
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

December 21, 2017

Ald. Michael J. Murphy
(414) 286-3763
Ald. José G. Pérez
(414) 286-3762

Alderman Murphy and Alderman Pérez encouraged by Chief Flynn and Mayor's new stance on traffic enforcement policy

Alderman Michael J. Murphy and **Alderman José G. Pérez** are encouraged to hear Milwaukee Police Chief Ed Flynn and Mayor Tom Barrett are acknowledging the positive results of a traffic enforcement policy change, which was proposed by Ald. Murphy, Ald. Pérez, and many other Common Council members. The aldermen were acting on behalf of their constituents who felt safer roadways were a top priority, and were consistently making public outcries for safety changes.

Ald. Murphy championed for the enforcement change with a letter to the City of Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission in April of this year. Through the commission, Ald. Murphy requested that the Milwaukee Police Department review traffic enforcement data, policies, and tactics. Ald. Murphy and Ald. Pérez followed up with a second letter in June asking for the pursuit policy to be changed to reduce the growing number of mobile drug units, vehicle flights, and hit-and-runs. It was a policy change Mayor Barrett and Chief Flynn were initially publically opposed to, but are now praising in a local news article.

Ald. Murphy says, "I am happy to see that Chief Flynn and Mayor Barrett are embracing the new policy and seeing the positive impact of the change. I'm grateful to the Milwaukee Fire and Police Commission members for taking action and taking our concerns seriously."

Traffic Enforcement Policy/ADD ON

Ald. Pérez says, “I appreciate the Fire and Police Commission members for their expeditious response. I hope the Mayor and the Chief will follow suit and be more prompt in heeding the Common Council’s recommendations, which aim to improve safety and residents’ quality of life.”

Ald. Murphy and Ald. Pérez want to acknowledge their other colleagues, **Ald. Robert J. Bauman, Ald. Robert G. Donovan, Ald. Mark J. Borkowski, Ald. Tony Zielinski, and Ald. Russell J. Stamper, II**, who were also very public in calling for a pursuit policy change to protect the public.

Ald. Murphy and Ald. Pérez look forward to further changes being implemented on the roadways to ensure safety.

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- Milwaukee Arts Board
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- Steering and Rules



MICHAEL J. MURPHY
ALDERMAN, 10TH DISTRICT

April 7, 2017

City of Milwaukee Fire & Police Commission
Attn – MaryNell Regan, Executive Director
200 E. Wells St., Rm. 706A
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Executive Director Regan,

After reviewing statistics on City of Milwaukee Police Chief Edward Flynn's police pursuit policy, I am requesting that the Milwaukee Fire & Police Commission (FPC) review said policy given the amount of crime we are currently experiencing when it comes to vehicle flights, mobile drug transactions, and more.

As you know, the pursuit policy changed in 2010 under the direction of Milwaukee Police Chief Edward Flynn when four innocent civilians were killed as a result of high-speed pursuits. I respect Chief Flynn's rationale based on the protection of civilian lives and officer safety, but I feel that the pursuit policy must be reexamined and possibly amended based upon current pursuit data. I encourage you to examine the data below from the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) Office of Management, Analysis & Planning:

Vehicle Pursuits & Non-Pursuits by the MPD								
Police Activity	2012	2013	2014*	2015*	2016*	YTD 2016	YTD 2017	YTD % Change
Vehicle Pursuits	49	82	102	263	305	71	27	-62%
Non-Pursuits	12	36	689	2,544	4,317	863	1,675	94%

**Indicates both pursuit and non-pursuit data is not comparable due to policy changes or reporting practices*

In 2016, there were 305 vehicle pursuits and 4,317 non-pursuits. As you can see, vehicle pursuits decreased 62% from January 1 through March 13, 2017 (27) from the same time period in 2016 (71); however, non-pursuits dramatically increased by 94% from 863 in YTD 2016 to 1,675 in YTD 2017. If current trends continue, we will likely exceed the 2016 figure this year. Again, while I respect Chief Flynn's rationale, I also wonder whether some of these should be pursued to prevent further illegal acts.

