWI grants, Fleet Manager, Building/Cell Inspections, On-Call Administrator, Nixle Administrator, Assistant Social Media Administrator, Manage Station Video System, Body Armor Grants, Guardian System Administrator, Power DMS Administrator, Managing Human Resources-hiring and background process, GPS Trackstar Administrator, Supervise Patrol Lieutenant.

The Administrative Captain is responsible for the following areas: Internal Affairs Commander (review/recommend), JIFF Coordinator, False Alarm Administrator, Bail Reform Coordinator, review investigation and supplement reports, Assistant Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, Radio System Administrator, employee evaluations, Assistant Social Media Administrator, Fire Department Liaison, maintain battery backup system, maintain generators, manage station video, supervise and manage IT Operations, On-Call Administrator, MVS 2000 Reports and Analysis, manage and prepare reports for Forfeiture Funds, prepare and disseminate Weekly Crime Blotter and Arrest Blotter Reports, prepare Grants, manage sick time log/Early Warning Guardian Procedure, Parole and Probation Liaison, Cyber Security Coordinator, Supervise Lieutenants.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Patrol Commander is responsible for the following areas: vehicle maintenance, patrol equipment (purchase, maintain, issue), POSS Administrator (schedule/time off/OT, etc.), Review all DWI's and Accident Reports, Domestic Violence Coordinator, Manage Off-Duty details, prepare Grants, manage statistics, schedule training, Training Development Coordinator, Hotel/Motel Association Liaison, Assistant Public Information Officer, On-Call Administrator, order/replace uniforms, Field Training Officer Coordinator, Manage Class II Program, OSHA Compliance Officer, Special Events Committee, Municipal Court Operational Liaison, manage and conduct vehicle inspections, Dive Team (people/training/equipment), Supervise Patrol Sergeants and Special Services Sergeant, L.E.A.D. Coordinator, Handle with Care Program.

The Administrative Lieutenant is responsible for the following areas: Dispatch Administrator, Records Administrator, Supervise Animal Control, Supervise Code Enforcement, review investigation and supplement reports, Internal Affairs Investigator, Crash Team Commander, manage crime analysis function, Assistant Public Information Officer, Assistant Social Media Administrator, Coordinate National Night Out, prepare Grants, On-Call Administrator, Hostage Negotiation Liaison, Honor Guard Coordinator, Manage Crime Watch Video Program, Manage Vacant Property Program/Ordinance, Municipal Court Administrative Liaison, Manage Livescan Systems: Crossmatch and Morphotrak, Manage Comcast Accounts: Headquarters/Rio Grande Substation.

The second Administrative Lieutenant is responsible for the following areas: Major Crimes Unit Administrator, Street Crimes Unit Administrator, review investigation and supplement reports from MCU/SCU, Internal Affairs Investigator, Megan's Law Liaison, VICAP Officer, Maglocen Liaison, manage towing, Assistant Public Information Officer, Assistant Social Media Administrator, Bias Crime Officer, DYFS liaison, Internship Coordinator, Prepare Grants, On-Call Administrator, Manage, approve and audit confidential funds, Webmaster www.middlepd.org Appmaster-MTPD App: Google Play Apple App Store, South Jersey Real Time Crime Center Liaison, ACS/ATS Coordinator, CJIS/TAC Coordinator, manage Verizon Wireless Account, Oversee Evidence Function.

PATROL DIVISION

Patrol is the largest Division of the Police Department. Its primary responsibility is responding to calls for service from the community. These calls can range from neighborhood disputes, domestic violence incidents and traffic accidents, to burglaries in progress and death investigations.



MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

As the First Responder to criminal complaints, Patrol Officers are responsible for seeing to the medical needs of anyone involved, interviewing witnesses, recognizing and preserving evidence, determining whether, in fact, a crime has been committed, and identifying and ultimately arresting those responsible.

Officers of the Patrol Division are also expected to provide proactive services such as traffic enforcement, crime detection and suppression, conducting business and property checks, initiating contacts with community members to further the Department's commitment to community and problem oriented policing.

Officers assigned to the Patrol Division are divided into five squads. Four patrol squads are responsible for 24-hour street coverage, seven days a week. Each squad is supervised by a Sergeant with seven Patrol Officers and, at times, supplemented with Class II Officers. The fifth squad, the Special Service Unit works 5 days a week. The squad is utilized to fill special needs of the Department: training function, court security, community events, School Resource Officers, and assist the Patrol Division during peak times.

In 2014, our Department began the process of training our Officers for the use of tasers. Our Department currently has 30 Officers trained and 10 tasers for deployment. As we move forward, all officers, as well as all new hires will be trained, so all officers working the street have another force option available before using deadly force.

Field Training Officers: (FTO's)

All Police Officers hired by the Middle Township Police Department must attend and successfully complete a New Jersey State Certified Police Academy. This department predominantly uses the Cape May County Police Academy. Upon graduation, all officers return to the department and are required to successfully complete a Field Training Program. The FTO program is an additional three months (564 hours) of intensive training and evaluation where the probationary officer is paired up with an experienced officer. The FTO officer has been carefully selected and trained as a Field Training Officer. It is the goal of the FTO program to prepare and develop probationary officers to act efficiently, effectively and safely in a solo patrol capacity.

The following Officers are designated as FTO:

Sergeant Josh Bryan
Corporal David Hagan
Corporal James D'Alonzo
PFC Armondo Jones
PFC Martin Lindholm
DFC. Daniel Martin
Patrolman Shawn Karge
Patrolman Brian Vergantino

Sergeant Brian Murphy
Corporal Phillip Johnson
Corporal John Norton
PFC Matt Martino
Detective Kurt Saettler
Patrolman Justin Vitola
Patrolman Michael Pastore

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

DETECTIVE DIVISION

The Detective Division, otherwise known as the Major Crimes Unit (MCU), is charged with the responsibility of reviewing all incident reports and activities in order to prioritize and investigate criminal activity. Detectives work cases that are either assigned to them or come to them while they are on duty or on-call. They also initiate case investigations.



The Detective Division generated the following:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Initial Investigation Reports:	34	50	+16
Supplemental Investigations:	1133	934	-199
Arrests :	31	36	+5

The Detective Division also conducts any and all Police recruitment, Police employee employment background investigations, there were **57** background investigations completed in **2020**. In addition, the Detective Division conducts all firearm application backgrounds. The unit completed a total of **627** firearms background investigations in 2020 an **increase of 377** from 2019.

The Major Crimes Unit utilizes a Case Management System. This system is designed to track all cases assigned to the Detective Division. It allows the Detective Sergeant to monitor the Unit's overall caseload as well as caseload of each individual Detective. This system also allows the Detective Sergeant to better assign new cases based on the caseload of the particular Detective. Case activity can now be tracked to ensure that no case is inadvertently forgotten. The Detective Sergeant also meets monthly with each Detective to discuss their active cases and strategies.

The following is a breakdown of cases as of December 31, 2019:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Cases Assigned:	218	201	-17
Cases Closed:	203	156	-47

Current number of active cases as of December 31st, 2020: **57**

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Some notable cases handled by the Major Crimes Unit in **2020** include:

- **2020-40174:** Overdose, Endangering the Welfare of a Child
- **2020-42527:** Aggravated Assault
- **2020-03205:** Aggravated Assault on Police Officers
- **2020-05859:** Missing Person
- **2020-12612:** Eluding a Police Officer
- **2020-15536:** Fatal Motor Vehicle Crash
- **2020-37371:** Drug Induced Death
- **2020-17014:** Obstruction Eluding
- **2020-17658:** Fatal Motor Vehicle Crash
- **2020-17758:** Bias Incident
- **2020-20556:** Kidnap
- **2020-22600:** Fatal Motor Vehicle Crash
- **2020-23242:** Fatal Motor Vehicle Crash
- **2020-24112:** Aggravated Sexual Assault
- **2020-26592:** Motor Vehicle Theft
- **2020-27549:** Attempted Murder
- **2020-27635:** Aggravated Assault on a Police Officer
- **2020-27774:** Obstruction, Resisting Arrest

The Division handled numerous aggravated assaults, sexual offenses, burglaries, child endangerment and missing person cases.

THE PROJECT MEDICINE DROP PROGRAM where residents can dispose of prescription medication 24/7, 365 days a year by simply coming into the lobby and dropping in a Dropbox has been hugely successful. **In 2020, we collected over 504 pounds of prescription medications.**



The Division works on a number of open cases, such as the Mark Himebaugh investigation, with various agencies including the FBI, New Jersey State Police, and Cape May County Prosecutor's Office. In 2012, an anonymous donor offered a reward of \$10,000 for the discovery of Mark Himebaugh, and \$25,000 if the information leads to Mark's safe return home. Anyone with information on the above cases, is asked to contact the Major Crimes Unit at 609-465-8700. In February of 2015, the Major Crimes Unit, along with members of the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office and the FBI traveled to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children located in Alexandria, Virginia, where a cold case review of the Himebaugh Case was conducted. Following the review, Investigators followed up on new leads and are actively working on the case.

