



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Shawnee Hills Police Department

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FROM OUR CHIEF OF POLICE

As we are wrapping up 2024, I am entering into my 10TH year as your Chief of Police. I am very proud of the accomplishments we have made as an agency and the sustainable growth we have achieved. The Village has changed much in the last 10 years and more growth is on the horizon. You have a full-time police department that is professional, has very high standards, and is well equipped. Our agency has received several commendations and earned accreditations for the way we conduct our business. I could not be any prouder to lead this agency!

We have excellent staff members and unwavering support from our community, council, and mayor. Our relationship with our community is very strong. I attribute this to our transparency and our strict focus on community-oriented policing. We continue our focus on becoming more visible within our community and at the same time strengthening our relationships with our partner agencies. We have added equipment, training, and capabilities that we have never had here in the past and they have produced fantastic results for us.

“Ask yourself often on patrol, is what I’m doing making this community a little safer”.

Looking Ahead

With very strong leadership, dedicated officers, and a forward-looking vision for the department we continued to build upon the foundation that was set in place in the past few years. It is my goal in the coming year to continue moving in a positive direction answering the needs/wants of our community while being fiscally responsible.

We remain open to suggestions and innovations that will help us to deliver the highest level of policing to our community. As I have said countless times, my door is always open to the community, and you are welcome to ask questions or share ideas. A police department is only as good as the trust the community has in them.

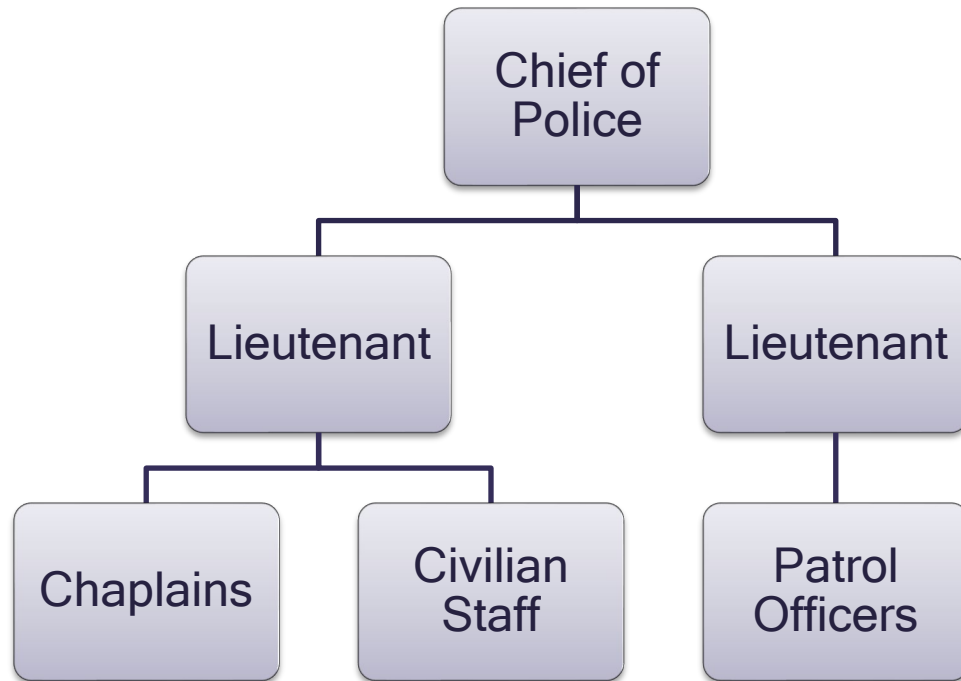


Russell C. Baron

Chief of Police



CHAIN OF COMMAND



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Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Shawnee Hills Police Department to safeguard the lives and property of the people we serve, to reduce the incidence and fear of crime, and to enhance public safety while working with the community to improve their quality of life. Our mandate is to do so with honor and integrity, while at all times conducting ourselves with the highest ethical standards to maintain public confidence.

Code of Ethics

As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve the community; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation and the peaceful against abuse or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all to liberty, equality and justice.

I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all and will behave in a manner that does not bring discredit to me or to my agency. I will maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed both in my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the law and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of my duty.

I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, political beliefs, aspirations, animosities, or friendships to influence my decisions. With no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecution of criminals, I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice, or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or abuse and never accepting gratuities.

I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of police service. I will never engage in acts of corruption or bribery, nor will I condone such acts by other police officers. I will cooperate with all legally authorized agencies and their representatives in the pursuit of justice.

I know that I alone am responsible for my own standard of professional performance and will take every reasonable

AGENCY STAFFING

Hiring Process

We are continuing our contract with National Testing Network, to recruit, test, and accept applications on our behalf. As part of our goal to provide a higher level of police service to the community, while being good stewards of the village budget, we will evaluate our processes annually. In December the supervisors met and evaluated the continuation of this contract and have decided to continue using the National Testing Network as it has successfully reached a diverse, well-qualified applicant pool that we previously were unable to reach.

