



COMMON GROUND

MAY 2018 ISSUE



MEET DEPUTIES
CLEARY, TARVER AND MURRAY
OF THE PROPERTY UNIT

DEPARTMENT HOSTS BOSTON CITY COUNCIL
HEARING TO DISCUSS REENTRY

Sheriff's Statement



In this issue, we profile one of the teams that represent our first line of defense against the potential introduction of contraband and weapons into the Suffolk County Jail – our Searches and Property Unit.

We also share an inside look at the recent Boston City Council hearing that was held at the Suffolk County House of Correction with the purpose of highlighting the needs of

incarcerated populations and the service providers who work with them to successfully reacclimate to society and reduce recidivism, which ultimately increases public safety.

Other items featured in the May 2018 edition of the Common Ground include my support of United States Senator Elizabeth Warren's federal bill to address the opioid and addiction crisis; the Anti-Defamation League of New England's visit to the House of Correction; our participation in the "Got Peace" basketball tournament; and much more.

-Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins

COMMON GROUND NEWSLETTER

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Department Hosts Boston City Council Hearing on Reentry

Read about the Boston City Council hearing held at the Suffolk House of Correction to discuss the needs of incarcerated populations.



Employee Profile: Deputies Tarver, Murray and Cleary.

Meet members of the Suffolk County Jail Searches and Property Unit – Deputy Phil Tarver, Deputy Ronald Murray and Deputy Ryan Cleary.



The SCSD's Searches and Property Unit

Learn about the Department responsible for the frontline safety and security of the Suffolk County Jail.



SCSD HOSTS CITY COUNCIL HEARING, FOR COLLABORATION ON REENTRY SERVICES

Members of the Boston City Council were welcomed to the Suffolk County House of Correction by Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins for a discussion about reentry, recidivism and the needs of incarcerated populations, as well as the providers who help them re-acclimate to society.

The Boston City Council Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice held a hearing to conduct a comprehensive review of reentry resources for incarcerated populations in Boston.

Joined by a myriad of representatives from local agencies and community partnerships, the Boston City Council conducted an official hearing - chaired by City Council President Andrea Campbell - that examined topics that included recovery services, workforce development, housing and healthcare access.



"It's crucially important that all of you are here to be part of this discussion, because one of the things that we try to do here at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department is to provide transparency and receive community input," said Sheriff

Tompkins. "We think it's very important that the people we serve, their families, friends and the community at-large know exactly what is going on behind the walls."

In addition to Department staff and current and formerly incarcerated individuals, others in attendance included the City of Boston's Office of Returning Citizens; the Mayor's Office of Public Safety; the Boston Police Department; Suffolk County Community Corrections Center; Bowdoin Street Health Center; the Boston Public Health Commission; Community Resources for Justice (CRJ); Brigham and Women's Hospital; Roca, Inc.; Boston University; and numerous other community stakeholders.



"This hearing has a few objectives," said Council President Campbell. "It's most important for us at the Council level to listen. It's important that there be an opportunity to listen to the providers about the work that they do every single day, serving the men and

women who are currently incarcerated, and also those who are being released."

"The information that we gather here will help us to explore ways in which we can prevent people from coming back into places like this," Councilor Campbell continued. "It is most important for us to listen to the people who are currently serving time, because every community that each one of us touches as City Councilors is affected by incarceration."

In an effort to understand some of the issues that are faced by incarcerated individuals prior to and after release, a group of men and women who are currently in the care and custody of the Department provided testimony detailing some of their concerns and experiences.

One woman explained, "When I do leave the House of Correction, I have a lot of factors working against me. I'm now a convicted felon; I'm in recovery, I'll have been out of work for 28 months, and I have no source of income upon release. I've also been waiting for placement in a half-way house for about two-and-a-half to three months. It's been a waiting game, honestly, and at times has been very frustrating. It's really imperative for women to have access to more pre-release programming."

In addition to testimony delivered by inmates, members of the Boston City Council heard from community partners and agencies about the many medical, mental health and educational needs of the currently and formerly incarcerated. For more information on the hearing, please visit: www.cityofboston.com/citycouncil.



EMPLOYEE PROFILES: THE SEARCHES & PROPERTY UNIT

Deputy Phil Tarver, Deputy Ronald Murray and Deputy Ryan Cleary all currently serve as highly trained and dedicated members of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Searches and Property Unit at the Suffolk County Jail.

Deputy Phil Tarver and Deputy Ronald Murray, each having served the Department for the last 17 years, have teamed with Deputy Ryan Cleary, a 10-year veteran, to bring together an immense amount of knowledge, experience, and expertise to the Searches and Property Unit.

Reflecting upon his college years, Deputy Cleary remembers, "I majored in criminal justice and someone handed me an application. They said

it was a good job and that I should try it out, so I applied. Before coming into this unit, when I first came into the Department, I was working the units upstairs and had experience with the Transportation Unit and various other roles in the Department. I was sometimes put into the Searches and Property Unit as a fill-in and ended up sticking around."

Deputy Ronald Murray, detailing his journey, spoke of the experience of having family members who had worked within the Department before him.

"My story in coming to this job is a little longer than some; I worked here when I graduated from high school from 1987 to 1989. My father was a Suffolk County Sheriff's Department employee at Deer Island Prison before this facility was opened. I took a break and did some other jobs in between before coming back to this facility in 2001. I have a long history of relatives working here dating back to the 50's."