Members of the unit during 2020 included:

Detective Sergeant Clint Stocker
Detective First Class Allan McClure

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Detective Jack Trombetta
Detective Jason Sweitzer
Detective Dan Martin
Detective Kurt Saettler
Detective Thomas Flounders
Part Time Evidence Clerk Mark DeVico
Part Time Evidence Clerk David Tomkinson

STREET CRIMES UNIT

The Street Crimes Unit was implemented to focus on reducing crime with a focus on the Rio Grande and Burleigh sections of Middle Township, as well as the opioid epidemic. In addition to street level narcotics investigations, the unit worked closely with the Major Crimes Unit investigating major cases to include several robberies and theft investigations within the Township over the past year. During 2020, four (4) members of the Middle Township Police Department were assigned to the Street Crimes Unit. During their assignment, all of the members authored a Court Authorized Search Warrant and were present and involved in the execution of the search warrant. It should be noted the Street Crimes Unit was only running at its full capacity from January 1st of 2020 until March 15 of 2020, due the Coronavirus Pandemic



The following is a list of Officers assigned to the Street Crimes for 2020:

Sgt. Kenneth Martin
Cpl. John Norton
Ptlm. Gregory DeCecco
Ptlm. Michael Reardon

The following is a synopsis of the Street Crimes Unit's 2020 case load:

The Street Crimes Unit was only running at its full capacity from January 1st of 2020 until March 15th of 2020, due the Corona Virus Pandemic. A majority of the arrest were for narcotics violations. Other arrests included: Driving While Intoxicated (DWI), motor vehicle theft, and local ordinance violations.

Arrests: Eight (8) (-76)

Search Warrants: Three (3) (-13) search warrants were executed in Middle Township resulting in the arrests of individuals for drug related and other criminal offenses.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Narcotics Seized: Heroin, Methamphetamine, Cocaine, Marijuana, K2 Spice and Prescription Medication.

Currency seized: \$925.00 (-\$158.00) was submitted for forfeiture as proceeds of criminal activity.

The following is a list of a few of our notable cases:

2020-01994- On January 14, 2020, members of the Street Crimes Unit arrested a subject for an outstanding NCIC Warrant. After a positive K-9 “Sniff” on the subject’s motor vehicle a search warrant executed on the subject’s vehicle. Over a 1/2 ounce of Methamphetamine was located in the vehicle along with a digital scale. The subject was charged accordingly and served at the jail; where he was incarcerated on the above mentioned NCIC warrant.

2020-03395- During the month of February, 2020, a Court Authorized Search Warrant was executed in the Whitesboro section of Middle Township. As a result, over a 1/2 pound of Synthetic Marijuana (K-2 Spice) and \$925.00 was located. The accused, was arrested and charged with 2C:35-5.3a - Distribution of a Synthetic Cannabinoid over an ounce a 2nd degree crime, and 2C:25-10.3a Possession of Synthetic Cannabinoid over an ounce a crime of 3rd degree, and lodged in the Cape May County Jail.

FORFEITURE

<u>Forfeiture Fund:</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Beginning balance:	\$42,070.78	\$37,121.81	-\$4,948.97
Forfeited monies received:	\$1,467.59	\$1,107.00	-\$360.59
Forfeited monies expended:	\$6,944.41	\$24,416.26	+\$17,471.85
Balance:	\$37,121.81	\$13,918.09	-\$23,203.72

Note: Any minor discrepancies can be attributed to interest gained on the account.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

MEGAN'S LAW UNIT

**Megan's
Law**

Although not officially a unit, the task of handling Megan's Law registrants within the Township rests with the Major Crimes Unit. Detective Thomas Flounders primarily oversees the registrants with the assistance of other Detectives. Registrants are required to re-register anytime they move to a new address within the Township, even a minimal move as a change within the same building to a different apartment or motel room. Registrants must also register upon moving into Middle Township from another area as well as notify our Agency when they are moving to another jurisdiction.

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
New registrants and/or moves:	10	5	-5
Average monthly registrant count:	85	88	+3
Low count	83	86	+3
High count	87	92	+5

During 2020, contacts with Megan's Law registrants were made via telephone due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Face to face contacts with Megan's Law registrants were only conducted if there was a concern or issue with the registrant. One arrest was made for a violation of Megan's Law registration requirements.

SPECIAL SERVICES UNIT

The Special Services Unit is led by Sergeant. Mark Higginbottom, and is under the command of Patrol Lieutenant Robert Shepherd. The Unit has several different tasks to include School Resource Officers, training of the entire Police Department, court security, community outreach, all community events, maintain Police fleet, weapons armorers, maintain, running the Police Department's Youth summer camp and monitor the Juvenile Station House Adjustment Program along with various other responsibilities.



Sergeant. Higginbottom and Corporal. Johnson of this unit are Glock Armorers, while Corporal. D'Alonzo is an Advanced Glock Armorer and a Patrol Rifle Armorer. This allows our Special Services Unit to maintain and repair the department's weapons in house.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Special Services Unit leads many of the community relations initiatives such as our Neighborhood Watch Program, informational booths at community events, and the Cops and Coffee Program. Our current Neighborhood Watch Programs are Friends of Davis and Teal (Rio Grande), Friends of 13 Curves (CMCH/Green Creek), Stone Harbor Manor Homeowners, Shannon Oaks Neighborhood Watch (Rio Grande), Gatherings at Cape May (Rio Grande).

The Special Services Unit was only able to hold **2 Cops and Coffee** details due to Covid restrictions. The Unit also participated in or hosted several events throughout the year including the following:

Many of our recurring events were cancelled due to Covid.

- Whitesboro Reunion
- Middle Township Juneteenth Celebration
- Safe Community Coalition School Bag Giveaway
- Kindle Ford's Octoberfest Community Event
- Halloween Parade
- MTPD Christmas Toy Drive
- Special Olympics Torch Run
- Township Santa Escort
- Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway
- ***Story Time with a Middle Township Police Officer***, a series of recorded videos of a Police Officer reading a story as way to stay connected to the youth during the pandemic. We released a video each week on social media until the end of the school year and shared the link with the Middle Township School District.

The Special Services Unit also manages two very important programs to assist residents in obtaining services for issues ranging from homelessness to addiction. The first program is through a partnership with CURE, (Christians United for Recovery) and their Advocating Substance Abuse Program (ASAP). We provide access to recovery support services to a person requesting them 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Whether an individual is under arrest or simply walks into the lobby, Officers treat the person with dignity and respect and call CURE for a member of their Crisis Response Team to respond.

The second program is our Public Advocate Program in Middle Township Municipal Court through our partnership with Cape Assist. Middle Township provides a New Jersey Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor and or Prevention Specialist in our Municipal Court Room. It is well understood that those suffering from addiction often commit crime in an effort to support their addiction. They steal merchandise from stores, metal from vacant buildings, jewelry and money from family and friends, and even resort to more serious crimes such as robbery and burglary. When those suffering from such addiction are arrested for these crimes, they often appear in Municipal Court. Defendants

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

who suffer from addiction and are arrested for more serious crimes often have the ability to learn about addiction services available to them, often through “Drug Court”. However, with less serious offenses that are heard under the authority of the Local Municipal Court, there are no resources available for these defendants.

The absence of any resources available in Municipal Court often leaves defendants, family members of those suffering from addiction, and even the Judge with few options regarding treatment or assistance. The Public Advocate is present in the Middle Township Municipal Court to assist defendants suffering from addiction, their family members, the Municipal Prosecutor, and the Judge with providing information about available treatment programs.

The Public Advocate also serves as a resource for the Middle Township Police Department in providing information about treatment programs to individuals who need assistance and information regarding substance abuse for themselves, a friend, or a loved one. **In 2020, 36 people we referred to services by the Public Advocate.**

The Special Services Unit is responsible for providing Municipal Court security and acting as the Municipal Court Liaison to the Municipal Prosecutor. The SSU also provided court security on **14 Court days during the year.**

In 2018, the Special Services Unit was responsible to launch our new partnership with the School Districts in Middle Township to assist youth exposed to traumatic events called Handle with Care. Many times when Officers come in contact with a juvenile during a traumatic event, there are limited options for the officers to assist that juvenile. If a juvenile is exposed to a traumatic event, he might not be able to comply with school’s requirement the following day or longer. Through no fault of their own, the teachers or school administration might compound the trauma by disciplining the child (ex. homework not done, absent-minded in class, or acting out). The Handle with Care Program bridges the gap between the juvenile’s out of school and in school life and will provide for an opportunity to receive additional support from school.