We did see a drastic decrease in the number of applicants/interests beginning in 2019 and this trend continued through 2024, partially due to a national decline in police applicants overall. In addition to having to pass a written exam, applicants are required to successfully complete a thorough background investigation, panel interview, polygraph examination, and psychological test.

2024 Applicant Information

This year's applicant pool grew slightly from last year, mainly due to the job posting being active all year. While there was an increase in candidates, there were fewer viable candidates. The top two reasons that we disqualified candidates for were not having completed a police academy and for poor past work history. As we look to the future of the police department, we may want to consider sponsoring candidates through the police academy, this is a trend that other agencies have turned to in the recent past.

Full Time		Part Time	
Applied	Hired	Applied	Hired
7	2	5	2

Current Staffing Demographics

Total Full Time- 6	Full Time Male Officers- 5
Total Part Time- 5	Full Time Female Officers- 1
Total Auxiliary- 2	Part Time Male Officers- 5
Total Civilian Volunteers- 2	Part Time Female Officers-0

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Annually we review our officer's performance and recognize them for going above and beyond what is expected. Every year this decision is very tough to make but in 2024 we had three officers stand out and receive major awards. If you would like to learn more about our awards, please contact the police department.

OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Officer Zach Gerdeman was recognized as the Shawnee Hills Police Department 2024 Officer of the Year. He has been with our agency for several years, recently as a full-time officer for the past three years. Zach is one of our most dedicated officers and it has been evident through the leadership abilities that he has displayed, and he has gone above and beyond while on patrol to maximize the impact he has within our community. Officer Gerdeman played a key role in planning several of our events last year, most notably our annual Safety Day.



LIFESAVING AWARD

Officer Zach Gerdeman and Officer Bruce Hawkings responded to Individual Fitness Solutions on the report of a medical emergency. Both officers arrived on scene and began performing CPR until they were relieved by medics.

The victim later recovered. If Ofc. Gerdeman and Ofc. Hawkins had not acted quickly and began CPR the outcome of this incident would have likely resulted in the death of the victim.



EQUIPMENT

Each year we conduct an inventory and review of all the equipment owned by our agency. We identified equipment that is still serviceable and items that need replaced as soon as possible, as well as projected replacement dates for other equipment. We then prioritized our equipment “needs” vs. “wants” to develop a replacement plan. We utilized trained personnel to be able to maintain certain equipment without having to pay an external vendor. By leveraging state and federal pricing contracts we can use public monies more efficiently.

2024 Large Purchases

- The aging department issued .40 Caliber pistols were replaced with new 9mm pistols in 2024. Not only does this ensure that our officers have excellent functioning equipment it also cuts training costs relating to ammunition.

2024 Equipment Review

- Two Tasers will need to be replaced as they are approaching the end of their life cycle.
- The 2014 and/or the 2017 Police Interceptors will be due to be replaced in 2025.
- Vehicle network routers are set to be replaced in 2025 as they are past their lifespan and are no longer supported. Additionally, they only support 4g wireless, which is causing issues with some of our web-based programs such as e-citation and our computer aided dispatch system.
- Body worn and vehicle cameras are at their end of life. We have applied for a grant to cover some of this purchase. We will know early in 2025 if grant funding has been awarded, if not we will explore options to move this forward.



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Our agency contracts with Lexipol LLC, a public safety risk management company, to manage our policies and procedures. Lexipol provides us with proven policies based off state and federal law as well as law enforcement best practices. These policies are backed by legal representation that will aid our agency if needed. This contract keeps us on the cutting edge of new legislation and best practices without the expense and time of having an administrator dedicated to research.



Predictable is Preventable®

Lexipol also provides us with “Daily Training Bulletins” that the officers must complete. These training bulletins test the officer’s knowledge of policies, and “high risk, low frequency” events, such as uses of force and serious crimes. This is available to us online, on our server, and via a cell phone application, always making it available to our officers. Lexipol has been one of the best administrative improvements we have made. Our agency maintains the “Gold Standard Award” for our policy and training participation. This is achieved by issuing policies that are above the minimum standard, achieving 100% compliance with training, and policy acknowledgements.

Ohio Community Collaborative Standards



In 2016 we received collaborative certification for our policies and practices relating to hiring, recruiting, use of force, use of deadly force, and bias free policing. Our agency was able to gain this certification by submitting annual compliance documentation such as policies, policy acknowledgement logs, training, and departmental review documents. In 2017 and 2020 we recertified the previous standards as well as the standards for body worn cameras and community engagement. In 2024 we again recertified on all the Collaborative Standards by passing an on-site audit. Our agency is compliant with both standards.

