

Baltimore City Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 3
Blueprint for Improved Policing
July 11, 2012

Introduction

The Baltimore City Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Lodge 3 believes in Baltimore. The men and women of the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) have made significant and impactful strides toward a safer city. Baltimore City may be a safer city today, but unfortunately, crime remains high in many neighborhoods and must be reduced. Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 feels that to achieve lower crime rates, improved policing by the BPD should first be instituted. Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 offers this report as a Blueprint for Improved Policing.

Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 realizes that any elevated or new taxes would be detrimental to the city. In fact, a reduction in taxes would promote growth in Baltimore and bring residents to the city. Though contrary to conventional wisdom, Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 believes Baltimore can significantly reduce crime and improve policing *while cutting taxes*.

The BPD needs to effectively manage the police resources it has. The current BPD management strategy remains outdated, ineffective, and reactive. A look at the headlines, including the downtown crime crisis in the Inner Harbor, shows a police agency lurching from one crisis to another due to a misapplication of resources, corruption within the BPD, a breakdown in command structure, and various other reasons.

Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 calls for a thorough review and audit of existing policies to take Baltimore to the next level of policing. A safer city without higher taxes will attract residents, increase the tax base, and continue Baltimore's progress in years to come.

Intelligent, innovative improvements and efficient use of finances and resources have the capacity to significantly impact safety and develop a stronger police force in our city without requiring a single additional cent from taxes.

Methodology

Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 has decided to be proactive in our concerns of the state of the BPD in offering a blueprint on how to improve policing without requiring additional taxpayer funds. Research was conducted on cities similar to Baltimore in demographics and crime statistics. Reports on other police departments compiled by the U.S. Department of Justice were examined. And finally, Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 engaged Clapp Communications, an independent consulting firm, to conduct a series of focus groups with Baltimore City police officers to solicit their expertise in formulating efficient ways to effect meaningful change in the BPD.

Herein identified are seven key areas in which improvements should be made. These areas have been identified as recurring and consistent problems within the BPD. By addressing these specific areas, Baltimore has the capacity to improve its police force and by extension, the safety and quality of life for residents and tourists without hiring more officers, raising taxes or cutting from elsewhere in the City's budget.

These suggestions are based in part on the information collected during these focus groups in which officers, sergeants and lieutenants who make up the ranks of the FOP were interviewed about their perceptions of the BPD in the seven areas: hiring, training, education, leadership, resources, tactics, and competitiveness.

Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 remains committed to a safer Baltimore. This Blueprint for Improved Policing will give Baltimore's elected officials, as well as the BPD command staff, objective recommendations upon which to build positive change.

HIRING

Recommendations:

- Establish a minimum hiring standard of a two year Associates Degree and/or two years of honorable military service, similar to the New York Police Department and Howard County Police Department
- Actively recruit military veterans with an emphasis on those veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Institute comprehensive background checks
- Enlist Maryland Police Training Commission to audit recruitment and hiring efforts to ensure standards are adhered to
- Incentivize experienced officers to remain with the BPD long-term
- Implement a salary and benefits package that provides a competitive edge in recruitment with surrounding jurisdictions

Quality over Quantity

- During the past several years, the BPD has been in the news and court system due to the poor decisions and behavior made by a small segment of our police officers. The continued public humiliation that is a result of corruption and scandals involving that very small segment of the force has damaged public perception and internal morale among the larger ranks. The officers who cause the negative perceptions and press make up a minority of those employed by the BPD, but the entire BPD suffers when these improprieties are the subject of media and public scrutiny.

Our police officers are appalled by those individuals who betrayed their oath and have now pled guilty in the Majestic Towing scandal, along with others which

have come to light in recent years. Many now feel embarrassed to tell others they work for the BPD. The rank and file officers attribute this scandal directly to the lax hiring practices of the BPD.

A police department which has been plagued to a greater extent by these incidences is the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD). The NOPD was ultimately investigated by the U.S. Department of Justice in an effort to determine the root(s) of the problem. From the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Report on the Investigation of the New Orleans Police Department dated March 16, 2011:

“NOPD’s longstanding failure to prioritize the recruitment of high-quality candidates contributes to the chronic, Department-wide problems we observed, including inappropriate and disrespectful conduct in the community, corruption, unnecessary uses of force, and improper stops and searches. Good police officers possess problem-solving skills, emotional maturity, sound judgment, interpersonal and communication skills, and the ability to collaborate with a diverse cross-section of the community.”

