

Hendersonville Police Department
Public Monthly Report
December 2023



Chief's Monthly Summary

We closed out 2023 with sad news. On Saturday, December 30, 2023, Greensboro Police Sergeant Dale Nix was shot and killed while he took action to stop a crime in progress at a gas station just outside Greensboro. Sergeant Nix marks the final North Carolina law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty in 2023; three in total in 2023. This was a tragic case that did not need to happen. Sergeant Nix was killed over what amounted to a misdemeanor crime. An unbelievably senseless crime!

It is a tragedy whenever a police officer is killed in the line of duty. The only encouraging news is that fewer officers died in 2023 than in the last several years. The deaths in the three major categories are all down. Gunfire deaths were 47 this year, down from 65 in 2022. Deaths by car crashes were 39, down from 59 the year prior. And medical related deaths were 26, down from 116 in 2022. While this still represents 114 duty-related deaths in 2023, the downward trend is encouraging.

We are driving these numbers down with better training, improved safety equipment, and better wellness practices. Officers are learning to deescalate situations rather than initially resorting to force. Seatbelts are required to always be worn on duty and we are striving to reduce distractions in police vehicles. We conduct annual driver training for all sworn officers where we review policy, study lessons learned from other duty-related accidents, and then practice safe driving skills. Our Officers participate in wellness programs to encourage healthier lifestyle choices. We provide time for on-duty fitness and better mental health resources. The stigmatization of seeking mental health treatment is becoming a thing of the past.

These steps, along with our ongoing efforts to strengthen public trust in law enforcement, are likely why we are seeing fewer and fewer officers dying in uniform. I remain committed to working with law enforcement leaders around the state and the nation to drive police death numbers to zero. We must make Officer safety and wellness our greatest priorities. Without these men and women available to do this job, our communities would be in chaos.

I know you support us in this pursuit, and I thank you for it. As Chief, I hope to never have to bury an Officer, related to their duties or not. I promise to continue promoting effective policing practices throughout the department. We will also continue investing in technologies that make officers safer in their duties. Our Officers deserve the highest levels of commitment from their leaders and their communities.

Thank you again for your support and your trust in us. We strive to "serve with excellence" in everything we do. We will continue to be better and to get better with every encounter.



Blair Myhand,
Chief of Police

Calls for Service

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
3,220	3,308	3,273	2,863	2,753	2,421	2,537	2,899	2,747	2,607	2,726	2,517	2,863
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
5,247	3,281	4,479	4,340	4,373	4,399	3,162	4,112	3,076	3,215	3,023	3,905	3,884

Traffic Safety

Total Traffic Stops:

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
546	419	459	262	274	224	309	289	281	217	204	242	311
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
233	299	388	362	311	203	271	297	270	397	368	424	318

Total Citations Issued:

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
382	277	293	204	200	175	189	239	191	176	138	129	216
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
151	201	243	265	207	144	146	182	185	263	281	290	213

DWI Arrests:

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
12	2	7	6	8	4	1	7	12	9	5	5	7
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
2	8	9	6	9	4	9	7	12	4	7	7	7

Motor Vehicle Crashes:

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
117	105	114	104	133	131	107	123	128	137	107	117	119
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
115	101	90	111	99	113	146	105	138	114	136	114	115

Top five crash locations:

#1	Four Seasons Blvd & Thompson St
#2	Chimney Rock Rd & Sugarloaf Rd
#3	Chimney Rock Rd & I-26
#4	Chimney Rock Rd & Highlands Square Dr
#5	Chimney Rock Rd & Howard Gap Rd

Crimes, Reports, and Arrests

Criminal Arrests:

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
72	87	93	63	71	58	54	56	60	67	59	51	66
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
90	93	140	94	118	114	89	141	118	102	78	79	105

Incident Reports:

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
136	105	185	146	138	116	108	131	97	116	109	106	124
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
169	134	277	222	259	292	239	205	198	151	114	111	198

Drug Offenses:

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
30	22	19	26	48	20	26	32	28	45	23	15	28
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
38	34	37	36	51	60	27	45	34	21	23	29	36

Larcenies:

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
45	29	8	19	37	25	35	44	20	31	36	29	30
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
42	49	47	28	35	48	46	52	32	58	32	41	43

Assaults:

2023												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
9	17	7	15	11	9	7	11	14	17	10	16	12
2022												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Avg.
15	10	17	15	10	11	17	10	13	14	14	11	13

Employee Actions

- Sammy Cruz was hired as a Police Officer. Sammy is an experienced officer from Puerto Rico. He will attend at least portions of Basic Law Enforcement Training at Blue Ridge Community College this spring. North Carolina provides a method for experienced officers to transfer into the state needing only portions of training. Sammy is bilingual and brings eleven years of municipal policing experience with him.
- A conditional offer of employment for Police Recruit was made. Assuming all additional testing is satisfactory, the new employee will start Basic Law Enforcement Training at Blue Ridge Community College in late January. Training lasts through May.
- Police Department Recruits Zach Dickman, Walter Garcia, and Elijah Bradley graduated from Basic Law Enforcement Training at Blue Ridge Community College. They are now in the orientation phase waiting to be certified as Law Enforcement Officers by the state. We expect them to begin field training in January.