It is worth noting that prior to year's end in 2015, MPD officers had to have a reasonable belief that a vehicle occupant was a suspect in a violent felony before they could actually pursue the vehicle. Chief Flynn later modified the policy to allow vehicle pursuits used in a violent felony whether officers had reasonable belief or not that occupants were actually involved.

According to many citizens, the lawlessness occurring today in regards to speeding, reckless driving, and traffic violations is astounding. The number of individuals not responding to basic traffic stops and standard traffic calming measures has an adverse effect on our citizens' public safety concerns. Both in public perception and in reality, I often hear residents expressing fears of driving on our streets. Criminals in our city believe that there are no consequences to their actions – Criminal behavior continues to escalate because appropriate action, both enforcement and court system, are not taken.

I am not declaring that I have all the answers. I am simply respectfully requesting that the FPC review and, if deemed appropriate, make modifications to the current pursuit policy because of the staggering statistics.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Murphy
Alderman, 10th District

Enclosure

CC: Tom Barrett, City of Milwaukee Mayor





Milwaukee Police Department Vehicle Pursuits and Non-Pursuits by MPD

Request: Data pertaining to vehicle pursuits that resulted from fleeing from January 1, 2012 to March 13, 2017.

Data Notes: Fleeing from MPD includes both “vehicle pursuits” and “non-pursuits”. A vehicle pursuit is initiated by officers to apprehend a suspect(s) of a violent felony (or an occupant(s) of a vehicle used or taken in commission of a violent felony) in a motor vehicle attempting to evade law enforcement (SOP 660). A non-pursuit is when an officer does not attempt to pursue a vehicle that flees in accordance with Standard Operating Procedure (SOP 660).

Table 1 illustrates vehicle pursuits and non-pursuits for the full years 2012-2016 and YTD 2016 & YTD 2017. Due to variation in reporting methods of non-pursuits and the policy change of police pursuits, full year data should not be compared. Year-to-date data was provided for 2016 and 2017, which can be compared.

In June 2015, the vehicle pursuit policy was modified to include the pursuit of vehicles that were used or taken in the commission of a violent felony. This may include a stolen auto that was subsequently used in the commission of a violent felony, such as a carjacking. In 2014, MPD began to consistently track and record non-pursuits.

Summary: In 2016, there were 305 “vehicle pursuits” and 4,317 “non-pursuits”. Vehicle pursuits declined 62% from January 1 - March 13, 2017 (27) from the same time period in 2016 (71). In contrast, non-pursuits increased 94% in 2017 (1,675) from 2016 (863).

Table 1. Vehicle Pursuits and Non-Pursuits by MPD

Vehicle Pursuits & Non-Pursuits by the Milwaukee Police Department								
Police Activity	2012	2013	2014*	2015*	2016*	YTD 2016	YTD 2017	YTD % Change
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*Indicates both pursuit and non-pursuit data is not comparable due to policy changes or reporting practices.

Questions pertaining to this document should be directed to the Milwaukee Police Department, Office of Management, Analysis & Planning at omap@milwaukee.gov or by phone at (414) 935-7835.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

CHAIR

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- Milwaukee Arts Board
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MICHAEL J. MURPHY
ALDERMAN, 10TH DISTRICT

June 1, 2017

City of Milwaukee Fire & Police Commission
Attn – MaryNell Regan, Executive Director
200 E. Wells St., Rm. 706A
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Executive Director Regan,

We want to take this time to thank the Fire and Police Commission for the enlightening report on police vehicle pursuits. It is one of the most non-biased, data-driven reports that the City has produced in years. It is reports like these that provide the Council with answers to many of the questions that our citizens have been asking. Yet, in reviewing the data provided on vehicle pursuits, and the subsequently requested addendum on non-pursuits, it has become clear that more answers are needed. It seems as though our data-driven Police Department isn't using all the data they have to issue citations and make arrests. With the millions of dollars spent over the past few years on collecting and storing data, this report seems to shed light on the lack of use of the very data that officers in the field could utilize to get dangerous people off of our streets.

