

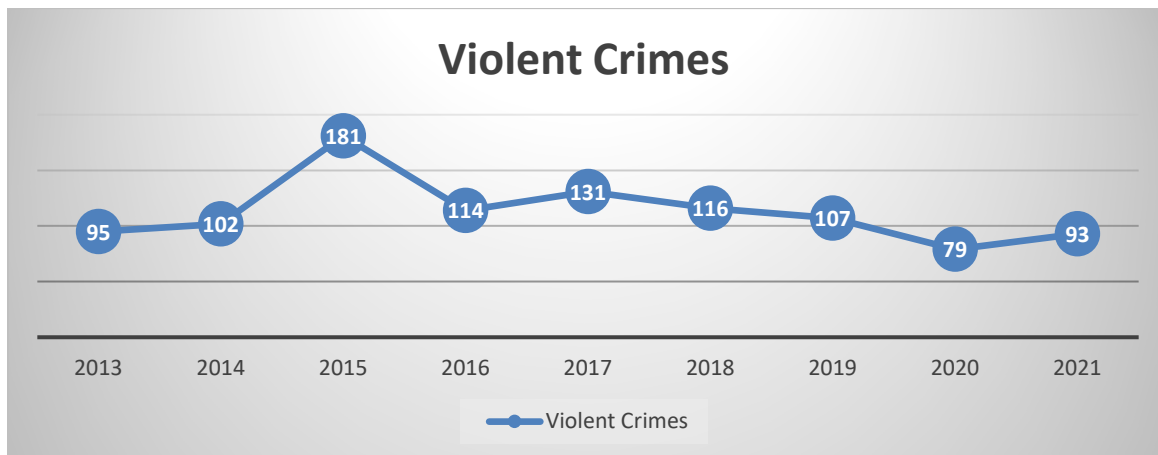
1. What does the Chief think has been most important during his time with the City?

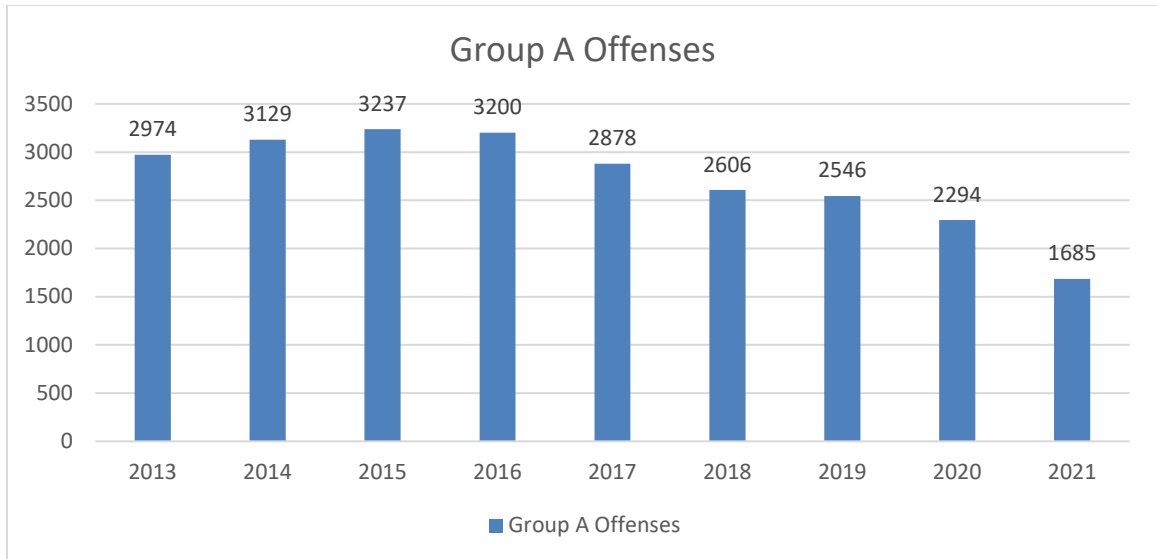
Without a doubt HIRING is the most important thing any leader does. In my case I have hired 27 out of 48 commissioned officers, promoted 6 out of 7 sergeants and both of the captains. I have also hired roughly one-third of the civilian staff.

Would I like to say I increased the number of bi-lingual and bi-cultural employees and the number of women employees – Absolutely. But, despite our continued best efforts at recruitment, I am limited to hiring those candidates who a) apply, and b) pass the tests.

In addition to hiring some awesome people who understand how to operationalize our core values of Service, Pride and Integrity, these same people have had a substantial impact on the crime level in Walla Walla. Since its peak in 2015, we have significantly reduced both violent crimes and overall crimes in Walla Walla. The charts below are graphic representations of that fact. I take great pride in the efforts of our department to help make Walla Walla a safe community in which to live, work and visit.

Unfortunately, we experienced a slight up tic in rapes and aggravated assaults in 2021 which caused our violent crimes number to go up slightly. The numbers however still include any rapes and aggravated assaults that occurred at the Penitentiary which we are required to count as Walla Walla crime statistics although we have no control over those.





2. What does he think were the highs and lows of his service to the Walla Walla community?

The highs for me over the past 10 years of service to the Walla Walla community have been working with great people who are committed to making this the best place possible to live – not only inside the PD but those throughout the City and throughout the community as well. There are some great people in this community doing some great things and it has been my honor and privilege to work with them on many different projects in various capacities.