Community Tip – Inclement Weather Driving Tips

We are entering that time of year when snow and ice are possible. We remind people that our narrow and steep mountain roads can make driving dangerous. We offer the following recommendations to help keep you safe when driving in snow and ice.

Venturing out around town:

- Only drive in inclement weather when necessary.
- Slow down and maintain an increased distance between you and the vehicles in front of you.
- Avoid passing other vehicles unless necessary. If you pass another vehicle, do so with extreme caution.
- Do not speed. Speed too great for the conditions is the number one cause of wrecks in winter weather.
- Do not use cruise control.
- Approach bridges with caution. Elevated roads accumulate ice long before surface streets. When you drive across a bridge, especially those with metal grating, avoid

abruptly applying brakes. Doing so can cause your vehicle to slide uncontrollably and may result in a crash.

- Come to a complete stop and yield the right of way when approaching an intersection where traffic lights are out. Always treat this scenario as a four-way stop.
- Fully clear snow and ice from the windows, mirrors, roof, hood, trunk, bumper, headlights, and taillights before driving. Snow and ice will blow off your vehicle and may hit vehicles behind you causing injury or damage.

Before taking a trip:

- Be sure your vehicle is running well, tires have ample tread, and is equipped properly for a trip.
- Always put cold weather clothing (coats, hats, gloves, etc.) in your vehicle, even if you are not wearing it.
- Consider placing an ice-remover kit in your vehicle that includes a scraper, brush, wiper fluid, and antifreeze.
- Put a supply kit in your vehicle in case you get stranded. Kits should include a phone charging cable, a flashlight, first-aid kit, blanket, shovel, non-perishable snacks, drinking water, and cones or safety flares.
- Always have at least a half-tank of gas in your vehicle before you leave. Short trips can become long trips when a storm hits.

Steps to take if stranded:

- Call 911 and report your location to emergency personnel. Make sure you inform 911 if anyone in your vehicle needs medical attention.
- Try to park your vehicle in a location safe from moving vehicles.
- Intermittently run your vehicle to warm the interior. Running your vehicle constantly, even outdoors, may potentially create carbon monoxide inside the vehicle and could result in death.
- Stay with your vehicle. Walking to find help in severe weather may be more dangerous than staying inside your vehicle.

Complaints and Findings

- A citizen complained that an officer used excessive force during an arrest. The investigation is ongoing.

Vehicle Pursuits and Findings

- None in December

Use of Reasonable Force (UORF) Incidents and Findings

- None in December

Operations/Notable Events

- The department helped facilitate the annual Christmas Parade. The weather kept the crowds to a manageable size and the parade was a success.
- Officers and Detectives responded to a fight that resulted in a shooting of one person. The victim received non-life-threatening injuries. The suspect was quickly identified and was charged with Assault with a Deadly Weapon Inflicting Serious Bodily Injury with Intent to Kill that same day. The suspect turned himself in the next day. The case is closed pending adjudication in court.
- Officers and Detectives responded to Pardee Hospital when a victim with a gunshot wound arrived at the hospital. The victim was struck in the calf and sustained minor injuries. No evidence was found that corroborated the victim's story and no witnesses were located. The victim also stopped cooperating with the investigation. The case is closed/prosecution declined.

Budget Summary

- We are approximately 50% through the fiscal year.
- We have spent or reserved \$3,005,818 or 44.77% of our budget.

Community Outreach/Special Events

- Members of the Hendersonville Police Department rang the bell for the Salvation Army at Walmart. The funds raised during the holiday season help the Salvation Army with assistance that they provide in Henderson County to those in need.



Grants Management

- Embedded Mental Health Grant – No updates to report
- CALEA and NCLEA Accreditation endeavors – No updates to report
- GHSP Grant – No reimbursements for the month

Recruiting/Retention

- 1 of 47 Police Officer vacancies exist.
 - Applications - Total
 - (2) applications received
 - (2) in background
 - (1) rejected