2024 Self-Initiated Activity Demographics				
Race	Sex	Stopped	Warned	Cited
Caucasian	M	58	37	21
Caucasian	F	69	53	16
Black	M	9	7	2
Black	F	3	3	0
Hispanic	M	6	3	3
Hispanic	F	1	0	1
Asian	M	5	3	2
Asian	F	3	2	1
All Other	M	7	7	0
All Other	F	4	2	2

FORCE REVIEW

Annually, our policies dictate a review of policies and incidents. On December 10, 2024, a review of our agency's pursuit and use of force policies was conducted by supervisors and agency instructors. Additional Ohio Collaborative requirements for annual review were also met at this meeting. Our policies are current with all laws and best practices, including the Ohio Collaborative Standards and the Presidential Executive Order banning choke holds.

Use of Force Review: We did not have any use of force incidents in 2024.

Pursuit Review: Our agency was not involved in any vehicle pursuits in 2024.

*Additionally, our agency did not assist with any pursuits from other jurisdictions.

Foot Pursuit Review: Our agency was not involved in any foot pursuits in 2024.



COMMUNITY RELATIONS

As part of our commitment to engage and educate the community our officers routinely attend public events, give presentations, or sponsor events. Below is a complete list of events we attended or hosted.

- Click it or Ticket Kickoff Event
- Drive Sober Kickoff Event
- Shop With A Cop
- Multiple Boy & Girl Scout Events
- Shawnee Hills Veterans Day Ceremony
- Light Ohio Blue, Operation Santa's Sleigh
- Trick or Treat Tailgate
- Walk a Mile in Her Shoes Event
- Village Christmas Tree Lighting
- Shawnee Hills Police Safety Day
- Annual Toy Drive
- Holiday Can-Good Collection



Fun Fact!

We collected 350 pounds of pills in our Prescription Drug Drop Box this year! This free service is available 24/7 in our lobby!



PATROL OPERATIONS

Officers respond to calls for service 24 hours a day, every day. Below is a statistical breakdown of reports and enforcement actions taken by our officers while on patrol within the Village.

Nature	2023	2024
Business Checks	13,629	14,869
House Checks	145	218
Cad Entries	650	649
Traffic Stops	94	165
Traffic Charges Filed	24	48
Traffic Complaints	57	68
Traffic Warnings Issued	70	117
Criminal Charges	12	15
Traffic Crashes	34	27
Alarm Calls / Open Building	66	42
Alcohol Offenses	9	5
Domestic Incidents	23	18
Animal Complaints	13	22
Suspicious Person or Vehicle	58	65
Total Reports Taken	65	78



In addition to patrolling the Village, our officers carried out several functions to include the following:

- Vehicle lockouts
- Emergency vehicle jump starts
- Vacation house checks
- Business Checks
- Well- Being Checks
- Act as a first responder for all fire/medical calls
- Attend public relations events



INVESTIGATIVE OPERATIONS

The Shawnee Hills Police Department investigates all crimes reported to our agency. Typically, an investigation starts as a dispatched call to a uniformed officer and will evolve into a larger situation. Should a situation evolve to a point that is outside of the means of our agency we have a relationship with the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations who will step in and provide support and assistance to our detective, while we maintain control of the case. Throughout the year we receive tips and referrals from county and state agencies. These referrals are usually related to domestic situations or related to the well-being of children. Our detective retired in 2020, so this position remains vacant, and funding is not available to fill it. Having a dedicated detective would be an asset to our agency's ability to handle these situations as well as return our officers quickly to a patrol function.



2024 Investigative Operation Statistics	
Employment Backgrounds	5
Felony Investigations	3
Outside Agency Referrals	4
Arrest Warrants Executed	7
Search Warrants Executed	1
Follow- Up Investigations	34

Below is a listing of the more serious incidents that our agency has responded throughout the year our officers responded to various calls within the Village and just outside of our jurisdiction that includes violent crimes, burglaries, alarm calls, and mental health crisis; these statistics are also reflected here.

Nature	2023	2024
Assault / Fight	1	5
Sex Offenses	1	0
Burglary / Breaking & Entering / Vandalism	8	5
Narcotics	1	1
Theft	10	16
Mental Health Crisis / Suicide Attempt	33	35
Missing Person	9	10
Harassment / Threats	10	13
Overdose	3	2
Juvenile Related	16	22

CANINE RETIREMENT

Happy Retirement Havoc! Havoc was a beloved member of our department for five years! From enforcement to public relations, we are very happy to have had Havoc on our team! Funding for the K-9 program came solely from donations and fundraisers; no money for this program has come from the Police Department budget. Havoc is certified through the State of Ohio as a dual-purpose K-9, both patrol and narcotics. He was trained in tracking, building searches, handler protection, apprehension, and narcotics. Havoc is not only a well-loved member of our department, but he has also helped us greatly expand our capabilities!

