

**06-23-2021 Town Council Meeting  
Responses to Council Questions**

**ITEM #13: Receive Recommendations of the Re-Imagining Community Safety Task Force**

**Council Question:**

What is the current entrance criteria for public housing?

**Staff Response:**

*The admission policy for Chapel Hill Public Housing includes the following exclusionary periods for the criminal activities listed below:*

<b>CRIMINAL ACTIVITY</b>	<b>PROPOSED EXCLUSIONARY PERIOD</b>
<i>Registered Sex Offenders</i>	<i>LIFE</i>
<i>Manufacturing Methamphetamine</i>	<i>LIFE</i>
<i>Sale, manufacture or distribution of drugs or counterfeit substance (including trafficking)</i>	<i>10 YEARS</i>
<i>Felony Assault</i>	<i>7 YEARS</i>
<i>Felony Property Crimes (i.e., Felonious larceny, burglary)</i>	<i>7 YEARS</i>
<i>Possession of drugs</i>	<i>7 YEARS</i>
<i>Felony- Fraud</i>	<i>3 YEARS</i>
<i>Misdemeanor- Larceny(shoplifting)</i>	<i>2 YEARS</i>
<i>Misdemeanor-Assault</i>	<i>1 YEAR</i>
<i>Trespassing</i>	<i>1 YEAR</i>

*If an applicant feels that their situation has special circumstances, they can appeal their denial. These admission criteria were updated a few years ago after hearing from community members that ours were too restrictive.*

## 06-23-2021 Town Council Meeting

### Responses to Council Questions

**Council Question:**

What is the status of the CHPD data reporting plan? We understood there is a staff position within CHPD dedicated to data collection and analysis. In June of 2020, Council mandated reporting to Council every six months and that has yet to happen, nor have we received the usual quarterly reports. Additionally, the community safety data reporting page established in June of 2020 has not been updated since it was initially created last summer.

**Staff Response:**

*Staff is finalizing an update on data which will be sent to the Council via email and updated on the website. Chief Blue and his staff will discuss the data and provide analysis with the Council in the fall. The Re-Imagining Community Safety Task Force report includes several recommendations related to the use of data, to include an examination of the frequency of reporting, the engagement of outside assistance in analyzing our data, and identifying the data points that are most reflective of our reform efforts. We look forward to working closely with CPAC to reconsider how we track and report data and to ensure that what we share is useful and accessible to our community. The pandemic has slowed our reporting and analysis efforts somewhat but we expect to publish three quarters of data within the next week.*

**Council Question:**

One of the recommendations focuses on decriminalizing poverty - this discussion has already been underway - could you please share what next steps need to be taken to move it forward and who is leading on those steps?

**Staff Response:**

*Assuming that Council agrees with the Task Force recommendation to decriminalize selected ordinances that disproportionately impact some members of our community, we would recommend that Council direct staff to identify those ordinances and bring recommendations back to Council in the fall regarding changes to them, or outright elimination of them.*

## Amy Harvey

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**From:** Maurice Jones  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 23, 2021 3:57 PM  
**To:** Allen Buansi; Amy Harvey; Amy Ryan; Hongbin Gu; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Michael Parker; Pam Hemminger; Tai Huynh; Town Council  
**Cc:** Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Loryn Clark; Ross Tompkins; CHRIS BLUE  
**Subject:** CHPD Quarterly Reports and an Update on Regulatory (Traffic) Stops

Mayor and Council,

Please see a message below from Chief Blue on the police department's efforts to collect and report on data related to our officers' interactions with the public. Chief Blue and his team will resume updating the information on a quarterly basis this summer. Additionally, Chief Blue offers some background on the significant drop in regulatory stops since the Council resolution was passed a year ago including an explanation of why some stops continue to be counted by the state as regulatory in nature but are actually safety related equipment failures.

We also expect to bring the annual report from FY 21 to the Council in September for discussion.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

All the Best,  
Maurice

### Updated Data

Mr. Jones: Below, please find links to the three most recent quarterly reports. Now that we have caught up, we will be more prompt in getting these published.

