SAN JOSE POLICE COMMUNICATIONS
Basic Dispatch Academy

COURSE TITLE: COMMUNITY POLICING – 2 HOURS

COURSE GOAL: To introduce students to the concepts of community-oriented policing; for the students to understand the role of the Public Safety Radio Dispatcher (PSRD) and Public Safety Communications Specialist (PSCS) in community-oriented policing.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

I.   Definition of Community Oriented Policing
II.   Principles of Community Oriented Policing
III.   History of Community Oriented Policing in SJPD
IV.   The role of the PSCS / PSRD

EXPANDED COURSE OUTLINE

I.   Definition of Community Oriented Policing

      A.   What do you think it is?

      B.   Community policing is a philosophy, management style and organizational strategy that promotes pro-active problem- solving and police-community partnerships to address the causes of crime and fear as well as other community issues.

      C.   Community oriented policing consists of the police and community forming partnerships to address problems of:

            1.   Crime
            2.   Fear of Crime
            3.   Physical and Social Disorder
            4.   Neighborhood Decay

II.   Principles of Community Oriented Policing

      A.   Professional Crime fighting has traditionally relied upon three tactics:

            1.   Motorized Patrol
            2.   Rapid response to calls for service
            3.   Reactive investigation of crimes

      B.   The greatest potential for improved crime control may not lie in the continued enhancement of response times, patrol tactics and investigative techniques. Rather, improved crime control can be achieved by:

            1.   Diagnosing and managing problems in the community that produce serious crimes.
            2.   Fostering closer relations with the community to facilitate crime solving.
            3.   Building self defense capabilities into the community itself.

C.   12 Principles of Community Oriented Policing

1.   Reassesses who is responsible for public safety and redefines the roles and relationship between the police and the community.

   a.   Maintaining public order, over time, was shifted from being primarily the responsibility of families, communities and individuals – assisted by police officers – to becoming primarily the responsibility of the police alone.

2.   Requires shared ownership, decision making and accountability, as well as sustained commitment from both the police and the community.

   a.   Police must acknowledge they cannot do the job alone, recognize they have valuable resources in the community and understand the need to share power and decision making to solve community problems.

   b.   The community must become empowered to accept the challenge and responsibility to assume ownership of their community's safety and well being. Shared ownership does not mean that individual residents take the law into their own hands or attempt to enforce the law on their own. It means the community works with the police.

      i.   Identify and prioritize problems that plague their communities.
      ii.   Develop and implement innovative and effective responses to the problems.
      iii.   Determine appropriate resource management.
      iv.   Evaluate and modify responses, as needed, to achieve the desired result.

3.   Establishes new public expectations of and measurement standards for police effectiveness.

   a.   Since implementation of 911 system, the majority of the officers' time has been spent responding to calls for service.

   b.   Preventive patrol, rapid response time and increased arrests have become the widely accepted and practiced tactics of law enforcement and the primary basis for evaluation.

   c.   The public must have realistic expectations of exactly what the police can and cannot do.

   d.   Implementing new practices and strategies requires establishing new measurements of success. The response time and arrest level criteria must be augmented with more qualitative standards measured by customer (community):

      i.   Satisfaction surveys
      ii.   Quality of life assessments
      iii.   Problem-solving successes
      iv.   Levels of community participation.

4.   Increases understanding and trust between police and community members.

   a.   Inherent in any successful partnership is a sense of equality and mutual respect.

   b.   The police must become culturally competent/literate for the neighborhoods they work in; they must be aware of and sensitive to the multicultural populations they serve and be capable of engaging in meaningful interaction and partnership with them.

   c.   Consistent follow-up and feed back to community members acknowledges their integral role and reinforces their involvement.

5.   Empowers and strengthens community-based efforts.

   a.   Supplies community with appropriate information and skills, reinforces their courage and strength and ensures them the influence is necessary to impact policies and share accountability for outcomes.

   b.   Police are instrumental in directly providing or advocating for the availability of guidance, contact persons, phone numbers or brochures.