This program was ultimately adopted by the New Jersey Attorney General who mandated this program to be adopted by every Police Department in New Jersey. Middle Township’s program was a model to help launch the program statewide with Chief Leusner, Middle Township School Superintendent Dr. David Salvo and School Resource Officer, Julio Ruiz playing a role in the statewide mandatory training session for every Police Officer in the State.

During the year of 2020 we handled **43 Handle with Care Referrals.**

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

The Middle Township Police Department instituted a community service program in 2011, working with the Cape May County Superior Court to have a work site for minor offenders to complete court-imposed community service. Under the direction of Corporal James D'Alonzo, the community service workers are assigned to clean Municipal vehicles and property, clean up abandoned property where trash and debris have accumulated, pick up trash along Municipal roadways, clean up graffiti, assist setting up areas for community events, and other tasks to assist the community. In addition to the services the workers provide, this program also strives to develop positive relationships with the workers with the goal of reducing future acts of criminal behavior.



The community service program expanded in 2015 with an agreement with the Middle Township Municipal Court to allow municipal offenders to have the opportunity to 'work off' any new fines or outstanding municipal court fines that were unable to be paid by the offender. Many offenders were unable to pay off fines and were finding themselves in jail, resulting in the loss of employment and a continued inability to pay the court fines. Community service allows for an alternative for monetary payment, and in turn, benefits the community.

Community Service Program Members

Cpl. James D'Alonzo
Ptl. Justin Vitola

PFC Dan Geiger
PFC Martin Lindholm

Ptl. Brian Vergantino

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

The School Resource Officer (SRO) Program is a collaborative effort with both the Middle Township School District and with the Cape May County Technical High School. The School Resource Officer Program is incorporated within the Special Services Unit. *(Note: Middle Township has an inter-local agreement with the Technical High School and Middle Township School District for the services of the School Resource Officers)*



The School Resource Officer Program has two main components: first is designed to enhance the relationship among the members of the school district, its students, teachers/administrators and the police department. The daily communication between police and school officials prevents many problems and mitigates existing problems for both the school and the police; second is a component to provide a law enforcement presence in all district schools. This is accomplished through the use of patrol officers who, as part of their duties, conduct walk through visits to the facilities. The second component is to provide training and informal counseling to students, staff and parents. The SSU annually prepares school security/action plans for all schools in Middle Township, including the Cape Christian Academy and the State Department of Human Services School. All plans are reviewed annually and updated if necessary, by the School Resource Officers.

The School Resource Officers conducted the following at their respective schools:

<u>Middle Township</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Investigations:	35	13	-22
Supplement Investigations:	17	7	-10
Arrests:	37	14	-23
 <u>Cape May County Technical High School</u>	 <u>2019</u>	 <u>2020</u>	 <u>Change</u>
Investigations:	24	8	-16
Supplement Investigations:	19	13	-6
Arrests:	2	1	-1

Note: Our SRO's do other tasks with the Special Services Unit during the summer months and assist throughout the school year as needed.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

L.E.A.D. PROGRAM

The Middle Township Police Department has conducted the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance and Education) Program in the Middle Township Schools since 1990 up until 2014. Starting in 2015, the Middle Township Police Department joined the L.E.A.D. (Law Enforcement Against Drugs). To date over 6,400 Middle Township students have gone through the DARE Program. The L.E.A.D. Program is taught at Elementary #2's fifth (5th) grade and Middle Township Middle School seventh (7th) grade. This program is 10 weeks long, and trained Officers visit their assigned class once a week and teach a prescribed curriculum. In 2020, due to Covid restrictions, the L.E.A.D. Program was suspended.



Officers who teach the L.E.A.D. Program include:

Sergeant Tracey Super
Sergeant Joshua Bryan
Corporal Eugene Castellano

Patrolman Justin Vitola
PFC Julio Ruiz

RECORDS DIVISION

The Records Division of the Police Department supports the operational efforts of the patrol and investigative functions as well as performing a variety of other services, including but not limited to:

- Data entry
- Report maintenance/
filing/retrieval/OPRA requests
- Issuing Licenses
- Copy reports for Civilians /
Attorneys / Law Enforcement
Agencies / Insurance Companies
- Expungement Orders
- Issue Temporary Handicap
Placards
- Division of Child Protection and
Permanency Backgrounds
- Process Firearms Applications
- Process Fingerprint Cards
- Process Juvenile Complaints
- Conduct Monthly statistic
- Prepare Uniform Crime Reports



MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

The work they do and the support they provide is invaluable. They are a great asset to this Department. During 2020, the Records Section staff consisted of the following employees:

Kendra Karstens
Sandra Sickerott

Lauren Cajigas
Alexis Kern

COMMUNICATIONS

The Middle Township Police Department Communications Center is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by full time Public Safety Telecommunication Operators. They are the initial point of contact for a majority of the public requiring police services. They are an extremely vital component in delivering effective police services to the community, and their dedication and importance should not be overlooked. Many times they are required to maintain a reassuring and calming demeanor in the face of extraordinary circumstances in



order to assist the caller and the Police Officer responding to an emergency. All of the Public Safety Telecommunication Operators are required to receive and maintain certification by the Office of Emergency Telecommunications Services in the Department of Law and Public Safety. Some of the examples of work performed include:

- Receive and respond to telephone requests for emergency services.
- In response to medical emergencies, provide First Aid or CPR instructions to stabilize the medical condition of persons until the arrival of medical assistance.
- Relay all vital information to responding police officers.
- Utilize radio, telephone, or other electronic equipment to dispatch specific law enforcement, Fire Department or Medical Units to the scene of an emergency.
- Refer non-emergency situations to the appropriate public or private agencies.
- Make data entries into the Police Department's computer system as well as various systems databases such as the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and the State Crime Information Center (SCIC).

The Middle Township Police Department employs (nine) full time Telecommunication Operators, (two) assigned to each of the (four) patrol squads. The ninth operator is used to cover vacations, training, illnesses, and other time off issues, which helps in

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

minimizing overtime costs. The Department employs an additional seven part time Communications Operators who assist in staffing the dispatch center as needed during unscheduled shortages or other time off. It is mandatory that at all times, there are two operators present in the dispatch center.

The following qualified and dedicated employees fill this highly important and stressful position as of 12/31/2020:

Senior Operator Jennifer Graham
Senior Operator Dustin Gaskill
Senior Operator Kyle Lindholm
Operator William Belles
Operator W. Kyle Bryant
P/T Operator Jeremy Embs
P/T Operator Mark Newman
P/T Operator Joe Repici
P/T Operator Jen Teasenfitz
P/T Operator Nicole Day
P/T Operator Maghi Draghi
P/T Operator Brandon Mitchell

Senior Operator Dave Atkinson
Operator Josh Tozer
Operator Paul Fritsch
Operator Dustin Kelly

Middle Township Police Department Telecommunications Operators handled the following:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Calls for service:	43,874	33,705	-10,169
9-1-1 Calls:	11,200	11,985	+785
Average 911 calls per day:	30.7	32.8	+2.1

Senior Operator Jennifer Graham is a certified Emergency Medical Dispatch Instructor as well as a 911 Instructor. Operator Graham is also a Terminal Agency Coordinator.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

The Middle Township Police Department is committed to providing Law Enforcement Services that are fair, effective, and impartially applied. Toward that end our Officers are held to the highest standards of official conduct, and are expected to respect the rights of all citizens. The adherence of Officers to these standards, motivated by a moral and professional obligation to perform their job to the best of their ability; is the ultimate objective of this agency. The effectiveness of a Law Enforcement Agency is dependent upon approval and acceptance of police authority. The Department must be responsive to the community by providing formal procedures for the processing of complaints from the public regarding individual Officer performance.

The purpose of the Internal Affairs Policy is to improve the quality of Law Enforcement Services. Citizen confidence in the integrity of the Police Department increases through the establishment of meaningful and effective complaint procedures. This confidence engenders community support for the Police Department and improves the relationship between police and the citizens they serve by facilitating cooperation vital to the Department's ability to achieve its goals. An effective disciplinary framework also permits Police Officials to monitor Officer's compliance with Department policies and procedures. Adherence to established policies and procedures assist Officers in meeting Department objectives while a monitoring system permits managers to identify problem areas requiring increased training, direction or policy changes. Finally, the Internal Affairs Policy ensures fairness and due process protection to citizens and officers alike.

