



Raymond Kelly Richardson
Superintendent

Barry Golner
Deputy Superintendent

Daniel R. Larocque
Deputy Superintendent

To: Eileen Donoghue
City Manager

EMD

From: Raymond Kelly Richardson
Superintendent of Police

Date: January 24, 2020

Re: Council Motion Response

8.7 Councilor Conway – Req. City Manager to meet with Police Superintendent and Fire Chief to provide a report and update regarding “Wellness Programs” for our first responders

Many of our police officers and firefighters today are combat veterans of the United States military. When responding to fatal or life-threatening emergencies such as fires, motor vehicle accidents, cardiac arrests, drownings, suicides, drug overdoses, over time, police officers and firefighters can suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, especially those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan in the past.

After an especially disturbing incident involving death or serious injury of a child or a co-worker, or an incident with multiple deaths, we offer a Critical Incident Stress Debriefing by the Greater Lowell Critical Incident Management Team.

The Fire Department has two Lowell Firefighters that have been trained in counseling firefighters with mental health or substance abuse issues.

Members of the Lowell Police Department have access 24/7 to mental health services. Services are provided by Jeffrey H. Zeizel, Director at Center for Health Resources, Inc. Center for Health Resources is located at 3 Baldwin Green Common, Suite 303, in Woburn, Massachusetts. Mr. Zeizel specializes in drug addiction, alcoholism, family problems, marriage problems, depression, anxiety, death and dying, stress, burnout, PTSD and trauma. He works with many law enforcement officers.

The Lowell Police Department’s training department is running a series of training sessions specifically designed for the benefit of the Lowell Police Department employees on a personal and a family level. The first class, titled “A Holistic Approach to Manage Your Stress and Gain Health,” was held on January 22, 2020 and was attended by 20 employees. Future sessions will

cover topics including diet, exercise, life issues, financial and retirement planning, among other issues that directly affect LPD employees.

The Lowell Police Department and the Lowell Fire Department have both implemented programs to promote physical wellness amongst employees. In late March the Lowell Police Department will be adding a fitness center to provide our officers an accessible venue to exercise. The center will be located on the second floor of the JFK Civic Center. The Lowell Fire Department has a line item in the budget for health and safety every year, as well as a health and safety committee. The LFD purchase gym equipment, cardio-vascular equipment, and other exercise equipment yearly so that firefighters can improve their physical wellness.

Chief Jeffrey Winward and I would be glad to provide a presentation on our respective departments' efforts to promote the wellness of our employees at a meeting of the Subcommittee on Public Safety should the City Council determine it would be valuable.