6.   Requires constant flexibility to respond to all emerging issues.

   a.   Twenty-five percent of police work involves enforcing the law or arresting people. Yet under the traditional model, police are equipped with very few tools, other than their authority to arrest and incarcerate based on the criminal law, to handle the broad nature of police business.

   b.   For example, police will often respond repeatedly to one location (for a family disturbance or neighbor conflict) only to leave it unresolved because no law has been broken - yet. These situations often escalate into incidents that eventually require a law enforcement response.

   c.   Develop new and alternative authority to respond to specific situations on the first call such as:

               - Mandatory mediation on 273.5 or 415N
               - Remove persons involved in a 415 in bar
               - Take 'homeless' individuals to a shelter
               - Transporting 647Fs to a detox shelter

7.   Requires ongoing commitment to developing long-term and proactive programs / strategies to address the underlying conditions that cause community problems.

   a.   Accurate community needs assessments that are sensitive to all cultural and ethnic populations w/in the community.

   b.   Participation of all appropriate players (elected officials, local agencies, organizations, schools, business, and diverse community members) to collect data and brainstorm strategies.

      c.   Review of existing community resource allocations and resetting priorities where necessary.

      d.   Collaborative, comprehensive programs that address the underlying issues and causal factors in question.

8.   Requires knowledge of available community resources and how to access and mobilize them, as well as the ability to develop new resources within the community.

      a.   Depends on recognizing and mobilizing the untapped resources available within a community.

      b.   Being resource knowledgeable is a unique skill that will enhance any community-based policing effort.

9.   Requires buy-in of the top management of the police and other local government agencies, and a sustained personal commitment from all levels of management and other key personnel.

      a.   It is a value-driven rather than rule-driven management approach.

      b.   Focus is on actively modifying and improving the systems that serve us.

10.   Decentralizes police services / operations / management, relaxes the traditional "chain of command", and encourages innovative and creative problem solving by all, thereby making greater use of the knowledge, skill and expertise throughout the organization without regard to rank.

      a.   Officers on the beat, as the direct service provider, become the most important persons in the department and managers of their area. They not only answer the calls, but also do problem analysis, know the people and are accessible.

11.   Shifts the focus of police work from responding to individual incidents to addressing problems identified by the community as well as the police, emphasizing the use of problem-solving approaches to supplement traditional law-enforcement methods.

      a.   The problem then becomes the main focus of police work.

      b.   Neighborhood Watch groups have identified the problems people are mostly concerned with are the quality of life issues that are perhaps more mundane than the high visibility serious crimes:

            i.   Drug activity in the park
            ii.   Noisy J's on the corner
            iii.   Abandoned vehicles
            iv.   Aggressive panhandling

12.   Requires commitment to developing new skills through training in:

      a.   Problem analysis and problem solving
      b.   Facilitation
      c.   Community organization
      d.   Communication
      e.   Mediation and Conflict resolution
      f.   Resource awareness and development
      g.   Networking and linkages
      h.   Cultural competency/literacy

D.   What Community Oriented Policing is not.

    1.   It is not soft on crime

    2.   It is not a "program"

    3.   It will not cause us to abandon our traditional responsibilities of crime suppression and investigation.

    4.   It is not the responsibility of an elite, specialized unit. It is an organization-wide philosophy.

E.   Four common elements of Community Oriented Policing

    1.   Focus on long term solutions

    2.   Neighborhood based crime prevention programs

    3.   Decentralization

    4.   Neighborhood Accountability

III.   History of Community Oriented Policing in SJPD

A.   Timeline:

1988 - Five-year staffing plan - includes direction to research the feasibility of Community Oriented Policing.

1991 - New Chief Cobarruviaz commits the department to transitioning to C.O.P. -Task Force commenced to create a Citizen Survey and Division Plan.