In 2020, there were a total of **41 Internal Affairs Complaints** received and 41 cases which reached a disposition. It should be noted some of the dispositions were carried over from the previous year. See the below for the disposition types.

2020 Internal Affairs Dispositions

Excessive Force: 1 Unfounded

Improper Entry: 1 Unfounded

Differential Treatment: 3 Unfounded

Other Criminal Violation: 1 Sustained

Demeanor: 1 Exonerated/2 Not Sustained/9 Unfounded

Domestic Violence: 1 Sustained/1 Unfounded

Other Rule Violation: 11 Sustained/9 Unfounded/1 Administratively Closed

7 of the Sustained Other Rule Violations were traffic crashes

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Major Discipline Disclosure:

1. An employee was suspended for 45 days for Conduct Unbecoming, which occurred off-duty.
2. An employee was suspended for 45 days for Conduct Unbecoming, which occurred off-duty.

The Middle Township Police Department works closely with the Cape May County Prosecutors Office and many of the internal affairs investigations are worked jointly between both Departments. This is to ensure that the highest quality of investigation is conducted.

The Internal Affairs Division is commanded by Captain Donald Nelson.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The Middle Township Police Department recognizes that quality of life issues can have a direct impact on crime as well as the ability of residents to feel safe within their neighborhoods. In an effort to improve the quality of life for the residents of Middle Township, the Police Department assumed control of the Code Enforcement function of Middle Township. The Code Enforcement Unit is a civilian staffed unit tasked with investigating and enforcing the local ordinances of Middle Township.



Code Enforcement Officer - Officer James Amenhauser

The Code Enforcement Officers issue violation notices to residents who are not in compliance with the Middle Township Code. If a property is not brought into compliance, a complaint summons may be issued to ensure compliance.

Total Code Enforcement calls for service in 2020: 1000

Below is a breakdown of some of the more common violations:

Property maintenance violations	393
Uncut grass	311
Unregistered/Junk Vehicles	32

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Illegal Dumping	4
Complaint Summonses issued for non-compliance:	10

VACANT PROPERTY REGISTRATION PROGRAM

Middle Township enacted a Vacant Property Registration Ordinance which became effective in 2019.

The Purpose of the ordinance is to:

- Identify properties in the foreclosure process (vacant or occupied)
- Require mortgage lenders to register properties that are in the foreclosure process and provide emergency contact information
- Provide emergency contact information concerning these properties and input that information into the Police Department Records Management System
- Identify deteriorated or neglected properties detracting from neighborhood values and report them to Code Enforcement for follow-up action
- Conduct regular follow-up and monthly inspections of the registered properties to ensure compliance
- Conduct monthly inspections of the entire township visually looking for other properties that are abandoned or neglected and report them to township authorities

These duties are assigned to a contractually approved third party company that specializes in this type of activity. The current company who is handling this for the Township is *Preferred Neighborhood Solutions*, based out of North Wildwood, NJ.

Total Properties Registered in 2020: 158

This figure fluctuates throughout the year as properties are bought and sold and are no longer falling under the guidelines of the ordinance.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Animal control services for Middle Township are overseen by the Middle Township Police Department. Animal complaints are investigated and handled by one full time animal control officer/animal cruelty investigator. In 2017, we added a trained part time Animal Control Officer, Kyle Lindholm. Kyle Lindholm is also a full time Communications Operator and has a good working knowledge of the Animal Control function. The Township also has a relationship with Animal Control of South Jersey to assist with animal complaints when the animal control officer(s) are unavailable.



MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>Change</u>
Total Animal Related Calls:	1179	1147	-32
Animal Cruelty Cases Investigated:	130	92	-32
Unlicensed Dog Cases:	82	38	-44

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

One of the most important responsibilities of a Law Enforcement Agency is the training and education of all its personnel. The Police Department has in place a comprehensive policy that addresses the organization and administration of the entire training process, including recruit training, in service training, roll call training, and specialized training.

The Special Services Unit, under the command of Lt. James Loftus, who along with Sgt. Mark Higginbottom, oversees the training component of the Department. Cpl. James D'Alonzo and Cpl. Phillip Johnson, members of this unit, keep track of all the mandatory training records. In addition, they identify problems and trends and then formulate strategies for training to deal with the issues for submission to the Chief of Police.



The Lead Training Officer for the Department is Cpl. James D'Alonzo. He is charged with making sure Officers of the Department are up to date with our training. This includes mandated firearms qualifications, less than lethal weapons qualifications, and policy reviews with Officers on the subject of use of force, vehicular pursuits, and domestic violence. Cpl. D'Alonzo also reviews safe tactics for Officers to use during the many different situations Officers may face during the performance of their job.

In 2017, the Department implemented (two) additional eight-hour training sessions, labeled as "Advanced Training". This training is now mandatory for all Officers and Detectives to attend, as they have become part of the standard annual training for the Department. These training sessions hit on training in such areas as active shooter, building and room clearing, weapon control and shooting, use of force, departmental policy updates, court case law updates, dealing with critical incidents, de-escalation techniques and many more areas experienced in today's policing.

The men and women of the Middle Township Police Department attended a wide variety of in-service and virtual training courses throughout 2020 including but not limited to:

- Bloodborne Pathogens
- Property and Evidence

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

- Firearms Qualifications
- SWAT Training
- Hostage Negotiation Training
- Dive Team Training
- Assault Rifle Qualifications
- Active Shooter Response
- CPR Recertification
- Use of Force
- Domestic Violence
- Vehicle Pursuit
- Interview and Interrogation
- Incident Command
- Hazmat
- Radar Instructor and Operator
- High Risk Motor Vehicle Stops
- Accident Investigations I and II
- Alcotest Operator Training
- Advanced Roadside Impaired Driver Enforcement
- Cell Block Management
- Arrest Search and Seizure Updates and Retraining
- HGN-DWI Refresher
- Fraudulent Document School
- Police Supervision School
- Taser Training
- Field Training Officer
- Firearms Instructor
- Sex Crimes Investigations
- Search Warrant Preparation
- Handle with Care Training
- Mental Health First Aid

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Police Department members who hold the rank of Instructor:

In addition to their normal work duties, several Middle Township Police Officers have attained the position of being Instructors in a specific field or multiple fields. These Officers conduct intradepartmental in-service training to Department Members. Many of them are also Instructors at the Cape May County Police Academy. Officers who are Instructors are as follows:

Chief Christopher Leusner	History of Law Enforcement and Community Policing
Lt. Robert Shepherd	Criminal Law, Physical Training Instructor
Lt. James Loftus	Firearms
Sgt. Mark Higginbottom	Patrol Concepts, Fair and Impartial Policing, Firearms
Sgt. Josh Bryan	Physical Training Instructor
Cpl. Jason Sweitzer	Physical Training Instructor, Military Drill
Cpl. Phil Johnson	Firearms Instructor
Cpl. Leonard Larkin	Physical Training Instructor, Military Drill
Cpl. John Norton	Patrol Concepts
Cpl. James D'Alonzo	Firearms, Officer Survival, Police Simulator Instructor
Cpl. David Hagan	Patrol Concepts
Cpl. Mike Pastore	CPR / First Aid, First Responder, Military Drill
Det. Kurt Saettler	Criminal Law

SPECIAL UNITS

SWAT Team (Special Weapons and Tactics)

The Middle Township Police Department had maintained and operated its own SWAT Team for approximately 20 years. In 2007, the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office, with the cooperation of the Cape May County Chiefs of Police Association, formed a Regional Countywide SWAT Team. In 2008, Wildwood Police Department came on board. The County Team is now divided into two geographical regions: Mainland and Island divisions. Every Police Department in the County has representation on the team. Middle Township Officers are assigned to the Mainland Division.

Team members undergo a very rigorous training schedule, tactically, mentally, and physically. These members work with their respective Agencies as Officers doing



MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

normal duties, but when necessary are called upon to conduct SWAT operations. They are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The position of a SWAT member is voluntary. Selection to become a member of the team is very competitive and their own department must select Officers. These Officers are selected based upon their past performance and attitude. Then they must attend a rigorous two-week SWAT course. Team members must train at least twelve 12 hours per month, and training sessions are held two times per month.

The Cape May County Regional SWAT Team was activated 20 times in 2020, 12 call outs being strictly Mainland Division Operations. The SWAT Team was also used for mutual aid for out of county and out of Jurisdiction assistance on multiple occasions.

Along with the SWAT callouts, the SWAT Team provides security for different community events throughout the County. The SWAT Team was also used to make appearances at different Police Youth Camps, LEAD events, and National Night Out.

