

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

November 12, 2019

Chief Edmiston called the meeting to order at 5:15PM. Present were Councilor Myers, Hardin, and Primmer. City Manager Byron Smith, Erica Sandoval, Will Jons, Tracy Johnson, Lilliana Gomez, Amanda Hartsteen, Travis Eynon, Scott Clark, and Lilly Alarcon-Strong.

Introductions and Personnel Updates

Chief Edmiston introduced members of the Police Department (PD) who were in the audience.

School Resource Officers

Chief Edmiston stated the City has engaged in conversations with the School District about adding a third school resource officer for the significant need in the two middle schools. Currently, Officer Betty Nava is responsible for all elementary schools and Officer Chris McMahon is responsible for the High School. Chief Edmiston thanked the School District for their incredible partnership as they pay for 75% of the total officer packages that are assigned to the schools.

Records Department

Chief Edmiston stated the PD continues to see increases in records requests which has prompted discussions between City Manager Smith and himself about the staffing levels for the Records Department, as well as continuing to close the front window for longer periods of time.

Code Enforcement

Chief Edmiston stated the PD is down to one part-time Code Enforcement Official, from two part-time Code Enforcement Officials. He and City Manager Smith are discussing the possibility of reverting back to one full-time position. More research will be done and proposals will be submitted in the near future.

Recognitions

Chief Edmiston presented Officer Will Jons with a Lifesaving Award and read the award aloud (attached) (applause from the audience).

Chief Edmiston recognized the records unit for the 3rd quarter, led by Communications Manager Amanda Hartsteen, and Police Records Specialists Tracy Johnson and Lilliana Gomez. This unit has experienced significant increases in workload this year including a 44% increase in police incidents created mostly by foot traffic at the window, 67% increase in citations needing processed, and 46% increase in requests for information, up more than 1,000 from this same period last year (applause from the audience).

Captain Travis Eynon stated the amount of work this unit does is significant, but mostly goes unnoticed. They are very deserving of this recognition.

3rd Quarter (2019) Crime Report

Chief Edmiston reviewed the 3rd quarter crime report (attached) with the Committee.

2020 Department Goals and Objectives

Chief Edmiston reviewed the 2020 Goals and Objectives (attached) with the Committee.

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Axon Body Camera Contract

Chief Edmiston stated the City recently signed a renewed contract with Axon (formerly Taser International) for the Hermiston Police Department to outfit patrol with body cameras for another 5-year period. Officers have been wearing cameras for 5 years; the City and citizens are very fortunate to have city leaders that see value in utilizing technology for the PD.

New Radio System

Chief Edmiston stated he and City Manager Smith are working on this front and will have more information next year regarding a new radio system.

Past/Upcoming Event Information

Chief Edmiston gave information regarding upcoming events HPD will be participated in, to include:

- 60th Anniversary of Hermiston Police Officer Ronald G. Kilby's line of duty death on October 8th. The PD will be sending a thank you gift to Officer Kilby's three remaining children that will consist of a shadow box with an end of watch badge, a police patch, and a Kilby nametag.
- The PD is planning to partner with and offer a training to the fire district and possibly to the public. The 2-day training in March, will be facilitated by Dr. Stephanie Conn who is a former police officer, is married to a police officer and had a father who was a police officer for 40 years. Dr. Conn is a licensed psychologist, with a practice in Beaverton, OR. and has written the book *Increasing Resilience in Police and Emergency Personnel*. The Kiwanis Club has agreed to dedicate some Festival of Trees money to the First Responder training and a \$1,000 grant from the local Wal-Mart store has also been received. The PD will soon be finalizing cost sharing and other information.

There was some discussion regarding what appears to be an increase of homelessness, working with the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Agape House transient housing possibility.

Adjournment

There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 5:47 PM.

Police Lifesaving Award

Officer Will Jons

LET IT BE KNOWN ON THE 30TH DAY OF JULY 2019, OFFICER WILL JONS TOOK ACTION ABOVE AND BEYOND THE NORMAL CALL OF DUTY BY RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY IN ONE OF OUR CITY PARKS. UPON ARRIVING AT WHAT COULD BE VIEWED AS A ROUTINE CALL FOR SERVICE, OFFICER JONS FOUND A TRIO OF INDIVIDUALS WITH ONE PERSON IN OBVIOUS DISTRESS, NON-RESPONSIVE, AND NOT BREATHING.

OFFICER JONS QUICKLY ASSESSED THE SITUATION AND BEGAN PERFORMING CPR ON THE MALE. WHILE PERFORMING CPR, OFFICER JONS WAS TRYING TO UPDATE DISPATCH SO THEY COULD RELAY TO THE RESPONDING PARAMEDICS. DURING THE COURSE OF PERFORMING CPR, OFFICER JONS LEARNED THE MALE HAD INGESTED FENTANYL WHEREBY CREATING ADDITIONAL CONCERNS FOR EVERYONE IN THE IMMEDIATE AREA. OFFICER JONS MAINTAINED HIS COMPOSURE AND CONTINUED WORKING ON THE MALE UNTIL THE PARAMEDICS ARRIVED AND ADMINISTERED THE APPROPRIATE MEDICATION.

OFFICER JONS IS TO BE RECOGNIZED ON THIS DATE, NOVEMBER 12TH, 2019, WITH THE DEPARTMENT LIFE-SAVING AWARD AND PIN. OFFICER JONS IS AN EXAMPLE TO ALL THAT POLICE OFFICERS DO CARE AND WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE THEY ARE FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO SERVE.