1992 - Division plan implemented. C.O.P. training for management personnel.

1993 - 1994 Full Scale Programming

B.   San Jose Police Department before and after

    1.   Before San Jose implemented C.O.P. 7% of areas in San Jose generated 60% of total police response in the city.

    2.   After C.O.P., the same areas now generated 20% of total police response for the city.

C.   Examples of C.O.P (Have class groups come up with examples):

1.   Enhanced police presence

   a.   Foot patrols
   b.   Bicycle patrols
   c.   Horse Mounted Unit
   d.   Entertainment Zone
   e.   Downtown Services Detail

2.   Better surveillance and deterrence of dangerous offenders.

   a.   Working closely with neighbors – citizens

   b.   Contact with Probation and Parole officers

3.   Increased access to information

   a.   PD can access Homeland Security databases

   b.   Public can access:

      i.   Community meetings
      ii.   SJPD.org
      iii.   Other websites including Fugitive Watch, America's Most Wanted, Megan's Law, etc.

4.   Early intervention to prevent escalation of disorder into crime.

   a.   Attend to broken windows, vacant houses.

   b.   Neighborhood Clean-up (of dangerous areas) through Code Enforcement & Metro Unit.

5.   Crime prevention activities

   a.   Special programs – see info index "crime prevention programs."

6.   Shoring up community institutions (families, churches, schools, businesses, organizations)

   a.   Improving relationships

   b.   Chief Garcia – bilingual – makes cultural investments – attended Ramadan events, etc.

   c.   National Night Out participation

7.   Problem Solving (long term as opposed to incident response)

   a.   Anti-gang education in schools

        b.   Neighborhood based crime prevention programs

        c.   "Differential patrol" – created TRAC to allow easy public access to reporting crime without need to send patrol unit.

    8.   Neighborhood Accountability

        a.   Ownership of shared responsibilities

        b.   Increased preparedness

            i.   SJ Prepared through OES

            ii.   Enhancements of lighting, locks, security devices, etc.

            iii.   Anti-crime practices such as not leaving valuables in vehicles, etc.

IV.   The Role of the PSCS / PSRD

    A.   Approximately 1 million calls last fiscal year. Approximately 440,000 were created for officer response.

    B.   A dispatcher / calltaker problem solves as much as, if not more than, an officer on the street does. Can you figure out how?

    C.   Self Perception

        1.   "I'm just a dispatcher or "I'm just a calltaker."

        2.   Our contribution to COP

        3.   Dispatchers / Calltakers added value to their agency is seen as an asset.

        4.   Mutual respect not "Them vs Us"

            a.   Have the students define "them" in statement them vs us.

            b.   How dispatchers relate to them and what impact does the phrase "them" have? Positive or negative?

        5.   Relationship with those assigned to programs.

        6.   Community Reps

        7.   The relationship needs to be fostered, developed, and continuous.

        8.   Dispatchers need to be pro-active and establish these relationships instead of reactive and wait for them to come.

        9.   Dispatchers add value to those who are assigned to these programs, as being a resource and partner.

D.   Customer Service / Service Delivery

    1.   Customer service attitude sets the tone for the ensuing relationship.

    2.   Calltakers / Dispatchers: Only or First contact with caller/reporting party.

    3.   Sets image for rest of the department.

E.   Community Investment

    1.   Attending Community Meetings

    2.   Education

        a.   Public Events
        b.   911 Programs in Schools
        c.   Citizen Academies
        d.   Sit-a-longs
        e.   Public Tours
        f.   Public Service Announcements
        g.   Web page segments

F.   Evaluations

    1.   Dispatcher / Calltaker Role

    2.   Individual vs. Organizational performance

    3.   Survey the public on service delivery

G.   Results

    1.   Tangible – long term

        a.   Less calls for service
        b.   Reduction in crime
        c.   More cooperation from public
        d.   Job satisfaction