One of the highs for me has been helping build a values driven organizational culture – one where people do the right thing, even when no one is looking – one where our thank you and kudos out number or complaints roughly 9 to 1 almost every year.

I wouldn't be honest if I didn't say the last two years have provided the lows of my service here and to be perfectly frank, most of the lows over my 37 year career in law enforcement. The George Floyd murder at the hands of a police officer was not only criminal but atrocious and should have shocked all of our consciences. And, it should have caused us all to review our own organizations and practices to ensure we weren't unconsciously or even worse, consciously acting with bias in any way.

Unfortunately, what I experienced was the amygdala hijack of many people (including myself in some instances). Instead of having constructive discussions, there were accusations made and defensive responses based on emotion as opposed to logical, empathetical conversations. I can't think of a more telling example of this than the tattoo controversy. I can tell you I became extremely angry at the demonization of a quality young man who has dedicated his adult life to serving his country and then his community. A compassionate young man who fought and almost lost his life and did lose the life of his friend, defending our Constitutional rights – those same Constitutional rights others would deny him.

Do I wish the Marine Scout Snipers would have picked a different logo years ago – absolutely. Their lack of empathy and understanding of the historic connotation of the double-lightning bolt "S" is tragic. But to demonize a young man for getting a tattoo to memorialize the loss of his friend, without really knowing what is inside his heart, was and still is equally lacking empathy,

understanding and if you ask me, appreciation for the sacrifices he and others have made so that his critics have the right to criticize him.

Honestly, seeing people act this way has me seeing red and in fact I allowed my amygdala to be hijacked in response. In hindsight, I wish I would have been able to channel some more emotional intelligence and work toward having more meaningful conversations about the issue.

3. What does he think the next Chief should know if that person is not from this area?

Get ready to drink from the fire hose. There are a lot of great people doing great things in this community. You need to be build relationships – be face to face with people often. Although it is slowly changing, this is a very provincial community – if you're not 3rd generation, you're not a local. Sometimes it takes time to break through that shell.

Keep the things that are working – make deliberate, well thought out changes.

4. What steps does he think the Department/the City should take to create trust and transparency in the Department over the next few years?

Well, the first thing I need to clarify is that I believe there is a high level of trust already in the PD and its people.

I believe the City is working toward Body Worn Cameras, which some people feel helps enhance trust and transparency. That's a good thing.

I think the biggest thing we can do once COVID is over – start back heavy with our outreach programs – the Community Policing Academy, Ride-a-Longs, Coffee with a Cop, Cafeteria with a Cop, Neighborhood Gatherings, NNO, anything we can do to connect face-to-face with people, get to know them, let them get to know us – listen to concerns and have meaningful conversations.

Trust and transparency and more importantly authenticity do not occur via social media. They are built on face-to-face connections with people. I don't know if the next Chief will reverse my decision on Social Media, but that will be totally up to him or her.

5. What else does the Chief think should be done to increase the diversity of the officer cohort?

Continue to recruit – expand recruitment – enhance support program – demystify the process, help prepare for areas of failure – physical agility testing.

In the past we have assisted potential candidates in finding the right study guide for the written test and even provided the study guide free of charge for anyone who could not afford it. We've helped candidates understand the different components of the testing process – written test, physical agility, oral board, polygraph, psychological, medical physical, extensive background investigation. We've explained the various disqualifiers, such as recent drug use. We've also held practice physical agility tests so the candidates know what it takes to complete the 3 components of the test within a 60-90 minute time frame.

I know that our recruitment committee is planning on reaching out to get time with the criminal justice students from regional colleges and universities (Walla Walla CC, Eastern, WSU). We are working at getting an audience with the Latino Club at WaHi to discuss opportunities with the police department.

Our recruitment in the past few years has generated quite a few bi-lingual and bi-cultural candidates. Unfortunately, they have failed a qualifying test along the way. Last year's test saw all 5 bi-lingual and bi-cultural candidates fail the physical agility test (which is required by the State Basic Law Enforcement Academy). Our last hiring list had two black females in the top three candidates. Unfortunately, one of the candidates had to move back East for family reasons and disqualifying issues were discovered during the personal history statement of the other candidate.

I know the recruiting efforts are continuing and will continue after my tenure. My hope is that the department will be able to help diverse candidates see that this could be a great career for them and help them successfully navigate the hiring process. Some of this will require early connections with middle and high schoolers so that they understand that certain choices they make could potentially disqualify them from this profession.

Overall, it is just a difficult time period to recruit qualified candidates to become police officers – no matter their demographic.

FINAL THOUGHTS

It has truly been my honor and privilege to be this community's Police Chief for the past 10 years. As I tell people often, I wish I would have started my career here. And, as I told the interview panels when I applied for the position, I will end my career here. This is/was my destination. I won the lottery when I was given this position. Bar none, these have been the most fulfilling years of my professional life (37 years in law enforcement and 2 years before that as a 7th grade English teacher).

Agree or disagree with anything I have done, I have always had the best interest of the community, the City and the Police Department in mind when I made decisions. As we have as one of our organizational FUNDAMENTALS (behaviors that operationalize our values): Assume positive intent.