"I had a military background from serving in the army and I was looking

for more stable work," said Deputy Tarver, recounting his own journey to the Department. "A friend of mine referred me to the Department and here I am today. I've done a lot in the Jail and didn't start down here [in Property]. When I first started, I didn't even know that this part of the building even existed for about three or four years. I also started as a fill-in and it was a good fit for the Department and for me."

In discussing their time with the Searches and Property Unit, each officer emphasized the critical role that the other has played as individuals in positively impacting teamwork. As individuals, they each stress the significance of working well with one another to ensure that incarcerated individuals are searched appropriately and their property is organized and protected for the duration of a person's detention.

Ultimately, it is this sense of teamwork and emphasis on maintaining cohesiveness that keeps the Searches and Property Unit running at such a high level for the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department.



An Inside Look: Searches and Property Unit



The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's Searches and Property Unit at the Suffolk County Jail is responsible for the searching of detainees when they arrive at the facility, and the officers in the unit are also tasked with the custody, documentation and preservation of detainees' property for the duration of their time with the Department.

Upon arrival to the Jail, all individuals go through the intake and booking process. Immediately after they are booked, detainees are brought to the Searches and Property Unit.

"When new arrivals come into the jail, we immediately start pulling information and start the process of logging them in by name and their assigned units to ensure that we are keeping track of everyone coming in and out of the facility," said Deputy Ronald Murray.

The purpose of the Searches and Property Unit is to ensure that no contraband is brought into the jail that could potentially harm other incarcerated individuals or employees. The searches completed by Deputy Ryan Cleary, Deputy Ronald Murray and Deputy Phil Tarver serve as a means to discover any weapons, drugs or prohibited items before they make it inside of the facility to prevent individuals from smuggling them in.



"As the Searches and Property Unit, we have the responsibility of stopping a lot of contraband and potential violence," continued Deputy Murray.

Serving as the main gatekeeper of the facility, this unit watches over the detainees' property until they are either released back to the general public, or sentenced to another facility. This property typically includes the clothing, phones, wallets and other effects that are in an individual's possession at the time of their arrest.

Though the primary focus of the unit is to conduct searches and preserve property, the specially trained officers who work within the unit emphasize the complex nature of their roles.

"Here, in this unit, it's not about how tough you are, or how big your muscles are. It's all about how you can get someone to do what is needed to do in the easiest way possible and without any problems," explained Deputy Phil Tarver.

The three correction officers who work within the unit detailed the critical role of communication and the various situations that can arise in the search process. They reflected upon experiences in which detainees sometimes returned from court upset or in highly stressed emotional states and talked about the kinds of skills and awareness needed to work with individuals in what can be greatly varied circumstances.



"Each person that we meet is different and their situations are different, so we have to erase everything that we had in our previous interaction and start of fresh with a new person," said Deputy Phil Tarver.

Deputy Richard Cleary expanded on this stating, "It's much more than just searches that are happening down here -- it's way more than that. We are often relying on our interpersonal skills, our abilities to diffuse potentially volatile situations and carefully managing the ways in which we communicate with the people coming into our care and custody."

AROUND SUFFOLK COUNTY |

Sheriff Tompkins Joins “One Boston Day” Ceremony in Honor of Boston Marathon

Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins joined Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Governor Charles D. Baker, other elected officials, city and state organizations and community members as they gathered to pay tribute to those killed and injured during the bombing of the Boston Marathon five years ago. The assembly also ushered in the return of “One Boston Day,” a day that serves as an opportunity to recognize the good in Boston’s community, reflect upon the spirit and resilience of the people of Boston, and honor those the City lost following the 2013 Boston Marathon.



Anti-Defamation League of New England Visits House of Correction

Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins welcomed members of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) New England Region’s Glass Leadership Institute to the Suffolk County House of Correction for a presentation and discussion about programming and services that are provided to the men and women remanded to the care and custody of the Department.



Sheriff Tompkins Lends Voice in Support of Federal Opioid Crisis and Addiction Bill

Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins joined Massachusetts U.S. Senator Elizabeth A. Warren for the unveiling of the comprehensive legislation that she and Maryland’s U.S. House Representative Elijah E. Cummings intend to file in an effort to help mitigate the opioid crisis and addiction. Sheriff Tompkins spoke about the need for more community-based resources centered around addiction recovery, and later participated in a roundtable discussion led by Senator Warren at the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program at Boston Medical Center.



AROUND SUFFOLK COUNTY

Sheriff's Department Presents at the Massachusetts Urban Farming Conference

The Department's very own Captain David Granese joined with urban farmers from across the Commonwealth for the Sixth Annual Massachusetts Urban Farming Conference. Captain Granese took part in the "Job Skills and Agriculture" panel and discussed the Urban Farming Program that he manages for the Department.



Sheriff Tompkins Named to "Boston Magazine's 100 Most Influential" List

Congratulations to Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins for being named to Boston Magazine's "100 Most Influential People in Boston" list. According to Boston Magazine, the list is made up of "businesspeople, tech moguls, politicians, and tastemakers that the rest of us are all watching, the folks who are truly shaping the city."

Sheriff's Department Joins "Got Peace?" Basketball Tournament

Members of the Department recently participated in the Youth in Crisis "Got Peace?" basketball tournament, held at Roxbury Community College's Reggie Lewis Track and Athletic Center. Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins joined Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Boston Public Schools, Congressman Michael Capuano, community activists, athletes and event organizers from numerous organizations, in an effort to promote peace through friendly competition. The Department also fielded a team for the tournament and committed volunteers for the event, all in the name of peace and community unity.





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Steven W. Tompkins, Sheriff



Suffolk County


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