

That Manitowoc Police Department has identified three major community issues in recent years. The issues have been identified as the growing use and distribution of fentanyl-based product, human trafficking and child pornography. An increase has been identified in each of these areas in recent years which will be further described.

## **DRUG ENFORCEMENT**

In 2020, Manitowoc Police Department began a proactive initiative to combat the growing issue with fentanyl-based products in the City of Manitowoc. The increase was identified through the rise of opiate confirmed overdose deaths and EMS requests where Narcan was administered. In 2021, almost all heroin and methamphetamine seized has been found to contain fentanyl. In 2020, Manitowoc Police Department investigated 12 confirmed overdose deaths and responded to 49 calls for police / EMS service of individuals who had overdosed and had been recovered with Narcan. In 2021, as of August, Manitowoc Police Department has responded to 13 confirmed overdose deaths and have responded to 45 calls for police / EMS service of individuals who had overdosed and had been recovered with Narcan. In response, the Manitowoc Police Department has become more active in narcotics investigations. The Manitowoc Police Department receives a large number of complaints via a variety of different methods that identify potential drug distribution residences in the City of Manitowoc. Due to the large number of complaints being received, the Manitowoc County Metro Drug Unit is not capable of conducting follow up. The Manitowoc Police Department has taken on the role of investigating the residences that would not otherwise receive investigative attention. In 2021 the Manitowoc Police Department executed 5 search warrants at addresses and made felony narcotics related arrests from each address. In each instance, residents in the neighborhoods approached law enforcement and thanked them for listening to their concerns. The Manitowoc Police Department will continue to be proactive in this area to address these concerns. In addition, a number of other complaints were addressed by law enforcement conducting surveillance and other alternative investigative techniques.

Manitowoc Police Department has also established a Warrant Service Team so that contacts at suspected distribution address can be conducted safely. Investigative staff, patrol, Metro Drug Unit staff and the Warrant Service Team work together to address these issues. In 2021, due to staff shortages and high case volume, the investigative staff has not had the ability to be as proactive in addressing these issues. The intent was to conduct these investigations as time and staffing permit.

## **HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

In 2017 Detective Erik Kowalski and Detective Jerod Lecher attended various trainings and shadow deployments with other agencies in regards to proactive human trafficking enforcement. Detectives have since used this training to educate other officers and investigative staff on this issue. The Manitowoc Police Department is committed to this type of investigation and has invested in equipment commonly used in proactive human trafficking investigations to capture the court required necessary evidence used for prosecution purposes. In 2018 a number of proactive human trafficking sting dates were executed with a significant number of arrests made and high-risk victims identified. Since 2018 we have been unable to make the same impact on the community due to high call volume, increase in

violent crimes and staffing shortages. Currently, Manitowoc Police Department is the only agency in Manitowoc County with the training, experience and equipment capable of conducting this type of investigation. Statistics related to these investigations include the following:

**2018** – All operations conducted under the 2018 Beat Patrol Grant – **73 Arrests**, 15 High Risk Victims (HRV) Identified, 7 Pimps, 1,067 Unique Contacts (UC) and TOTAL Sensitive Sex Crimes Investigated: 150

**2019** – All operations conducted on shift when time and staff level permitted – **9 Arrests**, 3 HRV Identified, 1 Pimp, 324 UC's and TOTAL Sensitive Sex Crimes Investigated: 113

**2020** - COVID Pandemic year placed limits on this type of investigation resulting in – **0 Arrests** and TOTAL Sensitive Sex Crimes Investigated: 85

**2021** - All operations conducted when time and staff level permitted resulting in – **14 Arrests** and TOTAL Sensitive Sex Crimes Investigated: 91

### **CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

In 2021, Manitowoc Police Department has again noted an increase in child pornography investigations. These investigations are typically received as a referral from national and state law enforcement agencies after the images digital trail is traced back to Manitowoc. At that point, Manitowoc Police Department assumes the role as being the lead law enforcement agency. The investigations in 2021 range from possession of child pornography to manufacturing child pornography. These investigations typically involve many agencies to include Manitowoc County Human Services and Manitowoc County SWAT. Due to the inherent dangers noted nationally with this type of investigation, SWAT personnel are typically used to ensure safe execution. In 2021, Detective Lecher and other detectives have investigated 11 referrals of child pornography making arrests in each investigation. In 2020 Detective Lecher and other detectives investigated 12 referrals of child pornography making arrests in each investigation. Due to this type of investigation typically leading to cellphone and or computer extractions which result in thousands of suspect images, the investigations can be very long and protracted. Currently Manitowoc Police Department is the only agency in Manitowoc County capable of conducting these investigations completely due to the experience, training and equipment that Detective Lecher is trained on. Manitowoc Police Department also assists other agencies in conducting these investigations with technical expertise and extraction efforts of suspect devices.

### **SUMMARY**

A request has been made to add an additional full time detective position with the Manitowoc Police Department. The intent is to use this new position, in collaboration with our current investigative staff, to continue to proactively address the above related issues and expand on our current investigative capabilities. The above issues are all community quality of life related issues. Through the use of this new position, as well as anticipated future grant funding, it is believed that a more significant impact can be made in our community.

