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REPORT TO MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Bradley C. Osgood, Chief of Police
Concord Police Department

DATE: January 2, 2015

SUBJECT: Update on Panhandling in the City of Concord

Recommendation

Accept this report regarding a status update on City Ordinance 17-7-3; The Passing of Items to or from the Occupant of a Motor Vehicle on a Roadway, as well as a status update on Panhandling in the City of Concord. It is further recommended that ordinance 17-7-3 become permanent by removing the sunset clause.

Background

Over the past couple of years, the City of Concord has experienced a rise in calls for service regarding panhandlers, aggressive panhandling tactics and panhandlers in the roadways. To address this issue, in part, the City Council enacted an ordinance (17-7-3) on May 13, 2013 "to provide for the free flow of motor vehicle traffic on the roadways" and with the intention "to promote health, safety and welfare of citizens traveling by vehicle in the City."

Discussion

In calendar year 2014, Concord police officers responded to more than 160 calls for service regarding panhandling incidents. Many were reported by concerned citizens while others were self-initiated by the patrol officers. Officers have taken enforcement action in several of the incidents and have provided dozens of warnings to violators as well. Of the enforcement actions taken by the police officers, approximately 30 have been based upon the ordinance 17-7-3. Additionally, Concord police officers continue to assist business owners, especially in the Downtown area and on Ft. Eddy Rd., in serving Trespass Letters to numerous individuals who were engaging in panhandling on private property.

The matter of panhandling, especially aggressive panhandling and the passing of items to and from a motor vehicle on the roadway remains an important matter that Concord police officers will continue to address in 2015. The ordinance, as written, continues to be an effective resource in this public safety matter.