<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/police/public-information/office-of-professional-standards>

Links

Q1 - <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/49345/637599698765157117>

Q2 - <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/49347/637599698778125697>

Q3 - <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/49349/637599698791719435>

The effects of the pandemic are reflected in these reports. A few highlights:

- Traffic stops continue to trend down dramatically. Council's action to end regulatory stops is evident in the traffic stop numbers and that policy change has gone well.
- When traffic stops are occurring, speed is the most frequent reason. 81% of traffic citations are related to speed.

- For several years, we have closely monitored searches that result from traffic stops to ensure that those are conducted when necessary but not without good investigation and consideration. In the most recent quarter, officers found contraband (illegal items) 80% of time, which tell us that the searches that are occurring are of high quality. For comparison, the state-wide “find rate” of contraband as a result of vehicle searches is 33%.
- We continue to emphasize warnings and citations over physical arrests. All arrests resulting from traffic stops in Q3 of 2021 were for DWI.
- There was an uptick in breaking and entering of residences, while reports of breaking and entering into vehicles declined recently.

We know that the Re-Imagining Community Safety Task Force report contains several recommendations about the collection, use, and distribution of data and we look forward to working with Council and CPAC to provide the most useful data for our community. To that end, we hope to present a comprehensive data overview for Council in the fall.

### **Regulatory Stops**

We are aware that the SBI Traffic Stop website reports (<https://trafficstops.ncsbi.gov/Default.aspx?pageid=2>) that the Chapel Hill Police Department has conducted vehicle stops for regulatory and equipment violations after the Council’s policy direction last June that such stops cease.

Our policy defines regulatory stops as any non-moving, non-safety related traffic stop (example: expired registration, cracked windshield, broken taillight, broken license plate light and other laws not connected to safe operation of a motor vehicle). There is no State definition of regulatory stops but we believe that the policy language that we are using captures Council’s interest when they prohibited such stops.

After each traffic stop, officers are required to complete a Traffic Stop Report. Once completed, the form is automatically sent to the SBI, which posts this information publicly. On the SBI’s public website, this information is titled *Initial Purpose of Traffic Stop by Enforcement Action Taken*; and it can be sorted by individual police departments. An example of this chart/information is below:

# Chapel Hill Police Department

## Initial Purpose of Traffic Stop by Enforcement Action Taken

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

Report From 7/1/2020 through 3/31/2021

Purpose	Verbal Warning	Written Warning	Citation Issued	On View Arrest	No Action Taken	Total
Checkpoint	0	0	0	0	0	0
Driving While Impaired	0	0	0	3	0	3
Investigation	4	1	3	5	8	21
Other Motor Vehicle Violation	15	0	0	0	1	16
Safe Movement Violation	83	6	13	5	2	109
Seat Belt Violation	1	0	3	0	0	4
Speed Limit Violation	62	29	336	3	0	430
Stop Light/Sign Violation	124	10	41	1	0	176
Vehicle Equipment Violation	70	0	0	2	1	73
Vehicle Regulatory Violation	2	0	1	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>834</b>

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When the officer fills out the Traffic Stop Report, they are limited by the ‘initial purpose’ options shown above to record why the traffic stop was initiated. **The Traffic Stop Report cannot be changed or modified by individual agencies or officers.** The shortcoming of this is that Chapel Hill PD cannot modify the form to indicate whether the officer stopped the vehicle for a moving or safety violation. An example of such a stop would be when an officer sees a vehicle traveling at night with no headlamps on. This is clearly a safety concern (and often an indicator of DWI) however, there is no accurate field to check for the purpose of the stop on the State Traffic Report form other than *Vehicle Equipment Violation* (no headlamps, N.C.G.S. 20-129).