Middle Township Police Officers assigned to the Regional Swat Team include:

Corporal Phil Johnson (Asst. Commander) Corporal James D'Alonzo

Corporal Ronald Miller

Sergeant Brian Murphy

Patrolman Tom Ritterhoff

DIVE TEAM

The Middle Township Police Department maintains a fully operational and Certified Marine Search and Recovery Dive Team. The Department maintains 2 vessels: one is a Carolina Skiff center console, and the other is an aluminum johnboat.



The Department has seven Certified Divers with a full complement of dive equipment. The team had seven (7) training sessions and three dive assignments in 2020. This year's training was cut short due to the Corona Virus Pandemic. Training takes place in local gravel pits, lakes, and in the Delaware Bay and Atlantic Ocean. The team also attended/assisted with the Wildwood Polar Plunge, Stone Harbor Polar Plunge, Sea Isle Polar Plunge, Ocean City Air Show, National Night Out, as well as the Middle Township L.E.A.D day, and The Middle Township Police Department Youth Camp. The team has been utilized many times to assist other Agencies in rescue and recovery operations.

Detective/Sergeant Clint Stocker, Sergeant Mark Higginbottom, Corporal John Norton and Patrolman Thomas Ritterhoff hold Specialty Dive Certifications in Underwater

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Crime Scene Investigations, Underwater Criminal Investigations, Evidence Recovery, Body Recovery, Vehicle Recovery, and Underwater Metal Detecting and hold the Master Underwater Crime Scene Investigator certificates.

Members of the Dive Team are:

Det/Sgt. Clint Stocker (Team Leader)

Sgt. Mark Higginbottom

Cpl. John Norton

Ptln. Shawn Karge

Sgt. Tracy Super

Ptln. Michael Pastore

Ptln. Thomas Ritterhoff

CRISIS / HOSTAGE NEGOTIATIONS TEAM

The Middle Township Police Department employs Officers that are certified and highly trained in Crisis and Hostage Negotiations. A County regional team was formed in 2009 with Middle Township's existing team acting as a foundation for the Cape May County Crisis Negotiation Team. The Middle Township Police Department has six Officers assigned to the Cape May County Crisis Negotiation Team. The Officers are available to respond to any incident within Middle Township or anywhere within the county to assist in negotiations. The team trains on a regular basis and is often called out in conjunction with the Cape May County Regional SWAT team.



The following Officers are assigned to the Cape May County Crisis Negotiation Team:

Lt. James Loftus

Detective Dan Martin

Ptl. Tom Flounders

PFC Julio Ruiz

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

HONOR GUARD

The Middle Township Police Department maintains a formal Police Honor Guard. The purpose of the Honor Guard is to formally represent the Middle Township Police Department at various official functions and community events. The Honor Guard Members wear a formal uniform blouse and utilize ceremonial rifles and flags. The Honor Guard presents the colors at events such as Police Academy graduations, LEAD Graduations, Township Parades, and fallen Officer funerals. The Honor Guard has also had the privilege of presenting the colors at the New Jersey Special Olympics opening ceremonies in Trenton for over two decades.



Members of the Honor Guard include:

Lt. James Loftus (Unit Commander)
Sergeant Tracey Super (Unit Leader)
Cpl John Norton
Cpl Ron Miller
Cpl Dave Hagan
Detective Kurt Saettler
Patrolman Brian Vergantino
Patrolman Justin Vitola

DFC Dan Martin
Patrolman Jonas McInnis
Patrolman Greg DeCecco

CRASH TEAM

Members of the Middle Township Crash Investigation Team have specialized training to investigate serious motor vehicle crashes. The members receive specialized training provided by North Western University and the Institute of Police Technology and Management. The courses are: Basic Crash Investigation (Crash I), Advanced Crash Investigation (Crash II), Pedestrian/Bicycle Crash



MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Investigation, Motorcycle Crash Investigation, Heavy Vehicle Crash, Occupant Kinematics, Vehicle Dynamics and Traffic Crash Reconstruction.

These training courses allow the unit to complete the following:

- Scaled computer diagramming
- Mathematical analysis
- Damage evaluations
- Seatbelt, headlamp, and tire examination
- Scene measurements
- Documentation of road type and tire friction
- High and low speed collision
- Bicycle collisions
- Semi-truck/commercial vehicle accidents
- Motorcycle collisions

The Middle Township Crash Team employs the following equipment to assist with crash investigations: Laser Impulse, Recon Data Recorder, Map Star System Angle Encoder, Prism and Pole, Drag Boot, Crash Zone software for scale diagrams, Measuring Tapes, Marking Paint, Chalk, and other miscellaneous equipment.

The Crash Team meets periodically during the year for training updates and familiarization with the equipment.

Members include:

Lt. James Loftus (Commander)
Cpl. James D'Alonzo (Unit Leader)
PFC Martin Lindholm(Asst. Unit Leader)
PFC Armondo Jones
PFC Matt Martino
DFC Dan Martin
Ptl. Justin Vitola
Det. Tom Flounders
Ptl. Greg Dececco
Ptl. Mark Bakley

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

BICYCLE PATROL

The Middle Township Police Department utilizes bicycles to supplement patrol, as well as for special community events, throughout the year. The members assigned to the unit can be assigned to regular patrol cars and patrol units, but are equipped with racks that will hold the bicycle. When manpower permits, the Officers will conduct bicycle patrols in business Districts of the Township, some residential areas, and the Township bike path. In addition, these Officers will be used for various Township special events throughout the year. The bicycles are also used when we experience increased issues, such as burglaries or criminal mischief problems, in certain areas of the Township. The Officers may be assigned to these areas to address the issue. Class II Officers also may receive bicycle training and be assigned to the Rio Grande area during the summer months. The Officers assigned to these areas help to increase officer visibility as well as making themselves more approachable to members of the public as well as Business Owners. The Special Services Unit can also utilize the bikes to maintain a Police presence on the bike path, riding back and forth between Cape May Court House and Rio Grande.



Trained Bike Officers:

Sgt. Mark Higginbottom
Cpl. Phillip Johnson
Cpl. Geno Castellano
Sgt. Len Larkin
PFC Armondo Jones
PFC Dan Geiger

Cpl. James D'Alonzo
Cpl. Dave Hagan
Cpl. Ron Miller

DRUG RECOGNITION EXPERTS

The Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) Program is a National effort to deter impaired driving by increasing the likelihood that people who drive under the influence of drugs will be detected, caught, convicted and punished. The DEC Program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and is administered and coordinated by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). The DEC Program focuses on a 12 step examination which makes up the DRE drug influence examination. The training consists of three phases: a two day Pre-School, a seven day DRE School and



MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Certification Training which consists of 6 field evaluations and witnessing 6 other field evaluations. Upon completion of all three phases certification is achieved.

An evaluation consists of 12 steps. The initial is the breath test completed by the Arresting Officer. If the Blood Alcohol Concentration reading is less than 0.08% and the Officer believes the subject appears more impaired than what the reading suggests a DRE is requested. The responding DRE performs more in-depth testing of the subject to determine if the subject is under the influence of one or more of seven drug categories.

The Department currently has three Drug Recognition Experts: Patrolman David Hagan, Corporal Leonard Larkin, and Patrolman Brian Murphy.

In 2011, the Department joined a grant with Atlantic County. The grant reimburses the Department \$220.00 each time a DRE is called in to complete an Evaluation when the officer is off duty (\$110.00 if the Officer is on duty at the time he or she is needed). The grant will also reimburse the Department an additional \$220.00 or if an Officer has to appear in court for up to 2 court dates.

ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

The Middle Township Police Department participates in the New Jersey State Association Chiefs of Police Law Enforcement Accreditation Program. This is a voluntary State program developed by the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police and is modeled after the CALEA national program. The Accreditation Program requires compliance with a series of professional standards designed specifically for New Jersey Law Enforcement Agencies. The program promotes the best practices in Law Enforcement. The Department was initially accredited in 2006 and reaccredited in 2010, 2013, and 2016.



On November 3rd, 2019, a team of assessors from the New Jersey Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission (NJLEAC) came to this Department to evaluate the Department's policies and procedures, management, operations and support services. The Department had to comply with 112 standards in order to be reaccredited. The assessment team was composed of Law Enforcement Practitioners from other Agencies in the State. The assessors reviewed written materials, interviewed individuals, and visited offices and other areas where compliance can be witnessed. After a review of the Department, reaccreditation was granted. Accreditation status is for 3 years, and during this period the department must submit annual reports attesting to continued compliance with those standards with which it received accreditation. In 2022, the Department will again go through the process to be reevaluated for accreditation.

