

CITY OF RED LODGE

POLICE DEPARTMENT



2017 ANNUAL REVIEW

By

ACTING CHIEF, SCOTT COPE

MESSAGE FROM ACTING CHIEF, SCOTT COPE

I have been Acting Chief of Police since May 2016, for the 2nd time in 23 years while serving as a Red Lodge Police Officer. I have been Assistant Chief for Seven years. My experience gives credibility to the fact that our officers have had a successful year in 2017. For much of my career I have focused on Officer retention which is a large part of our success not only in fighting crime but also in getting the Officers to be part of the fabric of the community. When I started there were only a few Officers who had family's in Red Lodge. For the most-part we hired and trained Officers for other better paying departments. Currently our small department has over 63 years of experience working in the Red Lodge Community.

I am proud of the work the department accomplished both in citations written to lessen traffic accidents and in responding to incidents in the community leading to the prosecution of criminals. All of our efforts stem from a love of our community, our home and our neighbors. The department is committed to preserving the peace, protecting the citizens and contributing to the positive growth of the community. I am thankful for the good character of our officers and for the job they do to guard the safety of the public.

COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

We respect the response of Red Lodge residents who took part in the 2017 survey. With a staff of only five officers, we provided the 24/7 coverage that the citizens want. We wear multiple hats to provide coverage, which is often more than officers do in larger communities and departments.

We designed our 2017-2020 Strategic Plan around the desires of the community and continue to work through the goals of that plan. Although short-staffed, officers make every effort to interact with the community as much as possible. Matt, Al, Ben, Greg and myself understand the culture of the town and enjoy a familiarity with the locals we protect.

We routinely handle every kind of call you can imagine from serious sexual assaults, domestic violence all the way down to livestock and a fair amount of wildlife calls.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Administratively we are looking at ways to provide better statistical reporting with the tools we have on hand. We have implemented a tracking and collection process for parking tickets in compliance with the City Ordinance where there was little oversight in the past.

We applied for and received grant monies through the Montana Highway Patrol's STEP Grant for high visibility events in town throughout 2017. We have begun the application process for STEP Grant monies for 2018.

We improved our reports to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) by attendance at a training workshop and working in cooperation with our state liaison manager. Based on improvements in our reporting, we may be eligible for grant monies through this program as well.

We have made contacts through the Edward Byrne Memorial Fund that may put us in line for grant monies for rural law enforcement agencies.

My administrative assistant, along with our city clerk, attended a seminar on clarification of funding sources which distinguished the purpose and use of the Drug Forfeiture Fund from the Equitable Sharing Funds which are awarded to the police department by the federal government for assisting in an investigation that results in arrest and forfeiture of a federally seized assets.

Having inherited a budget deficit, we succeeded in bring it in line with the City budget expectations while making improvements to our facility. The roof was repaired, preventing future damage, the garage doors were repaired, and we now own the patrol cars. Although we miss Officer Cates an, Drago, we had to make the fiscal choice to dismantle the K-9 program.

LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

We manage crime by focusing on prevention. Rather than only reacting to crimes already committed, we strive to control crime by focusing on prevention through visibility in the community, and building partnerships with the citizens we serve.

A review of the past six years' statistics will show that, although some years are higher than others, the RLPD has kept crime from trending upward. In 2017, officers issued a total of 617 citations, averaging 51 violations per month with average staffing of 5 officers. These figures do not include cases referred to the county attorney for felony violations. A breakdown of four of the most common misdemeanors follows:

2017 (Provided by City Court Clerk)

Theft 1 st Offense	09
Drug Offenses	38
Dui Offenses	45
Speeding	203

Reviewing statistics for the last six years shows a consistent pattern of criminal violations and an annual average of 535 violations. More serious criminal activity occurred in the following categories.

2012-2017 Averages (IMC Reporting System)

Dui	57
Larceny/Theft	40
Drug Violations	34
Assault	29
Disorderly Conduct	24

It's important to talk about the DUI numbers. If we conservatively say that each DUI arrest saves one life, at the very least, in the past six years our officers have saved 342 lives. In the State of Montana

that is a very significant number. We are glad to report that we have had no fatal crashes in recent memory.

COMPLAINTS AND REVIEWS

There have been no new lawsuits against officers in two years. There have been no formal complaints or internal reviews conducted during the time I have been Acting Chief of Police.