

**Cook County Gun Violence Task Force
Public Hearing
Feb. 16, 2016**

Cook County Board Chambers
118 N. Clark St.
Chicago, Ill. 60602

I) MEMBERS PRESENT:

Thomas Mahoney, Deputy Chief of Narcotics Prosecutions for the Cook County State's Attorney's office
Brandon Nemec, also of the State's Attorney's Office
Fr. Michael Pfleger, pastor of St. Sabina Church
Ernest Brown, Dir. of Homeland Security and Emergency Management for Cook County
Hazel Crest Police Chief Mitchell Davis
Dr. Beverly Butler of the Chief Judge's office
Evanston Police Chief Richard Eddington
John Gates, Cook County Medical Examiner's Office
Dr. Kim Joseph, Stroger Hospital.

ABSENT: Lake County, Ind., Sheriff John Buncich.

II) OPENING At 10 a.m. Cook County Commissioner Richard Boykin welcomed the task force members, speakers and attendees, saying the county's gun violence problem must be solved before elected officials can solve other problems. The Task Force will put forward a set of policy recommendations that will help to reduce gun violence in the city and the county, Boykin said.

III) WELCOME Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart also welcomed attendees asked for few speeches but much data and many ideas:

"If we can come up with 4, 5, 10 small things, micro things, that will be a home run. Sharing data. We want to get some stuff done that will actually make a difference on the streets. The goal is no legislative component here. The goal is one or two minor steps – they will have a huge impact on the streets."

IV) COORDINATOR'S ADDRESS: Task Force Coordinator Mike Anton encouraged members to "Think Outside the Box" and noted the impact his department's joint operations with Chicago Police were having in the city of Chicago. The Task Force's recommendations must be driven by research, he said.

V) CRIME LAB REPORT Cara Smith, Chief of Policy and Communications for the Sheriff's Office, read into the record written testimony from the University of Chicago Crime Lab Co-director Harold Pollack. (See attached)

VI) PREVIOUS REPORT SUGGESTIONS Thomas Mahoney, Deputy Chief of Narcotics Prosecutions for the Cook County State's Attorney's office, agreed with Sheriff Dart that legislation was not the answer. A previous task force he served on in 2010 made three recommendations he said were never acted on:

- a) Amend the vehicle code to suspend license plates of gun traffickers;
- b) All state law enforcement agencies should trace firearms;
- c) Public service campaigns -- sports figures to do public service announcements.

Sheriff Dart said some of those proposals might be worth considering again for this task force. He noted gun problems were highest in places that could not afford to pay police well and where turnover on the police force was high.

VII) ONLOOKER EFFECT Ernest Brown, Dir. of Homeland Security and Emergency Management for Cook County, said better roping off crime scenes would cut down on the "Onlooker Effect" in which "One kid sees a crime scene, goes back and talks to 30 kids about what he's seen. Residual carry-over."

VIII) COMMUNITY COOPERATION Fr. Michael Pflieger, pastor of St. Sabina Church, asked Mahoney if "lack of arrests" was an issue with his task force. With only 24 percent of offenders getting arrested, "To me that says 'no consequences' – You can shoot, you can kill without fear of getting arrested," Pflieger said.

Mahoney said that was not part of his task force report.

Sheriff Dart said lack of cooperation from the community was a problem in some areas his officers cover such as Ford Heights.

Commissioner Boykin agreed, saying federal resources were needed for the Chicago Police dept. and the Sheriff's Office.

Director Brown noted clearance rates have gone down nationwide and suggested a need to ID people who carry illegal guns – precursor behaviors. He said case report writing is becoming a "lost art."

Coordinator Anton said engaging the community is key; talking to the community because people know, in the neighborhood, who the shooters are, he said.

- IX) TRAINING** Hazel Crest Police Chief Mitchell Davis added that law enforcement needs to do a better job training first responders.
- X) TRACKING** Director Brown said that in addition to compiling a better profile of shooters, law enforcement needs to do a better job of tracking weapons.

Coordinator Anton said agency-to-agency communication must improve. Gang members talk to each other, he said. Law enforcement must likewise maintain a dialogue. There is easy database to be accessed at this point, he said.

Sheriff Dart said he is amazed that some towns still do not trace or inventory guns they confiscate. In some suburbs such as Harvey and Dolton, the guns the Sheriff's office takes off the street – not even counting guns the local police department takes off the street – exceeds the per capita number of guns confiscated in Chicago.

- XI) MARKETING** Director Brown said a marketing campaign such as the one Mothers Against Drunk Driving employed could help change the culture on gun violence.
- XII) COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP** Kevin Ammons, Community Activist: urged more community involvement in the hearings and Coordinator Anton said more hearings would be held in the community.
- XIII) UNEMPLOYMENT** Commissioner Boykin cited a University of Illinois report showing nearly 50 percent of young black males are unemployed. He said Crain's did a map showing that areas with the highest numbers of unemployment had the highest rates of violence.
- XIV) STATS** Director Smith said the Sheriff's Research Dept. and policy staff are available as a resource. She added, "We looked at 114 gun offenders released over 40 days. 55 percent of released were 26 years old or younger. 45 percent declared gang affiliation. 41 percent arrested 10 times or more – the highest number: 52 arrests. 36 percent had some form of traffic stop. 28 percent were in possession of or admitted using illegal substances.

Illinois State Police Lt. Col. Isaiah Vega and Jessica Trame chief of the State Police' Firearms Services Bureau, offered some statistics:

There are just under 2 million FOIA card holders in Illinois

In Cook County, there are 473,537 FOID card holders.
Statewide, the number of revoked cards is 33,250
11,070 of those are in Cook County
There are 2,824 revoked cards in Cook County that have not been returned to state police.

There are 148,000 Concealed Carry permits in Illinois
In Cook County, there are 39,365 concealed carry permits.
504 permits have been suspended or revoked statewide.
194 permits have been suspended or revoked in Cook County,
143 of those have not been returned to state police.

Among the trends they were noticing:
An increase in orders of protection.
Since Black Friday, they have seen an increase in applications, transfers.
They had 6,600 transactions on Black Friday alone
Typically they see a spike in purchasing through the holidays, but never that big a spike. Trame noted there were messages from President Obama about potential gun safety initiatives during that time period.

Trame said a non-compliance list will be sent monthly to each jurisdiction, naming people who have not turned in their FOID cards

Sheriff Dart urged the to get those lists to his gun team and pledged his officers would check them out, even if it's only the "last known address" in Cook County, Dart said. Vega said he would send the information.

Sheriff Dart asked if they had access to data about people who come into the Cook County Jail with a FOID card. Trame replied they did not have access to local databases, just state or federal databases. Hospitals in the state are supposed to report to them any admissions for mental health, she said.

Commissioner Boykin asked about an increase in expressway shootings – seven this year alone. Vega said expressway shootings were up and his office is working with ATF to address issues with matching guns to crimes.

XV) ADJOURNMENT Coordinator Anton adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

The next hearing is scheduled for 10 a.m. March 15