Captain William Adams is the Accreditation Manager.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

FALSE ALARM REDUCTION PROGRAM

On May 3, 2010 the Township Committee of Middle Township, repealed their prior false alarm Ordinance and approved a new alarm Ordinance to encourage alarm users to properly use and maintain the operational effectiveness of alarm systems; in order to improve the reliability of alarm systems and reduce or eliminate false alarms. Middle Township has always had an Ordinance dealing with False Alarms, but with a decrease in manpower both sworn and civilian personnel, it is very time consuming to manage. A decision was made to privatize this function and Middle Township, on behalf of the Middle Township Police Department, entered into a contract with ATB Services to administer its Alarm Ordinance. In 2012, ATB Services was sold to PMAM Corporation.



In the past Middle Township had well over 1,000 false alarms a year that could be easily prevented. Each alarm in Middle Township must be registered so we can reach people in the event of emergencies. Unfortunately, approximately only 400 alarms were registered in Middle Township out of approximately 1,000 in operation. Many times Officers and Dispatchers were wasting valuable time trying to locate an emergency contact from an unregistered alarm or failure to update their contact sheet on file. This Ordinance will result in a decrease of false alarms, quicker response from emergency contacts, and a more efficient use of one of the most expensive costs we have: the time of a sworn Law Enforcement Officer.

The alarm program has yielded positive results which can be seen by the false alarm data below. Shown is a comparison of the years 2009 through 2020. Numbers are the number of false alarms for each month.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2009	117	81	103	101	82	99	122	139	132	96	97	107
2010	92	150	135	117	116	118	142	99	77	78	78	106
2011	95	79	65	76	70	77	78	99	69	78	75	71
2012	77	59	74	69	72	90	69	79	68	78	59	76
2013	71	57	68	61	71	76	85	99	58	86	90	87
2014	101	66	76	60	76	80	64	77	74	66	74	66
2015	78	79	70	77	77	100	86	89	76	89	73	71
2016	91	69	54	54	60	80	80	65	57	59	82	74
2017	61	57	77	75	57	72	91	66	64	84	77	93
2018	75	50	80	48	68	89	75	73	74	58	54	71
2019	94	66	62	71	101	78	91	60	65	92	87	43
2020	74	56	50	51	70	69	61	82	50	42	49	55

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Yearly Totals:

2009 - 1,276
2010 - 1,216
2011 - 932
2012 - 870
2013 - 909
2014 - 880
2015 - 965
2016 - 829
2017 - 874
2018 - 815
2019 - 910
2020 - 709

Year to year comparisons:

Comparing 2009 to 2010, alarms are down by 60 which is a 4.7% decrease.
Comparing 2010 to 2011, alarms are down by 284 which is a 23.4% decrease.
Comparing 2011 to 2012, alarms are down by 62 which is a 6.7% decrease.
Comparing 2012 to 2013, alarms are up by 39 which is a 4.5% increase from 2012.
Comparing 2013 to 2014, alarms are down by 29, which is a 3.2% decrease from 2013.
Comparing 2014 to 2015, alarms are up by 85 which is a 9.7% increase from 2014.
Comparing 2015 to 2016, alarms are down by 136 which is a 14% decrease from 2015.
Comparing 2016 to 2017, alarms are up by 45 which is a 5.4% increase from 2016.
Comparing 2017 to 2018, alarms are down by 59 which is a 6.8% decrease from 2017.
Comparing 2018 to 2019, alarms are up by 95 which is a 11.7% increase from 2018.
Comparing 2019 to 2020, alarms are down by 201, which is a 22.01% decrease from 2019.

As indicated above, prior to the implementation of this program there were about 400 registered alarms within the Township. As of this report date, there are 874 registered alarms which is more than double the initial number. It should be noted that on several occasions the Officer is “cancelled” prior to arrival, or when the alarm owner/company determines Police are not needed. This aspect of the program allows Police to remain free to respond to other valid calls. This program has also resulted in better contact information being provided for Police.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP AWARDS COMMITTEE

The Middle Township Awards Committee was reinstituted in 2010. The Awards Committee consists of Lieutenant James Loftus, Detective Sergeant Clint Stocker, Detective First Class Allan McClure, Detective Jason Sweitzer, and Detective Daniel Martin. The committee reviews submissions for awards and has the sole authority in making the final determination. Our Fifth Awards Dinner was held in March of 2019 and a list of the award recipients is listed below:



- | | |
|---|--|
| • Chief Leusner | Academy Instructor and 20 Years Award |
| • Capt. Don Nelson | 20 Years Award |
| • Lt. Bob Shepherd | Academy Instructor and 20 Years Award |
| • Lt. James Loftus | Crash Team |
| • Lt. Doug Osmundsen | Academy Instructor and 20 Years Award |
| • DSG. Clint. Stocker | Meritorious Service, Distinguished Honor, and 20 Years Award |
| • Sgt. Mark Higginbottom | Academy Instructor and Firearms Instructor |
| • Sgt. Fran Fiore | Medal of Valor and 20 Years Award |
| • Sgt. Jen Delanzo | Firearms Instructor and 20 Years Award |
| • Sgt. Tracey Super | Accreditation and Distinguished Honor |
| • DFC. Allan McClure | Meritorious Service, Distinguished Honor, and 20 Years Award |
| • Det. Jack Trombetta | Meritorious Service Award, 2 Distinguished Honor, and Firearms Instructor |
| • Det. Jason Sweitzer | Meritorious Service and 2 Distinguished Honor |
| • Det. Daniel Martin | Medal of Valor, Meritorious Service, 2 Distinguished Honor, Accreditation, |
| and Crash Team | |
| • Det. Brian Murphy | 2 Distinguished Honor |
| • Cpl. Fred Crawley | Meritorious Service, 2016 Marksman, and 20 Years Award |
| • Cpl. Gino Castellano | LEAD, Motorcycle Unit, and Bicycle Unit |
| • Cpl. Phil Johnson | Firearms Instructor |
| • Cpl. James D'Alonzo | Crash Team and Community Service Unit |
| • Cpl. John Norton | Master Underwater Investigator, Meritorious Service, Distinguished Honor, |
| Academy Instructor, and Firearms Instructor | |
| • Cpl. Ron Miller | Firearms Instructor |
| • Cpl. David Hagan | Distinguished Honor and Academy Instructor |
| • PFC. Julio Ruiz | School Resource Officer and LEAD |
| • PFC. Matthew Martino | Distinguished Honor and Crash Team |
| • Det.. Kurt Saettler | Meritorious Service and 2 Distinguished Honor |
| • PFC. Daniel Geiger | 2 Meritorious Service, Distinguished Honor, Good Conduct, and Community |
| Service Unit | |
| • Ptlm. Martin Lindholm | Crash Team, School Resource Officer, LEAD, Community Service Unit |
| • PFC Armondo Jones | Meritorious Service, 2 Distinguished Honor, Accident Reconstructionist, |
| Crash Team, and Training Officer | |
| • Ptlm. Jeff Salvesen | Education Achievement |
| • Ptlm. Brian Vergantino | Life Saving, Training Officer, Community Service Unit, Honor Guard, and |
| Good Conduct | |
| • Ptlm. Justin Vitola | Life Saving, Distinguished Honor, Crash Team, Community Service Unit, and |
| Honor Guard | |
| • Ptlm. Michael Pastore | Meritorious Service, 3 Distinguished Honor, 2018 Marksman, Baby Delivery, |
| Dive Team, Academy Instructor, and Good Conduct | |

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

- Ptlm. Shawn Karge Life Saving, Training Officer, and Good Conduct
- Ptlm. Michael Reardon 2 Meritorious Service, Distinguished Honor, Good Conduct
- Ptlm. Ben Stiefel Education Achievement
- Ptlm. Jonas McInnis 2 Distinguished Honor and Honor Guard
- Ptlm. Tom Ritterhoff Master Underwater Investigator and Education Achievement
- Ptlm. Mark Bakley 2017 Marksman and Crash Team
- Ptlm. Thomas Flounders Meritorious Service, Crisis Negotiator, Education Achievement, and Crash Team
- Ptlm. Dylan Young Medal of Valor, Meritorious Service, Distinguished Honor, and Baby Delivery
- Ptlm. Trevor MacCormack Education Achievement
- Ptlm. Thomas Runyon Meritorious Service and 2 Distinguished Honor
- Ptlm. Blake Martindale Distinguished Honor
- Ptlm. Gregory Dececco 3 Distinguished Honor, Crash Team, and Honor Guard
- Ptl. Officer Pamela Gittle Military Member
- Ptlm. Christopher Russ Distinguished Honor
- Class II Paul Mueller Military Member
- Dispatcher Jennifer Graham 25 Years Award
- Dispatcher Robert Eagan Distinguished Honor and 15 Years Award
- Dispatcher Dustin Gaskill 10 Years Award
- Dispatcher Atkinson Meritorious Service, 2 Distinguished Honor, and 5 Years Award
- Dispatcher Kyle Lindholm 2 Meritorious Service and Distinguished Honor
- Dispatcher William Belles Distinguished Honor
- Records Kendra Karstens 10 Years Award
- Records Sandra Sickerott 5 Years Award