It is apparent that many of Baltimore’s policies are shortsighted and counterproductive. Lax hiring standards and an emphasis on hiring a predetermined number of officers results in unqualified officers, as well as officers who have not been properly vetted, joining the force.

There is a correlation between hiring unqualified officers and corruption in the ranks. The Los Angeles, Washington, New York City and Miami Police Departments have each suffered through periods of significant cases of police corruption and misconduct. One of the primary causes was the lack of thorough background investigations or maintenance of high standards for recruits. According to a March 2, 2011 article in *The Daily Record*, the City of Baltimore has, in a three-year period, spent \$7.25 million to settle police misconduct lawsuits. In a recent article from June 25, 2012, *The Daily Record* reported \$800,000 in settlements and judgments through June 20 of this year, with an estimated year-end amount of \$1.5 million to \$1.6 million, according to City Solicitor George Nilson.

Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 feels strongly that what the BPD needs is not simply more officers as City Hall has suggested, but qualified and motivated police officers. The BPD must improve the quality of its background investigations and must no longer accept marginal candidates as seen in the various corruption scandals of late. Officers of good character are incorruptible regardless of salary. A better educated, more qualified police force leads to lawful arrests, more probable cause and stronger convictions in court.

- Hiring qualified police officers will ultimately save the City money. The approximate average number of officers suspended in the BPD is 80-100 at a time, which is more than half of the officers needed to staff an entire district.

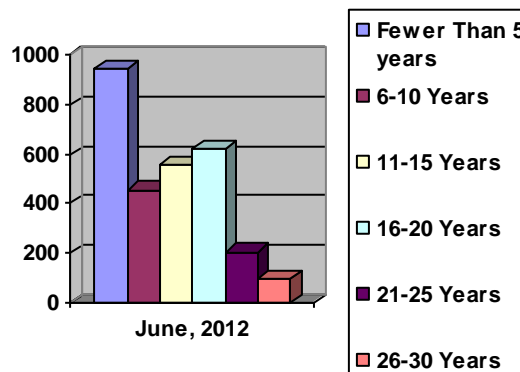
This, in turn, leads to additional overtime costs to fill the vacancies. If the vacancies are not covered shifts go out on the street under strength. Under strength shifts represent serious officer safety concerns, endangering both officers and citizens of Baltimore.

While the BPD works toward recruiting new police officers, some insight from the same DOJ report:

“NOPD hired hundreds of officers during a relatively short time period; one estimate is that 400 officers were hired during the three year period following Katrina. In its press to hire these officers, NOPD reportedly lowered its recruiting standards, essentially removing the physical agility requirement and asking the Civil Service Commission to score the written portion of the application less vigorously.”

The NOPD has now made the physical agility portion of the entrance exam more stringent, and has required that successful applicants for police officer have at least 60 hours of college credits from an accredited college or university, or two years of full-time military service. The Howard County Police Department has similar requirements. Such requirements would benefit the BPD.

Focus group participants felt that Baltimore has historically had trouble retaining qualified police officers. This is problematic, as experienced police officers have fewer complaints, incidences of misconduct, and at-fault traffic accidents. Research shows that departments with a large number of officers having fewer than five years of experience have high rates of police misconduct. Studies show these are heavy because of low pay, high stress, poor working conditions, diminished benefits, and public perception. As of June 8, 2012, the BPD has 941 officers with fewer than five years of experience, which equates to roughly 1/3 of the force. Just two years ago, that number was at 800.



Many officers took pride in being a police officer in one of the most challenging policing environments in America. This is simply not the reality anymore. Essentially, Baltimore city taxpayers are being duped. Their tax money is funding the training of Baltimore City police officers who, in turn, leave to work for other jurisdictions, including Baltimore County. The cost is more than just fiscal—

taxpayers are losing protection and it's a waste of resources in general. In addition to losing qualified police officers, according to in-service training surveys, not one Baltimore City police officer said he/she would recommend joining the BPD to potential applicants. At this moment, the Baltimore County Police Department has initiated a 50 member lateral class focusing on recruitment of Baltimore City officers with fewer than five years of experience.

- Retaining qualified police officers will save the City money. Because of the high attrition rate, the BPD spends an enormous amount of money hiring and training police officers. Before a new officer spends an hour on Patrol, the BPD spends over \$30,000 on salary and benefits alone for Academy training. Officers leave for other jurisdictions because of low departmental morale and poor salary. Baltimore City will become safer when the BPD is able to retain quality officers and the only way to make that happen is by offering more competitive salary, better working conditions, fewer scandals, competitive benefits, and educational credit.