CHIEF JASON EDMISTON

CITY MANAGER BYRON SMITH

MAYOR DR. DAVID DROTZMANN



HERMISTON POLICE DEPARTMENT



330 S. First Street
Hermiston, Oregon 97838
www.hermiston.or.us/police/home
Sine Metu Sine Gratia

Phone: 541-567-5519
Fax: 541-567-8469
Email: records@hermiston.or.us
Without Fear Without Favor

TO: Mayor Drotzmann, City Councilors, and City Manager Smith
FROM: Chief Jason Edmiston
DATE: October 9th, 2019
SUBJECT: 2019 3rd Quarter Crime Report

Statistics - The only science that enables different experts using the same figures to draw different conclusions. - Evan Esar

Attached to this memo is a scaled-down version of our 2019 3rd Quarter Crime Report. The intent of this summation is to provide a quick snapshot of trends (both crime and department activity levels) we are experiencing.

Statistical highlights include:

- ✓ Total incidents are a combination of calls for service and self-initiated activity. Looking at the year to date, we experienced a 5% increase from last year and in looking at just the 3rd quarter of 2018 compared to the 3rd quarter of 2019, we saw a 19% increase. Much of this is due to the injuries and illnesses we were plagued with last year.
- ✓ Traffic Stops – we saw a 4% increase year to date and a 92% increase in comparing only the 3rd quarter from last year to this year. I will be implementing a performance standard specific to traffic stops in our 2020 individual officer goals and objectives.
- ✓ Arrests – to include total arrests, misdemeanor arrests, and felony arrests. We were relatively flat in these categories with an overall increase of 2% from the 10-year average. We know increases in arrests and actual reports taken (8% increase from the 10-year average for reports taken) equates to less time the officers have for nondiscretionary traffic enforcement.
- ✓ Total Citations – increased 7% from the 10-year average and 26% from last year to this year.
- ✓ Total Crime – encouraging numbers specific to an overall decrease of 8% from what we would normally expect on the 10-year average and 19% decrease when looking at the 3rd quarter last year compared to the 3rd quarter this year. There are some alarming increases in violent crime specific to aggravated assault, but the number of incidents is still low frequency. Intoxication due to drugs and alcohol is the primary cause of what we are experiencing. With the continued state trend to decriminalize more and more, I do not see this getting better.

Moving forward

I have mentioned this a couple of times already this year, but I want to mention it yet again, as we are continuing to experience some dramatic increases in our records department. These increases, in my opinion, are not sustainable unless we look at alternatives to how we conduct business.

Specifically, we are experiencing a 12% increase in calls for service (phone and lobby) that come into our records center where incidents are then created and either officers or records staff are dispatched to handle the matter. This can include criminal calls for the officers and things such as fingerprint walk-ups, sex offender registrations, etc. for our records personnel. Either way, 12% is not insurmountable but due to other increases, it is something we need to consider when looking at our hours of operation, availability to the public, paying for dispatch services yet handling these matters internally, etc. etc.

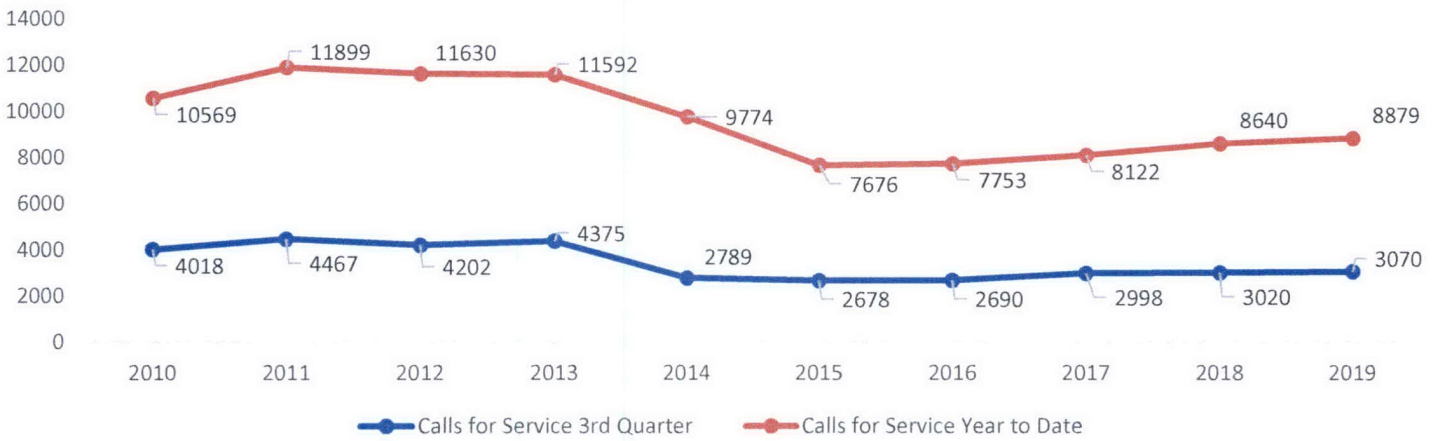
Our requests for information (very labor intensive) are up 46% through the 3rd quarter this year as compared to last year. At the end of the 3rd quarter in 2018, records handled 2,252 requests for information. This year, that number is 3,280. Because of the time involved and the necessity to obey state law with regard to redactions and time deadlines, this is a major concern for me and something I have had conversations with City Manager Smith about. Factor in the time records spends on data entry for the 26% increase in citations issued, and we need to continue to monitor if this is a perfect storm situation or something we can expect to be the norm moving forward.