The following officer received Certificates of Recognition for various accomplishments:

- Sgt. Kenneth Martin 2017 Presidential Inauguration in Washington, DC
- Cpl. James D'Alonzo 2017 Presidential Inauguration in Washington, DC
- Cpl. David Hagan 15 Years of Service
- Det. Jack Trombetta Senior Officer - 12 years of service, March 2019
- Det. Jason Sweitzer Senior Officer - 12 years of service, August 2013
- Det. Daniel Martin Senior Officer - 12 years of service, August 2018
- Det. Brian Murphy 2017 Presidential Inauguration in Washington, DC
- PFC. Matthew Martino Senior Officer - 12 years of service, February 2019
- Det. Kurt Saettler 2017 Presidential Inauguration in Washington, DC and Performance while on the Street Crimes Unit
- Ptlm. Raymond Bradley 2017 Presidential Inauguration in Washington, DC
- Ptlm. Brian Vergantino 2017 Presidential Inauguration in Washington, DC
- Ptlm. Michael Pastore Performance while on the Street Crimes Unit
- Ptlm. Thomas Ritterhoff Performance while on the Street Crimes Unit

The Next Awards Dinner will be held in March of 2022.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

Middle Township Police Officers have come together and formed the Middle Township Police Officers Association. Each sworn Officer contributes money to fund the association. The purpose of the association is to support a morale and welfare account.



Over the past several years the association has supported numerous community events and partnered with the community to help those less fortunate. The highlights of 2020 included our Annual Toy Drive, partnered with ACME Markets to deliver Thanksgiving meals, participated in No Shave November to raise \$2970 for Cpl. Miller's family whose wife is fighting cancer. During a new event this year, the Middle Township Police Department, in cooperation with the Progressive Black Initiative and non-profit, Ocean Inc, hosted an event targeting positive youth interaction with our Officers during the holiday season, called "Shop with a Cop." Twenty-four (24) children were selected from Middle Township Elementary Schools to participate. Those students were selected based off of the free-lunch program through the school. The twenty-four students, from various age groups, then spent some time shopping with an Officer from our Department shopping for the Holiday Season. This two-hour event was held on December 20th, 2020 and provided valuable positive police interactions at the local Walmart. The Fund also supports the Awards Dinner and Retiree Luncheon.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Law Enforcement Community Engagement Committee

In September, Township Committee created by Ordinance the "Middle Township Law Enforcement Community Engagement Committee." The committee's mission is to give a voice to a diverse group with a shared mission - to foster trust and mutual respect between the Police and the Community. This Committee consists of nine members appointed by the Township Committee and is made up of a balanced mix of local clergy, educators, a representative from the Concerned Citizens of Whitesboro, a member of the local chapter of the NAACP, a representative from the Township's Social Service Partners, and three appointed members that reside in Middle Township. The panel includes a liaison for the MTPD, who would furnish the committee with quarterly data on Police interaction in the community, updates on new and existing programs, and partner with the committee to enhance communication and understanding of available resources.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

“We are excited that we have been able to put this dynamic and diverse group of caring citizens together,” Mayor Tim Donohue stated. “We look forward to building on our ongoing efforts at community policing and outreach. On behalf of Township Committee, I thank all the members for stepping up to help us build a better Middle Township.”

The committee members are:

- Rudy Sheptock, local clergy, three-year term,
- Melisha Anderson, educator, three-year term,
- Butch Harner, Concerned Citizens of Whitesboro, three-year term,
- Quanette Vasser-McNeal, Cape May County NAACP, three-year term
- Dan Auld, Middle Township resident, two-year term,
- AG Anderson, Middle Township resident, two-year term, Maureen Hagen, Middle Township resident, two-year, term Patrick Miller, CARES social service program, one-year term,
- Chief Christopher Leusner, Middle Township Police Department liaison, one-year term, Rachel Shepherd, secretary, one-year term

Additional efforts Community Outreach efforts in 2020 include:

- The Chief of Police attended the following community/civic groups in person meetings and/ or virtual events in 2020: Concerned Citizens of Whitesboro, Cape May County NAACP, Atlantic City NAACP, Middle Township Chamber of Commerce, Cape Assist, Progressive Black Initiative, Cape May County Prosecutor’s Office Social Justice Committee, Soar Church and Safe Community Coalition meeting and events.
- The Middle Township Police Department continues to grow its Facebook fans, Twitter followers and Nixle contacts to communicate with the residents.
- Officers maintained an informational show booth at a limited number of events this year due to COVID-19.
- The Middle Township Police Department supports the Special Olympics by supplying an Honor Guard at the opening ceremonies of the New Jersey State Special Olympics and supplies the Dive Team and boat for the Polar Plunge in Wildwood and Sea Isle City.
- Middle Township released a mobile app available for free download to all residents and visitors to receive updates and information from us.

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

2020 Goals/Results

Patrol Division

In 2020, the Patrol Division had set two Goals. The first goal was to maintain our enforcement goals set for the Rio Grande area, as well as the Route 47 corridor through Middle Township. Improve the quality of life and safety of residents in Rio Grande and increase safety for motorists traveling on State Highway 47. Our objective, was to maintain the number of DDACTS Traffic Stops in 2020 as compared to 2019, conduct a minimum of 1 foot patrol per shift per squad in the DDACT Zone, conduct a minimum of one radar detail a shift per shift per squad on Route 47 between milepost 5 and 8 and milepost 12 and 16.

In 2013, the Department established the DDACTS zone in Rio Grande. Patrols were increased in the zone during peak days and times of criminal activity and motor vehicle accidents. The objective of the 2020 goal was to maintain the number of Traffic Stops in the DDACTS compared to 2019, and conduct a minimum of one foot patrol per shift. Our number of foot patrols in 2020 was 329, which is down from 584 in 2019. Traffic stops were at 781 which is a decrease from 2,103 in 2019.

The Patrol Division saw a decrease in foot patrols in the immediate area as well as a decrease in Motor Vehicle stops. There was also a decrease along the Route 47 south area, from 1113 in 2019 to 485 in 2019. The overall crime rate in the DDACTS zone in 2020 was 119 offenses, down from 122 offense in 2019. This total is down 38.76% from the 2012 rate of 307, the year prior to establishing the DDACTS zone. Motor Vehicle crashes in the DDACTS zone decreased from 337 in 2019 to 236 in 2020. In 2019, there were 52 Crashes involving injury, this decreased to 36 in 2020.

The second goal was to foster and promote resiliency through positive police youth engagement. Our objective was to conduct a minimum of two monthly youth contacts when there is a not a call for service or emergency.

Total Youth Contacts: 2019 310 2020 300

Special Services Unit

The Special Services Unit had set two goals for 2020.

The first goal was to enhance the Department's Missing Person investigations with a focus on juvenile runaways. The Unit updated the Department's Standard Operating Procedure (S.O.P.) pertaining to juvenile runaways. The update focuses on pertinent information on the reasons, causes or situations that may have resulted in why a juvenile would choose to run away. The update gathers information through a follow up questionnaire that is administered by one of our juvenile or School Officers. The purpose

MIDDLE TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

of the follow up is to assist the juvenile in any crisis that the juvenile may be experiencing with the intent to prevent future occurrences.

The second goal was to enhance the Department's response to incidents to reduce the impact of trauma on children. The unit developed and assembled 'comfort bags' with the purpose to distribute them to children who are involved in or experiencing a traumatic event. The 'comfort bags' contain various items that are designed to help calm and comfort a young child during these incidents. The 'comfort bags' were placed in every police vehicle and the Officers were trained on the purpose and use of the 'comfort bags'.

Major Crimes Unit

In 2020, the Middle Township Police Department's Major Crimes Unit set two goals. The first goal was to do a complete review of all cold cases before the end of 2020. The second goal was to attempt to educate residents and raise awareness about Scams and Cybercrimes.

2020: Goal # 1

All "Cold Cases" were reviewed by the Detective Sergeant, then discussed and evaluated by all members of the unit, in an effort to get a new "set of eyes" and possibly new ideas on the old cases. "Cold Cases" are described as unsolved criminal investigations which remain open pending the discovery of new evidence.

