

Jon Dahlvig 2019 Campaign Thoughts

- Public Safety -

Law Enforcement & Crime

Overall, I feel that our community is safe. We have a highly motivated and trained police department that serves our community 24-hours a day. They are extremely professional and to date, I have never had a bad experience with our officers

Our officers devote their time on duty between being assigned to calls and available for calls. To my understanding, this ratio has been an average of 60/40%. Which means that 60% of their time is taken up by dealing with a situation within our community while being proactive and patrolling or even just being involved within the city 40% of the time.

I personally would like to see this ratio flipped at least if not even more of their time not taken up on calls. It means they're being more visible and this in itself is a crime deterrent. It also helps build better community relations with the department and us, the citizens. We could make this happen by increasing staffing but that would also mean an increase in budget and potentially an increase of taxes, more than likely property tax. Increasing property taxes is the last thing I want.

A solution to increasing staffing without a significant increase in budget is to utilize a reserve division in our police department. I am not the first candidate for council or mayor to propose this idea. In fact, it's already authorized within our cities charter. In simple terms, just need the police chief and city manager to authorize.

I am aware of some concerns about a reserve division. First, these officers would be no different than our regular full time officers. They must have all the same initial and continuing training that is required by the state of Texas. There is no doubt in my mind that our department would implement the same hiring and training standards they use for full time officers as they would for reserve officers. In fact, I wouldn't support such a program without this.

By having reserve officers, this increases staffing with a minimal increase in budget. This means more officers on the street or serving in other divisions. Reserve officers could also be used in place of full time officers at city events which would decrease the cost of overtime and as a result, decrease cost to the citizens. I would leave it up to the department administration in how they deploy and utilize the reserve officers but I feel such a division would only benefit our community.

We need to find ways to make our community safer. If you're involved in social media, there's no doubt that it feels like crime is on the rise. Some will say that crime is trending down. I took a look at our crime statistics as released by our police department from 2013-2018 (2018 Year

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Report hasn't been released as of 1/28/19). Major crime has indeed decreased while minor crime has increased. Leading to an overall crime percentage increase since 2013. I am happy that major crimes are down but fact is, I view every crime as major. While a crime may not be considered major for statistic reasons, if you were a victim of a minor crime, it's important to you, which makes it a major crime in my book. If you are a victim, you don't feel safe and we should feel safe where we live and work.

Increasing officer staffing can help, but we must also take responsibility for our own community and the safety of it. I am absolutely not calling for vigilante type response, but we have to active in our communities. If you see something, say something. Take your dog for an extra walk. Leave your front porch or house lights on. Lock your house and vehicle doors. By having more citizen eyes looking for suspicious persons, citizens being more visible to criminals, and decreasing the opportunities for crime, we can lower our crime rate I feel substantially.

Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Our fire department is another fine example of a highly motivated, trained, and professional department. Having been a volunteer firefighter myself and having a career in EMS, I can honestly say, our fire department is one of the best there is. I may be a little biased having been a reserve member for our department but that doesn't change the fact they're some of the best.

I want to ensure that our fire department remains highly motivated and trained and would support any initiative to keep them this way as long as it's being fiscally responsible.

I would like to see our department implement a community health paramedic program. This could be used to reduce the cost of responding to non-emergency calls. It also could be partnered with our local hospitals to help reduce the incidence of readmissions and even visits in general to the hospital. In all, benefiting our citizens.