Overall, I am happy with the statistics we are experiencing. There is, of course, more we could do to have an additional positive impact(s) on those we are blessed to serve, but the PERS can that was kicked down the road again by the legislature this session, is/will be our biggest threat in the coming years. In conjunction with the discussions I have had with City Manager Smith about our records department, we will be enacting some changes in 2020 to see if our patrol staff is nearing saturation as it relates to time spent dealing with calls versus having some time for proactive things such as traffic enforcement/education.

Total Incidents



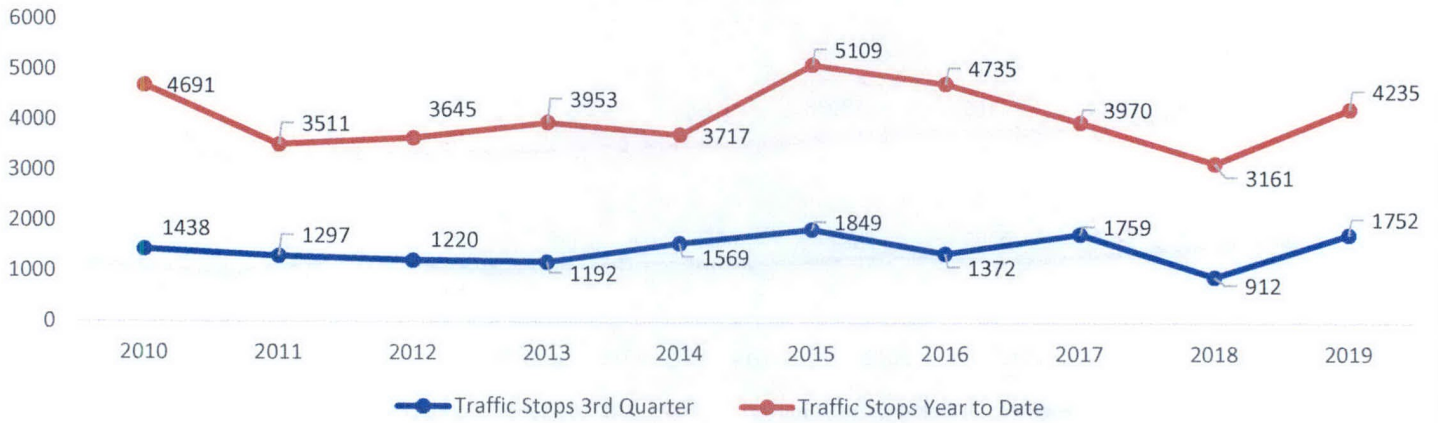
Calls for Service



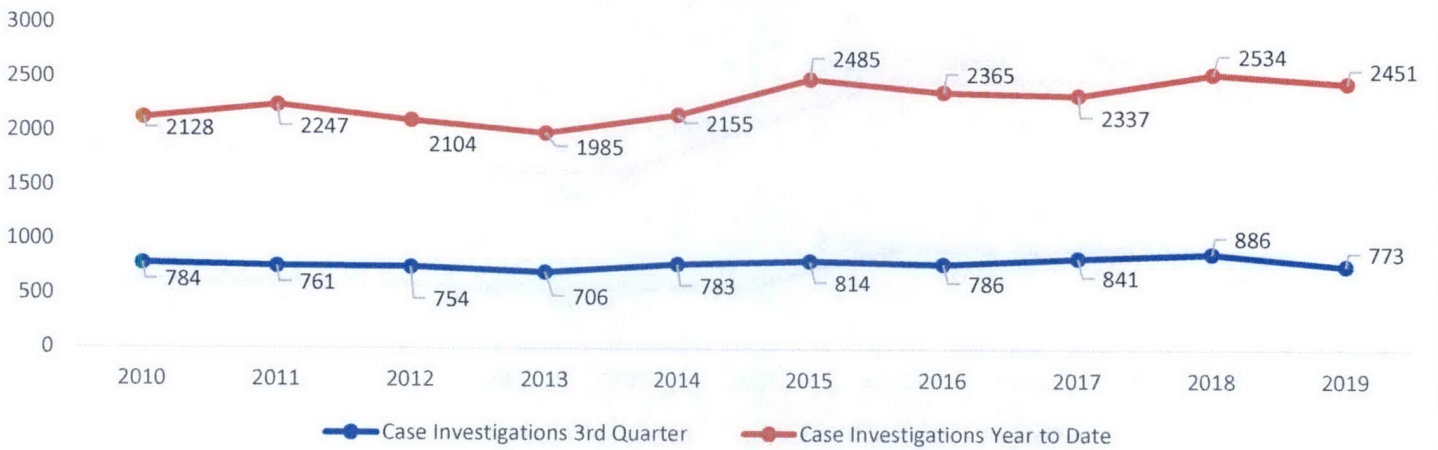
Officer Initiated Activity



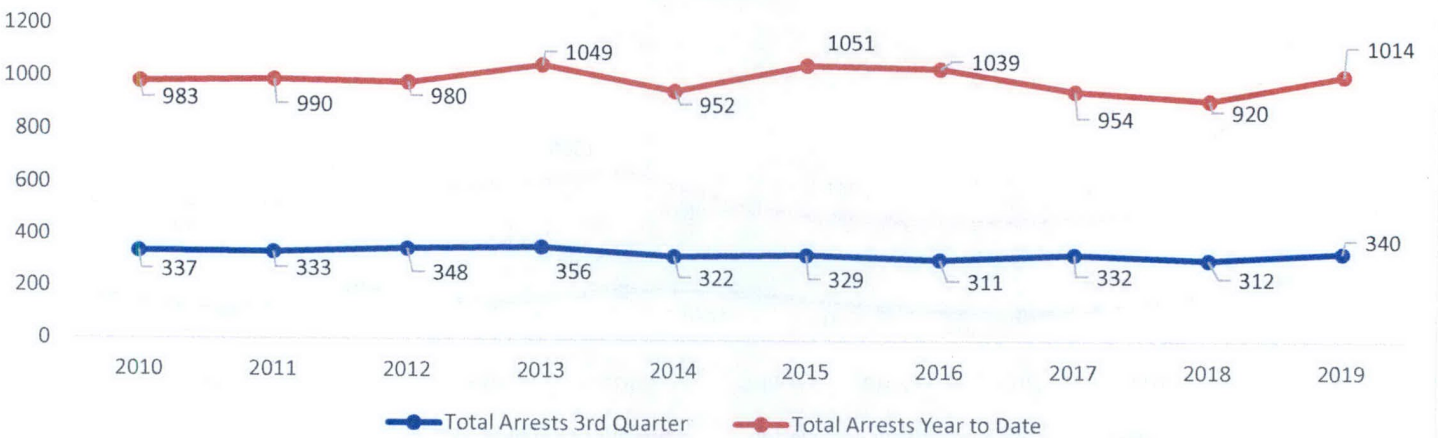
Traffic Stops



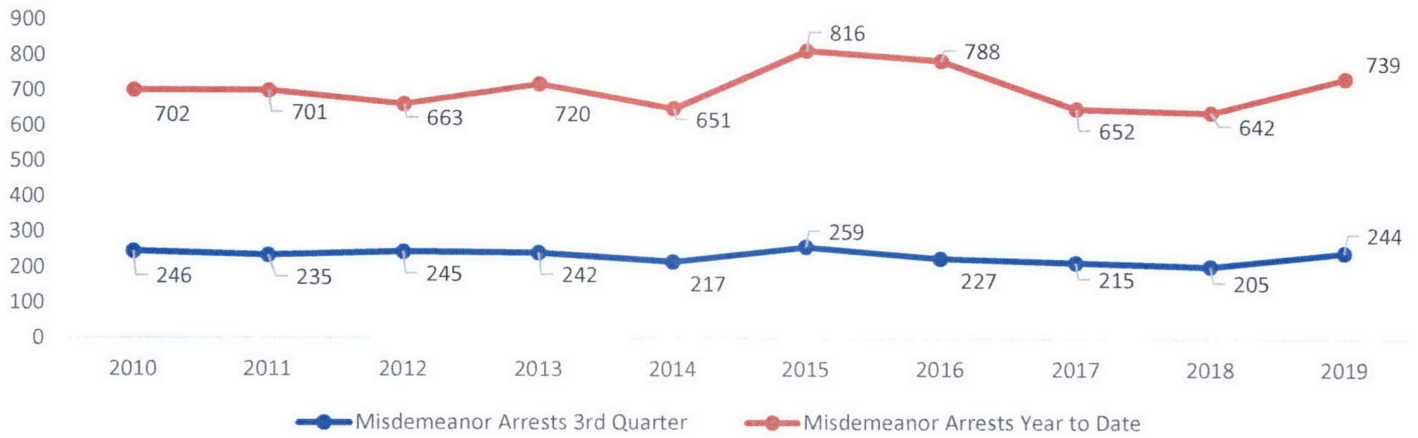
Case Investigations



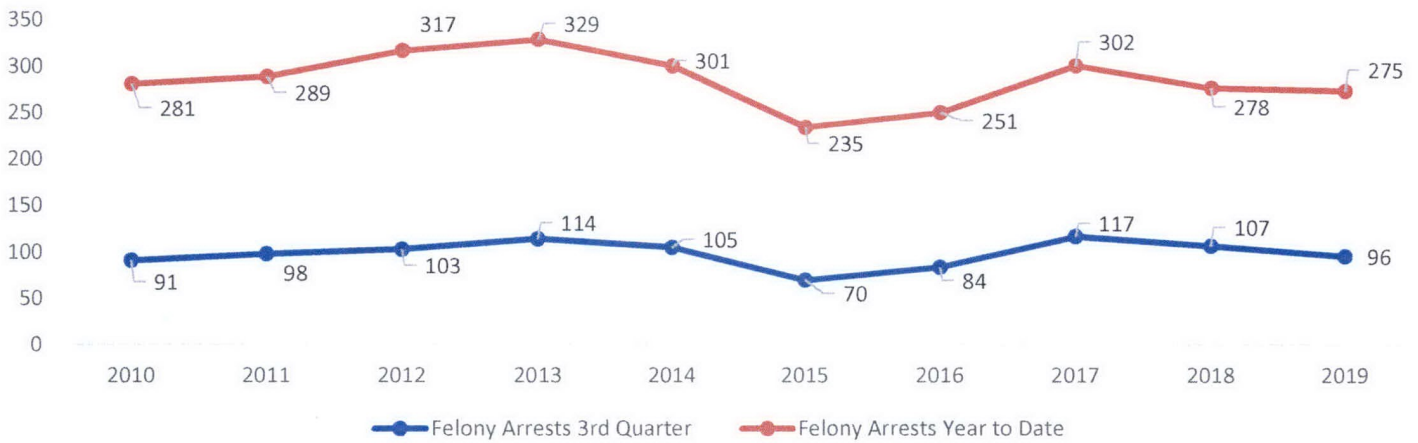
Total Arrests



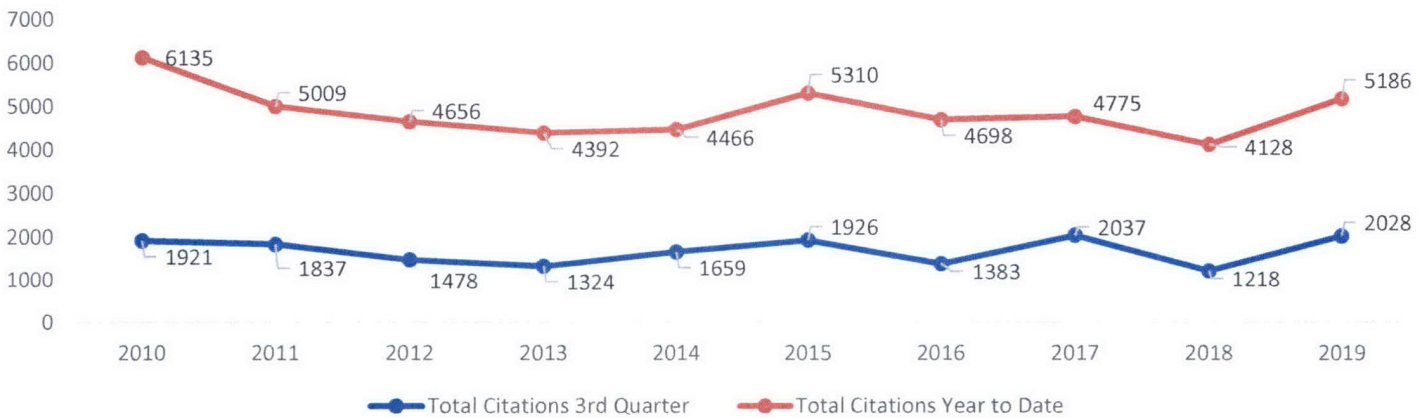
Misdemeanor Arrests



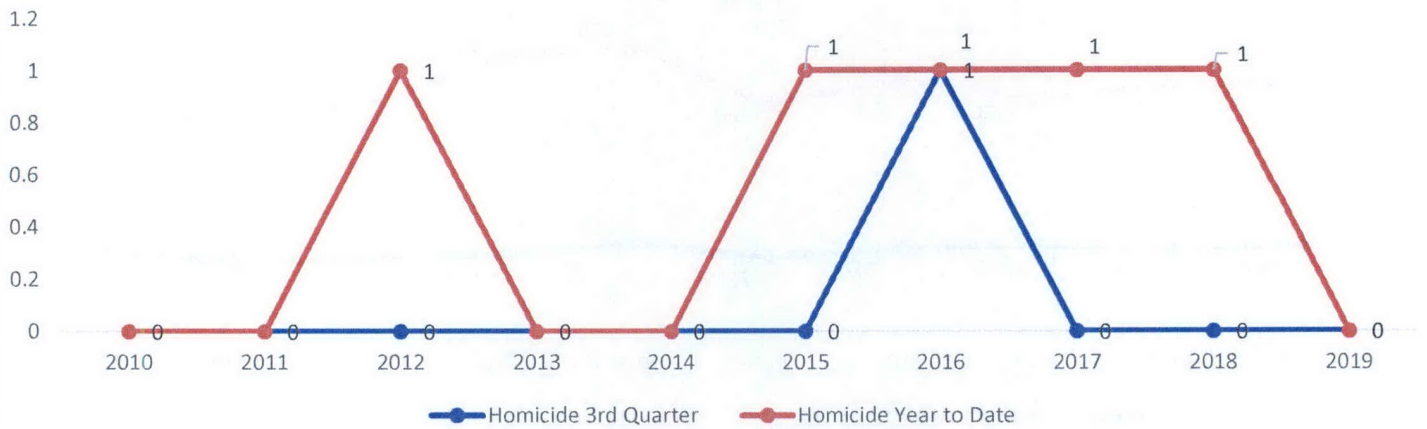
Felony Arrests



Total Citations



Homicide



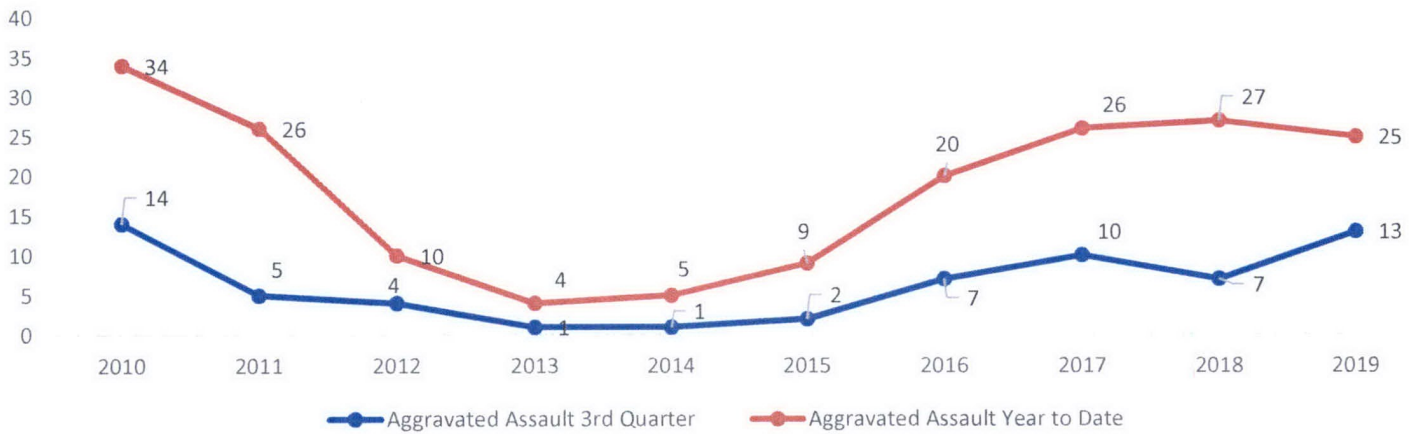