Recognizing the limitations of the State-mandated form, Chapel Hill PD requires officers to provide additional documentation describing the circumstances of their traffic stops. When only a warning is issued, officers still complete a “field contact” report for every traffic stop. If the outcome is an arrest, an incident and arrest report are completed. If the outcome is a citation, the citation is recorded as such. All field contact reports, incident reports, arrest reports and citations are documented in our records management system. This gives us the ability to record information that is not included on the State-mandated traffic stop form and allows us to further inform/document the reason for the stop, what type of search was conducted, if any, and to record if any contraband was found on the search. This data is not collected or tracked on the State-mandated Traffic Stop Report so those nuanced explanations for stops will not be reflected in the State reporting site.

In response to the question you posed, we pulled all traffic stops from 07/01/2020 to 05/11/2021.

### TRAFFIC STOPS-EQUIPMENT (Traffic Stop Report):

There was a total of 83 traffic stops recorded on the State-mandated Traffic Stop Report as *equipment violations*.

- 78 of the 83 stops resulted in verbal warnings.

- 77 of these stops were made for failure to burn headlamps.
- 1 stop was due to a trailer being pulled in such a manner that caused sparks to fly from the vehicle.
- There was 1 citation issued as an outcome of the 83 traffic stops (Driving While License Revoked) and the reason for that stop was that no license plate was displayed on vehicle.
- There were 2 arrests that resulted from the 83 equipment-related traffic stops and both were for DWI.

The information above accounts for 81 of the 83 traffic stops in the relevant time period. We have learned that 2 field contacts were not completed and we are, therefore, unable to determine why those stops were initiated. This has been addressed as an employee performance matter and I do not expect that it will reoccur as officers better understand when those filed contacts must be completed.

**TRAFFIC STOPS-REGULATORY (Traffic Stop Report):**

In the same review period, there was a total of 6 traffic stops that officers recorded on the State-mandated Traffic Stop Report as *regulatory violations*.

- 3 of the 6 stops resulted in verbal warnings (1-registration on vehicle indicated vehicle was a Subaru when it was displayed on a Mazda, 1-no license plate on the vehicle, 1-fictitious tag on the vehicle-often associated with stolen vehicles)
- There were 2 citations issued as an outcome of the 6 traffic stops- both for no insurance. (Reason for stops: 1-no license plate displayed, 1-driving 5 mph and left of center-often an indicator of DWI). The same officer issued both of these citations and has since been counseled on the prohibition against issuing citations for no insurance.
- 1 field contact was not completed and we are unable to determine why that stop was conducted. This has been addressed as an employee performance matter and I do not expect that it will reoccur.

**DEMOGRAPHICS REGULATORY/EQUIPMENT STOPS (Traffic Stop Report):**

A quarterly review is completed of all stops to examine the agency’s progress towards delivering fair and impartial policing. This is completed by collecting the data of each traffic stop, by officer, to include the reason for the stop and demographics. Each officer’s supervisor reviews the data, along with any associated documentation and body worn camera footage to look for disparities or irregularities in terms of race, gender and ethnicity. Additionally, supervisors review and discuss each officer’s stop statistics from the Traffic Stop Report form as part of the employee’s annual performance review.

The traffic stops demographics below represent the driver in each “regulatory or equipment” stop from 07/01/2020-05/11/2021:

Equipment:

Race/Ethnicity	A	C	VW	Total
Black African-American	0	1	23	24
Caucasian	1	0	36	37
Hispanic	1	0	9	10
Asian	0	0	11	11

**\*\*NOTE:** 1 additional stop of African-American driver had no action taken.

Regulatory:

Race/Ethnicity	A	C	VW	Total
Black African-American	0	2	2	4
Caucasian	0	0	2	2
Hispanic	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0

A=Arrest

C-Citation

VW-Verbal Warning

We recognize that such stops have historically been an area of significant disparity. While our efforts to de-prioritize them over the years had led to an overall reduction, we still saw disparities in them. Since Council's action to prohibit them, I have been very pleased with our progress in implementing steps to address these disparities and our continued efforts to engage in fair and impartial policing. Please let me know if you have additional questions or require more detail about this report.

Christopher C. Blue  
Chief of Police and Exec. Dir. for Community Safety  
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