“The BPD needs to focus on getting good people and molding them.”

-Focus group participant

“We’ve been getting good people lately, but not keeping them—they’re gone in two years to work for another police department. They use us as training.”

-Focus group participant

“A five-year cop in the city has the equivalent experience of a ten-year cop anywhere else. We’re top in the nation. People come to us for our expertise.”

-Focus group participant

EDUCATION

Recommendations:

- Reinstate Police Agent Program
- Reinstate educational reimbursement opportunities
- Institute command development training program
- Maintain the Cadet Program
- Enforce Cadet Program rule that Cadets who do not continue a career in law enforcement must reimburse the city for tuition expenses
- Give an incentive for special skills, such as speaking more than one language
- Make education level a priority. Recognize the importance of education for better policing
- Reinstate basic detective exam

Education and Performance

- Research shows that the more education an officer has, the less likely the officer is to be involved in misconduct, and the less likely he is to resort to the use of physical force. Accordingly, the BPD has a vested interest in furthering the education of their officers so that they are less likely to find themselves in a lawsuit and, therefore, are less likely to cost the BPD money. Additionally, a better educated, more qualified police force leads to lawful arrests, more probable cause and stronger convictions in court.

The BPD has cut its educational reimbursement initiatives; therefore, officers are not incentivized to continue their education. The majority of officers are upset that the reimbursement program is no longer in existence and would take advantage of it, were it reinstated, according to our research.

No incentive, monetary or otherwise, is currently given for officers possessing or developing special skills which would benefit the BPD, such as fluency in a foreign language.

Command Development Training

- Most major police departments' commanders receive advanced management training at the FBI National Academy, the Northwestern University Center for Public Safety or the Southern Police Institute. Most Baltimore commanders do not have the opportunity to receive command development training.

Basic Detective Test

- The protocol for selection of detectives for districts and specialized units appears inconsistent from case to case. Until the 1980s, the BPD had a basic investigation and criminal law exam to become a detective. The exam has since fallen to the wayside. The knowledge tested in this exam is necessary in order for an officer to excel in the detective role. This basic exam should be reinstated to ensure a consistent, high standard is set and maintained for officers who take on this vital and complex role.

TRAINING

Recommendations:

- Establish physical fitness incentive
- Keep academy class sizes consistent with DOJ standards
- Focus on simulation training

Training Models

- Over the past several years, Baltimore City Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 3 has supported the BPD and, specifically, Commissioner Frederick Bealefeld in the development and implementation of a training model for his patrol officers (Diamond Standard Training) and first line supervisors (Sergeants Leadership School). Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 supports continuing efforts in improving our training models - both for newly hired recruits and current police officers - and we encourage the BPD to utilize the Joint Labor-Management Committee as spelled out in the Memorandum of Understanding between the FOP and BPD to assist in this regard.

Class Size

- According to the DOJ report, recruit classes should be kept to approximately 25-30 candidates to ensure quality of training. BPD recruit classes have consisted on average of 35-50 officers.

Firearms, Judgment, Accuracy and Physical Fitness

- The key to proficiency is an officer's ability to focus on the fundamentals, maintaining accuracy and sound judgment especially for a police officer who may have been pursuing a suspect on foot for several city blocks. It does the BPD no good if officers can shoot at a stationary target but not pursue a suspect on foot and still keep that same precision. Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 has urged the BPD for years to adopt physical fitness incentives whereby the fitness standards are not mandatory, however provide enough of an incentive for the majority of the BPD to participate in.
- Police officers must be quick reactors who are prepared to deal with whatever is thrown their way. Officers frequently referenced in the survey that simulation training is crucial because it teaches officers how to react in situations that regularly arise. This type of training is held in high regard by officers and should be an area of focus. This includes all sorts of real life scenarios such as testifying in front of a jury, executing a search warrant, conducting interviews and more. The BPD should utilize State's Attorneys and other outside sources for some of this training.
- According to survey results, there has been consistent concern by other officers about BPD officers keeping their general gun skills up. Baltimore City's policy is to terminate employment of any officer who does not satisfactorily complete the annual gun range test two consecutive times. Focus group participants reported that this policy, however, is not being enforced. Instead, officers who fail the annual gun range test twice are often pushed through, leaving Baltimore City with under-qualified members in one of the most vital skill sets.

“Training is among the most important perishable skills. It keeps them safe and gives them more confidence. They handle situations more professionally.”