Due to Havoc displaying some health issues we made the decision to retire him early in 2024. We wish him a very happy retirement surrounded by his favorite tennis balls and treats! Below are some of our favorite photos of Havoc!



MULTI- JURISDICTIONAL UNITS

As part of our ability to provide an excellent level of service to our community we have to ensure that our officers are highly trained and have access to resources that the village may not have on hand. One of the best ways to tap into these resources is to collaborate with our partner agencies. Our agency has two on staff a Crisis (hostage) negotiator who is certified through the State of Ohio and the FBI.



Additionally, we have an officer that is highly trained in missing and abducted children investigations/searches who is the Executive Commander of the Delaware County Missing/Abducted Child Response Team. Delaware County hosts the only nationally certified CART team in the State of Ohio! In addition to training our own officers this person trains officers regionally on how to respond, search, and investigate missing child incidents.

Below is a list of the multi-jurisdictional teams that our officers participate with any official roles we fill:

- Delaware County Child Abduction Response Team
 - Executive Commander
 - Team Member
- Delaware County Crisis Negotiation Team
 - Negotiator
 - Training Coordinator / Negotiator
- Delaware County Emergency Management Executive Board
 - Vice- Chair
- Drug Free Delaware Access & Availability Committee
- Delaware County Safe Communities Board
- Delaware County Criminal Justice Association



2024 Special Operations Missions	
Team	Missions
Abducted / Missing Child Response Team	7
Crisis Negotiation Team	21



TRAINING

The largest part of providing the best level of service we can to our residents is training. Our officers need to constantly train and challenge themselves to learn new things. We have a large focus on mental health and crisis training. All of our officers have completed Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). We are a small community but often we deal with the same issues larger cities do daily, just on a smaller scale. It is our duty to equip our officers with the tools and knowledge to handle the worst imaginable situation and hope it does not happen. We ensure that we equip officers with a variety of different skills within the department.

When an officer attends a class, he/she is tasked with the responsibility of passing on what they learned to the other officers. This allows us to send one officer to a class and it benefits the entire department. Additionally, we have in-house instructors that not only teach our officers but have presented training courses to other agencies.

Training Classes Attended

In 2024 all our officers maintained their training relating to missing and runaway children through the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to qualify our agency as for the “Missing Kids Readiness Program”. We are one of three agencies in the State of Ohio to hold this designation.

Below are some of the other topics that our officers attended in 2024.

Missing Children Response	Reality Based Perishable Skills	Body Worn Cameras
Public Records	Ethics and Professionalism	Taser Refresher
Crisis De-Escalation Training	Vicarious Trauma	Legal Updates
Search & Seizure	Narcotic Legal Updates	Effective Communication
Human Trafficking	Child Abuse & Neglect	CCW Updates
Public Safety Collaboration	BCI Lethal Force Investigations	Negotiator Training
Amber Alert Training	Evidence Management	Emergency Management
Pistol Instructor	Vehicle Tactics	Officer Wellness



2024 IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Every year, all officers across the state are required to take mandatory training as designated by the Ohio Peace Officer's Training Commission and the Ohio Attorney General. For 2024 the State of Ohio mandated 24 hours of training.

All officers are required to complete Daily Training Bulletins via Lexipol. Every day of the month officers received a scenario and had to answer questions derived from our policies and procedures; these are typically related to high risk, low frequency events. Lexipol tracks these Daily Training Bulletins, and every officer completes over 300 training scenarios throughout the year. This equates to 40 hours of training annually.

In addition to the below listed training all officers had access to monthly firearms range training, each officer was required to attend a minimum of three sessions. These trainings are structured with two instructors. In addition to the three sessions officers are required to qualify annually with a pistol, rifle, and shotgun. All our officers passed without remedial training.

- Victim's Rights
- Mental health and crisis de-escalation
- Refresher training for perishable skills in a reality-based training environment
- Use of force policy review and training
- Policies and Procedures
- Legal updates
- Defensive Tactics



2025 Goals

Our main goal for 2025 is to continue our commitment to the community that we will provide a superior level of policing while at the same time remaining fiscally responsible. While we keep this goal in mind there are other projects and goals that we are looking forward to that are listed below.

- Work with Council and the Mayor to pass and maintain a budget using the approved levy funding that is responsible and allows the police department to operate efficiently.
- Continue our enhanced visibility and approachability within the neighborhoods through routine bicycle and walking patrols.
- Continuing our work towards accreditations and agency commendations, which lends to our credibility and shows our community and surrounding communities that our agency is professional and in line with current standards.
- Continue to reduce traffic crashes and crime through directed patrols and enforcement.
- Continue to enhance our readiness and our abilities to handle larger scale incidents in our community.
- Further our relationships with partner agencies through collaborative efforts.