At the beginning of 2020, the Major Crimes Unit had 59 cases that are considered "Cold Cases". Of these cases, 3 were solved or closed, 2 are awaiting results of fingerprint analysis, and 8 were reopened due to new evidence; resulting in a remaining 46 cold cases to carry forward into 2021.

2020: Goal #2

Multiple videos, media articles, and local police warnings were posted to Social Media regarding scams and Cyber Crimes for the public to read. We were unable to achieve our goal of doing in person presentations due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and its restrictions.

Appendix A: 2021 Proposals

National Incident Based Reporting System

The New Jersey State Police will be requiring all Police Departments in New Jersey to transition from the Uniform Crime Reporting System to the National-Incident Based Reporting System or NIBRS on January 1, 2021. Detailed incident-based data is what the National Incident-Based Reporting System brings to the UCR table. The NIBRS-only data collection will provide more detailed, richer data on more offenses than is currently available through summary data.

The National Incident-Based Reporting System was implemented to improve the overall quality of crime data collected by law enforcement, captures details on each single crime incident—as well as on separate offenses within the same incident including: information on victims, known offenders, relationships between victims and offenders, arrestees, and property involved in the crimes.

Mental Health Response Teams

Law Enforcement Officers frequently encounter persons with disabilities or individuals who are experiencing a mental health crisis. Unfortunately, because of failures in the mental health system here in New Jersey, Law Enforcement in many cases is left to handle these issues. In December 2020, the New Jersey Attorney General issued a directive mandating county working groups to improve Law Enforcement interactions with special needs populations and those living with mental or behavioral health issues.

We have engagement with various social service partners in the community for many years to help connect citizens with services. However, there is a growing and urgent need in our opinion for the state to devote more resources to mental health issues and reduce the burden currently being placed on Law Enforcement. We plan on working with the County Prosecutor as directed in the Attorney General Directive to hopefully identify funding streams to create a rapid mental health response when Officers interact with someone in crisis or suffering from mental health issues. We have seen an increase in calls for service for minor issues and in many cases, repeated calls for the same person over one shift. Our hope would be for this rapid response team help bring those situations and others to a successful conclusion.

Capital Improvements

1. Sergeant Vehicles and Pick Up Truck

\$200,000

Our Sergeant Expeditions are ten years old and approaching the end of their useful life. The expenses are starting to rise to keep these vehicles in a safe condition and on the street. I recommend we purchase four Ford Explorers to replace these vehicles.

We have been utilizing a Hummer we obtained from the 1033 program for the Crash Investigation Team and the Dive Team. We have recently been experiencing a lot of

Appendix A: 2021 Proposals

problems and will most likely be recommending it for auction. We have had it for a period of time where the Federal Government allows to auction the vehicle. I recommend we buy a pickup truck with a cap to replace the hummer.

2. Access Control Doors

\$10,000

We would like to add some access control doors to our existing system. The doors include our evidence room, storage room and the door entering the rear of the Court Room which we can set to certain times during court hours as opposed to physically locking the door.

3. Purchase Additional (CEDs) Devices (TASERS)

\$30,000

We would like to increase the number of less lethal Conducted Energy Devices (CEDs) Devices to allow as many Patrol Officers as possible to carry a CED Device. This less lethal CED device provides an important and necessary tool for Police Officers in this day and age. We currently have 20 Officers trained and 9 CED Devices. The training frequency has increased and in turn allows us to equip Officers with these devices. The additional devices we would purchase would replace older devices reaching the end of their useful life, and increase the total number of devices assigned to the Patrol Division.

Appendix B: 2021 Goals

Patrol Division

Goal #1

Improve quality of life and safety of Residents in Rio Grande and increase safety for Motorists traveling on State Highway 47.

Objective:

Conduct at least 1400 traffic stops within the DDACTS zone during 2021, conduct a minimum of one foot patrol per shift, in the DDACT Zone, conduct a minimum of one radar detail per shift, on Route 47 between milepost 5 and 8 and milepost 12 and 16.

Strategies:

1. Continue DDACTS enforcement actions in the Rio Grande area. (Data Driven Approach to Crime and Traffic Safety policing model).
2. Focus patrol time and Police activity during peak days and time.
3. Utilize Class II Officers to partially focus on the Route 47 in the above areas when possible.
4. Educate the Public through social media and traditional media on aggressive driving, distracted driving, and driving while under the influence.

Goal #2:

Foster and promote resiliency through positive police youth engagement.

Objective:

Conduct a minimum of four monthly youth contacts per squad, when there is a not a call for service or emergency.

Strategies:

1. Conduct walk through details on a regular basis at the Township Recreation Centers during scheduled youth sporting events and when School is not in session.
2. Conduct walk through details on a regular basis at Township Schools during the School day as well as at after School activities.
3. Provide resources to juveniles on various youth activities developed by the Special Services Unit.
4. Increase positive field contacts with juveniles during routine patrol.
 - a. Examples include stopping and interacting with juveniles at play in the neighborhoods of the Township.
5. Use the Police Youth Camp as an opportunity to recruit Youth to the Cape May County Sheriff's Department Explorer Program and/or other Programs.

Appendix B: 2021 Goals

Major Crimes Unit

Goal#1

Increase the investigative knowledge, skills and abilities of Officers and improve case outcomes.

Objective:

Conduct at least two training sessions on evidence collection, TRAK message entries, and interview techniques.

Strategies:

1. Develop training program on interviewing strategies and techniques.
2. Provide an overview of the latest case law on Miranda Warnings.
3. Develop training program on crime scene photography strategies and techniques.
4. Provide an overview and orientation of our STAR Witness Software Program.

Goal #2

Improve the tracking of Sex Offenders within Middle Township and transition to the newly mandated Offender Search Tracking System.

Objective:

Conduct 4 random checks to verify Sex Offenders are residing at their registered addresses, to ensure all Sex Offenders are not in violation and to help track the location of all Sex Offenders within Middle Township.

Strategies:

1. Conduct checks throughout the year to verify the addresses of all Sex Offenders.
2. Conduct random audit to ensure an updated list of Sex Offenders in our Computer Aided Dispatch System. The audit will include a review to confirm a flag has been correctly entered for each address.
3. Coordinate with the Street Crimes Unit at least quarterly to review intelligence on current homeless population and address any Megan Law Violations.

Appendix B: 2021 Goals

Special Services Unit

Goal #1

Educate the Public about marijuana use and the negative consequences amongst youth and young adults.

Objective:

Develop and administer during 2021 a public awareness campaign through traditional media and social media to provide an overview of the prevalence of marijuana use among this youth and young adults and the physical, academic, and social consequences and provide tips for how to get involved to prevent marijuana use among youth and young adults.

Strategies:

1. Work with community partners to develop promote PSA's and distribute through traditional media. .
2. Utilize resources from the DEA and CDC to share with the public on social media.
3. Utilize the Police Department website to share various resources.
4. Distribute pamphlets and resources during various community events in 2021.

Goal#2

Increase the Police Department sworn Officer's demographics to reflect as closely as possible the demographics of the Township of Middle based on the most recent Census data.

Objective:

Develop a Recruitment plan by the end of 2021 to increase the number of qualified minority and women employment applications to the Middle Township Police Department.

Strategies:

1. Advertise employment opportunities on the Township of Middle website and Middle Township Police Department website.
2. Advertise employment opportunities with diversity organizations, publications, and websites
3. Attend job fairs throughout the South Jersey Region, focusing on job fairs promoted as "diversity" events.
4. Advertise with Colleges, Universities and Technical Schools throughout New Jersey.

Appendix B: 2021 Goals

Street Crimes Unit

Goal #1

Reduce the use and distribution of methamphetamine throughout Middle Township.

Objective:

Initiate criminal investigations into the distribution of methamphetamine that results in at least 6 arrests by the end of 2021.

Strategies:

1. Work closely with and share information with the Major Crimes Unit as well as the Cape May County Gangs, Guns, and Narcotics Task Force.
2. Gather intelligence information pertaining to the subjects responsible for the distribution of methamphetamine.
3. Execute search warrants on residences where methamphetamine is being distributed and arrest those distributing methamphetamine.

Goal#2

Reduce the use and distribution of heroin/fentanyl in Middle Township.

Objective

Initiate criminal investigations into the distribution of heroin/fentanyl that results in at least 6 arrests by the end of 2021.

Strategies:

1. Work closely with and share information with the Major Crimes Unit as well as the Cape May County Gangs, Guns, and Narcotics Task Force.
2. Gather intelligence information pertaining to the subjects responsible for the distribution of heroin/fentanyl.
3. Execute search warrants on residences where heroin/fentanyl is being distributed and arrest those distributing heroin/fentanyl.