-Focus group participant

LEADERSHIP

Recommendations:

- Reinstate civil service rank of Captain
- Reform/restore Comstat to its original intent, as information sharing and planning tool
- BPD must be independent from City Hall and political influence

Civil Service Protection

- Baltimore eliminated the civil service merit based position of captain, but the officers with whom we spoke almost unanimously want the position restored. Captain had been the highest rank in the BPD based upon a competitive examination process. It was replaced with the position of deputy major. The rank of deputy major is a promotion made solely at the discretion of the Police Commissioner. While police executives need the ability to appoint top commanders, most professional police agencies do not have at-will appointees in lower management ranks. If the competitive civil service rank of captain was returned to merit based promotions, the Police Commissioner would still have the power to appoint deputy commissioners, colonels, lieutenant colonels and majors. Promotions should be based upon merit and not connections. Without the civil service ranking, this principle is impossible to enforce.

Baltimore should restore the civil service rank of captain so that the process of promotion is shielded from political influence. Although the BPD intends on changing the name of 'deputy major' to 'captain' this does not replace the fact that the rank will be outside of civil service protection and thus the buffer between the rank of lieutenant and command appointees will be missing. Lieutenants need not be political pawns in the efforts at improving policing within the BPD and the easiest way of removing the political pressures they face is to restore a civil service rank just ahead of theirs.

Priorities of Management

- Comstat numbers drive everything in the BPD, which has led to misplaced priorities. As a result, officers in the BPD feel pressure to achieve numbers for

perception's sake, be it for increased federal funding or to keep up appearances in the media for the administration's sake.

The focus on assigning blame for less-than-satisfactory numbers during Comstat, rather than problem-solving, is completely unproductive and weakens the collective morale of the BPD. If restored to its original intent, Comstat has the potential to be an extremely constructive use of time.

Independence

- It is imperative that the City Council and the Mayor allow the BPD to maintain independence from City Hall and political influence.

“Comstat needs to be completely reformed. Originally intended as an information-sharing and planning tool when it was first implemented by Commissioner Edward Norris, the weekly meeting has become a ‘whipping post’ for commanders.”

-Focus group participant

RESOURCES

Recommendations:

- Review and implement privatization of fleet maintenance and acquisition
- Establish a single uniform color for all ranks

Uniforms

- All BPD police officers, from commanders down to officers, should wear the same color to maintain consistency and camaraderie throughout the BPD. This would bring the BPD in line with the Maryland State Police and Howard County Police Department, who require their police forces to wear the same color uniform regardless of rank.

Vehicle Maintenance

- There are consistent reports of neglected and improperly maintained vehicles by the BPD. Consequently, officers are often required to ride two or three to a car. This constitutes an inefficient, perhaps wasteful use of resources. This vehicle shortage reduces preventive patrol coverage in Baltimore neighborhoods. Police vehicles must be functioning well for officers to do their jobs properly.

Moreover, the condition of vehicles and other BPD equipment plays an integral part in the image officers project in the community. We consistently heard from

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officers how demoralizing it can be to pull up in a dilapidated squad car which can be heard from “a mile away.” Officers feel it does not command respect and it makes it hard to be taken seriously.

“How am I supposed to pull someone over for having a taillight out when my car has two?”

-Focus group participant

“Our bumpers are duct-taped, the brakes squeal, the tags are hanging off, the lights and blue lights are out.”

-Focus group participant

DEPLOYMENT

Recommendations:

- Refocus efforts on quality of life crimes in Baltimore City
- Promote community oriented policing by offering incentives for officers to live within the city limits
- Redraw patrol area boundaries map, and, more specifically, divide the Northeastern district
- Seek reimbursement for actual costs to City associated with providing police coverage to large nightclubs and bars
- Reform Comstat
- Restore effective first line supervision by instituting a corporal rank
- Restore Patrol to its formerly well respected position by staffing Patrol first, recognizing that a lack of numbers is an indicator of lessened crime rates and, therefore, successful policing.

Quality of Life Crimes

- Over the years, the BPD has rightly focused on violent crime arrests, but neglected quality of life crimes throughout the city. The result is a crime crisis downtown and an extraordinarily high number of burglaries and assaults in neighborhoods once thought of as safe, including Mt. Vernon, Federal Hill, Canton, and Fells Point.

Community Oriented Policing

- A recent study shows that an increasing number of BPD officers live in Baltimore City. The BPD should make certain that the trend continues by offering incentives for police officers to live within the city limits. The greater the number

of officers residing in the city, the more personally invested the police force as a whole will be in the welfare of the city.