Rape



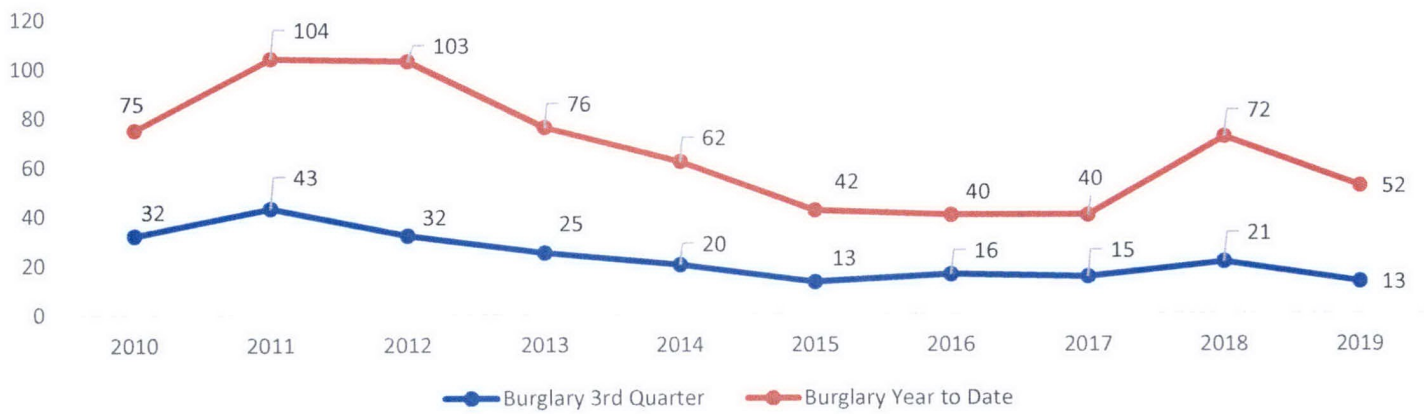
Robbery



Aggravated Assault



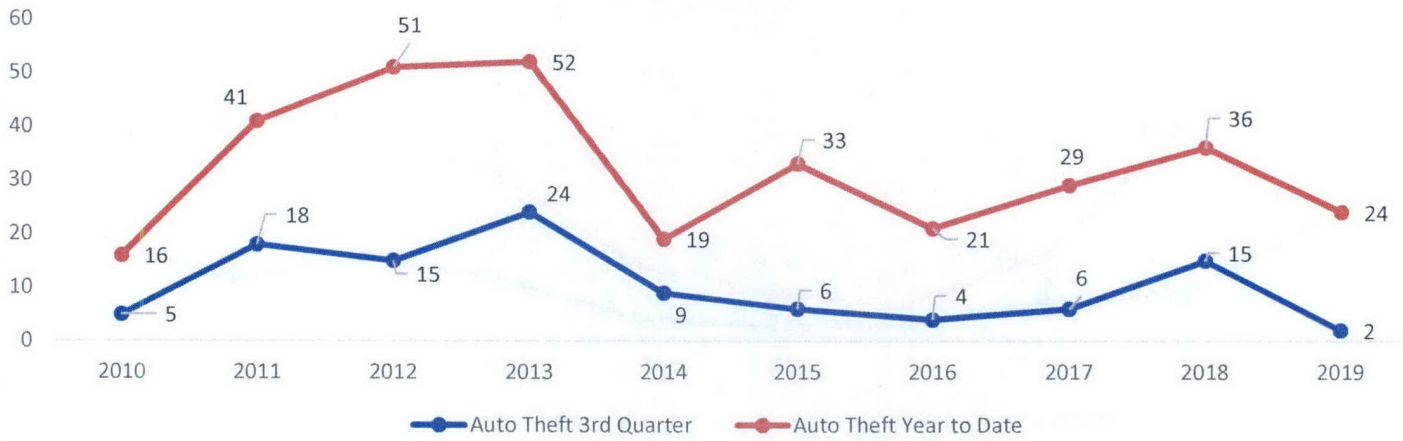
Burglary



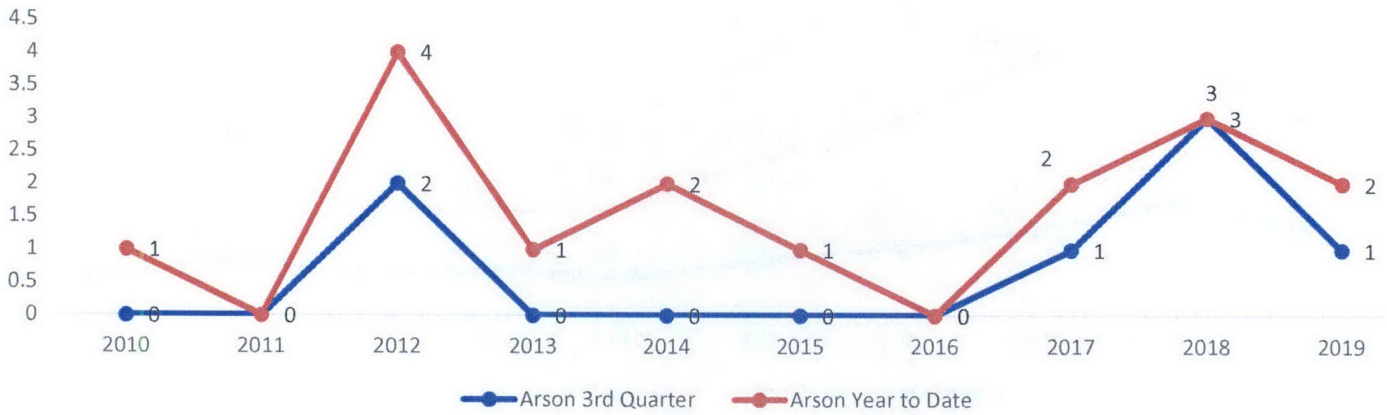
Larceny



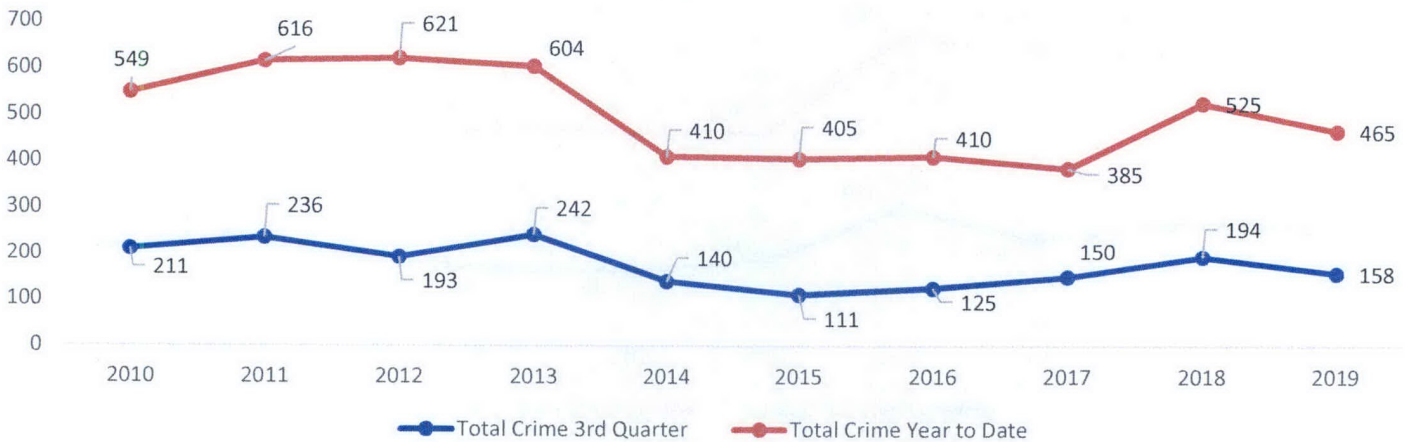
Auto Theft



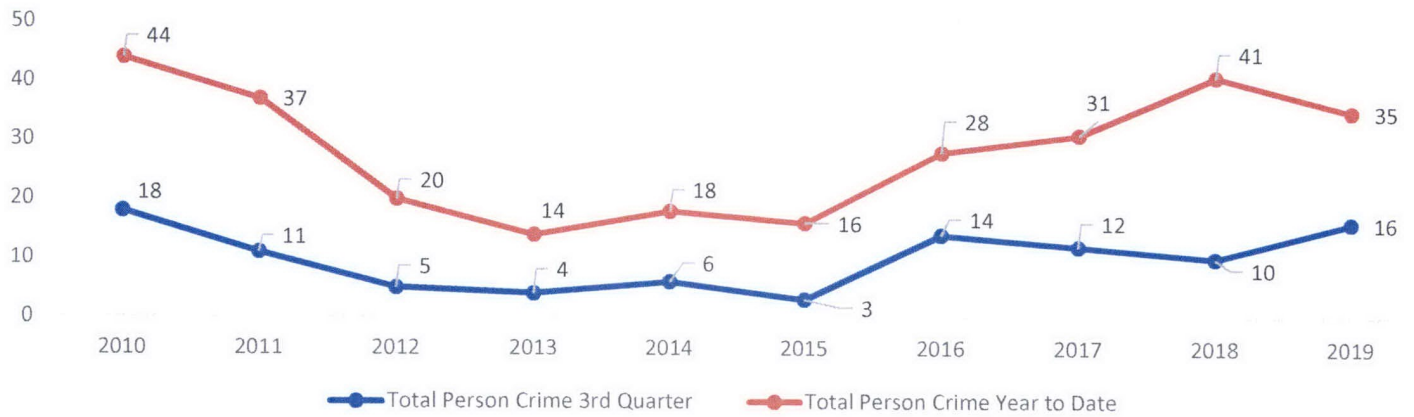
Arson



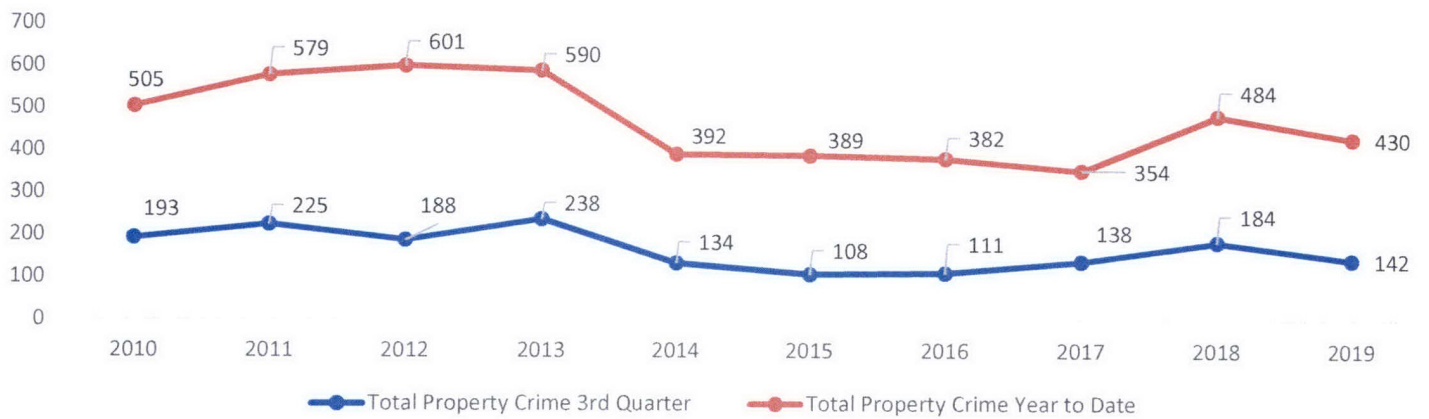
Total Crime



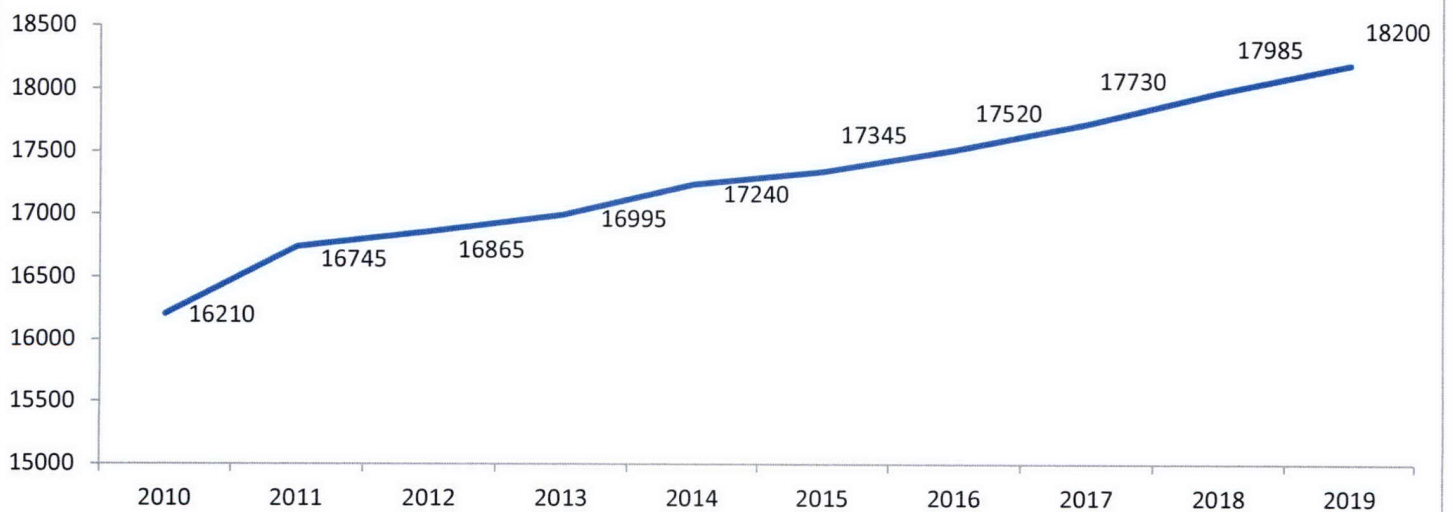
Total Person Crime



Total Property Crime



Hermiston Population





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Hermiston, Oregon 97838
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Sine Metu Sine Gratia

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2020 DEPARTMENT GOALS

Customer Service

Provide efficient and effective police services consistent with the vision and values of our community. Serve as ambassadors of the city of Hermiston with an increased presence of employees at city meetings and functions. Place an emphasis on service delivery to our customers through the establishment of observable, measurable, targeted, and specific performance objectives for each employee of the department.

Predictive Policing Strategies

The department will utilize any policing strategy or tactic that develops and uses information and advanced analysis or technology to inform forward-thinking crime prevention. This includes the utilization of available intelligence/data and deployment of resources implementing a zero-tolerance stance for all incidents involving elements of criminal activity in a timely and targeted fashion specific to each shift or assignment. The continual nurturing of existing healthy partnerships will be critical.

Address Traffic Issues

Provide for a structured approach in dealing with the traffic-related issues experienced in the city by utilizing engineering, education, and enforcement strategies in dealing with these problems. Targeted enforcement of traffic along the Highway 395 corridor will be the priority of patrol.

Livability Issues

Focus on those issues which impact the livability of the citizens we serve will be a high priority. This includes noise complaints, animal complaints, controlled substance enforcement, and all code issues including areas of blight consistent with the Broken Windows Theory of policing.