Patrol Boundaries

- The BPD patrol districts are based on 30-year-old crime statistics and population figures. For example, during the last 30 years, crime in the Northeastern District has steadily increased and the district now produces so many murders the officers call it the “new Eastern District.” As this point, the Northeastern District is too large with too much crime for the number of officers assigned to patrol it.

Downtown Baltimore provides another example of how drastically things have changed. Baltimore has developed a vibrant nightlife in recent years. Unfortunately, Baltimore has neglected to implement an effective strategy for addressing the challenges associated with some of the nightclubs. In addition to the challenges facing nightclubs and the growth downtown is the continued problem of youth attacking visitors and residents in the Inner Harbor, along with surrounding neighborhoods downtown, such as Mt. Vernon, Federal Hill, Fells Point, Harbor East and Canton.

The BPD should reconfigure its district, sector, and post patrol boundaries to reflect current population and crime figures. The Northeastern district in particular should be reconfigured so that crime can be effectively managed in that area.

Nightclubs and Bars

- A vibrant nightlife is an important economic asset to Baltimore. The problem is the Downtown, Canton, Fells Point and Federal Hill nightclubs and bars require a great deal of police services. These resources are shifted away from the neighborhood to provide increased patrols during peak club times. There have been a number of killings, stabbings and assaults associated with these clubs. The clubs pay a great deal of money for security at their bars. The club owners want to provide a safe environment. Visible police patrols on the streets outside of those clubs would greatly reduce the crime and disorder associated with those clubs. All officers on these details would be under the direct supervision and discipline of the BPD.

Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 proposes a public private partnership to alleviate these problems. Uniformed officers should be paid by the City to walk foot in those areas and the club owners would reimburse the City in the same manner as the Orioles, Ravens, parades and festivals do. The City of Miami recoups over one million dollars each year in fees for administering the Paid Detail Office. A reasonable fee should be included to go to the City to cover expenses of the outside employment office, workers compensation, fuel, equipment use, and any other actual or potential costs to the City.

Comstat

- As previously discussed, Comstat is in need of major reformation. Originally intended as an information-sharing and planning tool when it was first implemented by Commissioner Edward Norris, the weekly meeting has become a gathering predominantly used to berate officers for performance issues within the BPD.

The focus during Comstat needs to shift from assigning blame for less-than-satisfactory numbers to actual problem solving, as shaming officers is completely unproductive and weakens the collective morale. In order to become a constructive tactic again, a majority of the time spent in Comstat should be devoted to brainstorming ways to improve the BPD and its numbers.

Patrol

- Across the board, focus group participants agreed there should be an emphasis on Patrol within the BPD and that Patrol should be larger. Officers reported that Patrol used to be the “backbone” of the BPD, and one of the most highly regarded units. Today, as result of the BPD emphasis on specialized units, Patrol has many vacancies and has been diminished.

Since patrol officers are assigned to the same area of the city each shift they work (unlike specialized units), they have the opportunity to build relationships in the community, conduct ongoing investigations, and employ more strategic policing overall. This is where the true reduction in crime will come from.

Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 feels that the BPD must refocus its efforts on Patrol and must discontinue the practice of rewarding statistically driven arrests. Deployment should be redirected with an emphasis on filling Patrol first.

Effective First Line Supervision

- Baltimore lacks sufficient first line supervision. The BPD does not have a sufficient number of sergeants and lieutenants to provide a consistent supervisory presence. The BPD extensively uses a system in which a police officer acts as Officer in Charge (OIC) when the sergeant or lieutenant has a day off. There is a higher rate of problems occurring on days when the sergeant or lieutenant is off. This system promotes poor discipline. One day an officer in the squad acts as sergeant and is in charge of disciplining his fellow officers and the next day is back to working as officer along with those officers he was supervising the prior day.

In order to more effectively handle this situation, BPD should institute a corporal rank. Most Baltimore-area police departments have a corporal rank to maintain

consistent supervision. Promoting additional sergeants or corporals would be revenue-neutral as the OIC is paid acting sergeant's pay.

- Although education and training are important barometers in establishing a strong corps of sergeants and lieutenants within the BPD, time on the street and experience making arrests, investigating cases, and testifying in court are essential for all ranks. Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 recommends the BPD adjust the a minimum years of service requirement to be eligible for the sergeant's examination from the current three years of service to five years of service and that the years of service requirement to be eligible for the lieutenant's examination be moved from the current five years of service to seven years of service.

“Patrol boundaries are much too big, the Northeastern, especially. No one wants to go to Northeastern anymore.”

-Focus group participant

“Foot patrols make good cops and good community relationships—they own the area.”

-Focus group participant

COMPETITIVENESS

Recommendations:

- Return previous pension benefit for officers with fewer than 15 years of service
- Make pay more competitive with surrounding jurisdictions
- Ensure that officers receive a reasonable amount of time off requested
- Utilize funds which would be poured into hiring and training new officers to better compensate and incentivize current officers

Compensation

- Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 recognizes there is a nationwide pension crisis. Along with the Baltimore City Fire Unions, Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 proposed over \$80 million in concessions to our pension in Fiscal Year 2011 alone. But City Hall would not consider a compromise and the result is more than a long federal lawsuit. Morale in the BPD is extraordinarily low. The City is both the most dangerous and lowest-paid jurisdiction, with no education or special skills incentives—a combination that has been prompting officers to leave the city for other jurisdictions in search of better working conditions. The salary for a Baltimore City police officer, sergeant or lieutenant is over 18% less than the median salary for the same position in all the jurisdictions in the State of Maryland.

Pending the outcome of the current court case regarding Baltimore's public safety employee pension system, the BPD stands to lose hundreds of officers to surrounding jurisdictions. Particularly for those officers with fewer than 15 years on, the outcome of the case will be pivotal in the decision making process regarding their career paths, according to our findings.

The BPD's pension system was used heavily as a recruitment tool when the majority of officers joined the force. And it has remained one of the largest incentives to stay with the BPD despite the promise of higher salaries and safer working conditions in nearby municipalities.

Ultimately, without a competitive pension plan, there will be no monetary incentive for officers to remain in the City unless officers' salaries become competitive with surrounding areas.

Leave

- Morale is down significantly due in large part to police officers being unable to schedule a reasonable amount of time off on days which work well for them and their families. Patrol officers, in particular, are consistently denied time off due to staffing shortages. The inability to spend holidays with family or get the time off that is deserved is a major drain on morale in the BPD, and one that is easily fixed through more strategic staffing, deployment and merely rewarding officers for the good work they do.

Retention

- Training new officers is extremely expensive. If experienced officers are stripped of their pension benefits and the BPD experiences a mass exodus of officers as a result, the City will have to pay to train new officers in droves, minimizing or eliminating altogether the cost savings of overhauling the system.

Moreover, the BPD will then be comprised of a less experienced, and hence, less competent workforce. The most dangerous jurisdiction in the State cannot afford to police its streets with an overwhelmingly untested, "green" police force. Aside from sound judgment which can only be honed through experience, studies show that officers with five or more years have fewer disciplinary issues as well.

"People will leave with this lawsuit coming out. The 100 open positions in Baltimore County will get filled. It will purge people from the agency and we'll be back to the bottom again."

-Focus group participant

CONCLUSION

Despite major strides in the reduction of crime in our city, the police officers, sergeants and lieutenants who comprise Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 call for a thorough review and audit of existing policies to take the BPD to the next level of policing. A safer city without higher taxes will attract residents, increase the tax base, and continue Baltimore's progress in years to come.

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, in her 2012 State of the City address, stated as a primary objective growing Baltimore City by 10,000 families. According to the most recent U.S. Census, Baltimore actually lost population over the last 10 years. Given that successful cities, however, saw their populations grow at higher rates than suburban areas nationally, the conditions should be ripe to begin to grow Baltimore. Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 supports the Mayor's efforts to grow Baltimore. This cannot happen, however, until residents see a safe place to work and live.

The overall feeling articulated by focus group participants is that City Hall does not have a clear understanding of what needs to happen to improve policing by the BPD and positively impact public safety in Baltimore. In offering this blueprint, the leadership of Baltimore City FOP Lodge 3 are hoping to provide City Hall with the information needed to achieve these goals without raising taxes. It is our hope that these findings will be helpful and relevant to meaningfully improve policing by the BPD.

BPD officers are willing to take strides toward these goals as well. The general consensus among participants is that members of the BPD are willing to work diligently, are proud of what they do, and want to make a difference to improve Baltimore. The overarching sentiment repeatedly stated in the focus group is that this is the reason officers joined the BPD and it is the reason they have remained.

For Baltimore City Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 3:

Detective Robert F. Cherry, Jr.
President

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