The FPC report on vehicle pursuits has raised multiple new questions:

1. In 2015 alone, 51 different stolen vehicles were “not pursued” on multiple occasions, according to the graph on page 7 of the Addendum Report. Why are stolen vehicles not being pursued?
2. In 2015, roughly 900 vehicles with known license plate numbers fled the scene and were not pursued. Since the police knew the license plate numbers, why were fewer than 200 citations issued?
3. Given that the Fire and Police Commission is the oversight body of the Police Department, why doesn't the FPC have direct access to the CAD system?
4. With Chief Flynn's vehicle pursuit policy in place since 2010, why are we seeing a 59% increase in non-pursuits from 2015 to 2016, with another 94% increase YTD from 2016 to 2017? Why such recent dramatic increases?

Follow-Up Letter to Fire & Police Commission

5. 80% of non-pursuit incidents are for municipal ordinance violations. Since the vehicle fled without pursuit, are the citations for the ordinance violations mailed to the vehicle owner's home? Is an additional citation for fleeing an officer also being sent to the vehicle owner's home?
6. Chief Flynn instituted the non-pursuit policy stating that it would decrease accidents and fatalities caused by police pursuits. Yet while this non-pursuit policy has been in effect, the City has seen an increase in accidents and traffic fatalities. As a result of unintended consequences, is there a correlation between the increase in vehicle accidents and the increase in non-pursuits?
7. What policy and procedure changes are the FPC Commissioners proposing to quell the rash of people fleeing police? Or reckless driving? Or speeding? Has the FPC approved any changes to MPD's SOP 660 (Vehicle Pursuit Operations) since 2010?
8. MPD has piloted a vehicle-tracking program using the StarChase system. How many vehicles have been fitted with the device? How many times has it been deployed? How many times has it been deployed successfully? What is the cost associated with the deployment of StarChase? How many tickets have been issued or arrests made after the successful deployment of StarChase? What were the outcomes when StarChase was unsuccessfully deployed?
9. In the MPD CAD system, is there a separate license plate data field that can be easily sorted? If not, can a data field for license plates be added?

It is our intent to introduce a communication file on this matter.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Murphy
Alderman, 10th District



José Pérez
Alderman, 12th District

CC: Tom Barrett, City of Milwaukee Mayor
Common Council Members
Fire & Police Commissioners



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

City Hall, 200 E. Wells Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202 • www.city.milwaukee.gov

June 13, 2017

The Honorable,
Members of the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners
City Hall
Room 706A

Honorable Members,

An excerpt from the Fire and Police Commission's (FPC) mission statement states the following:

"The commissioners serve as the citizen's voice in police and fire matters as a means of ensuring more responsive and effective city government."

Based upon that language, data-driven police enforcement, neighborhood input, and the overwhelming support of the rank-and-file members of the Milwaukee Police Department, we encourage you to amend the current Standard Operating Procedure governing the pursuit policy.

Lives are being lost at an alarming rate under a pursuit policy that emboldens and encourages those under suspicion to flee. Although it likely took us seven years to get to this point at which traffic rules and regulations are disregarded by so many, we must collectively take decisive action to regain control of our streets. So while Chief Flynn only presents data that suggests altering the pursuit policy will lead to collateral damage, he refuses to acknowledge the current chaos playing out on our roadways. There are two sides to every coin and both must be considered when making tough choices as it relates to the public's health, safety and welfare.

To infer that a non-pursuit is a political statement would seem to suggest that some political gain is achieved when invoking that notion or philosophy. Per Chief Flynn, activating the lights on a patrol car or chasing a vehicle then terminating that pursuit because the SOP prohibits it, should not be called a non-pursuit. On over 4,000 occasions during 2016, non-pursuits, instances in which a pursuit was abandoned or discontinued, as it was in conflict with existing SOP, occurred. To dismiss non-pursuits as being political statements and not legitimate outcomes is insulting to the intelligence of the FPC, the Common Council, and the public.

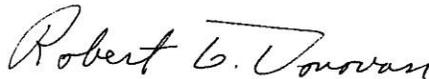
It has been further reported by the FPC -- and not the purported data-driven MPD (that has an entire department devoted to data analysis) -- that the beginning months of 2017 each had over 600 non-pursuits. The simple math on that would indicate that the City is on pace to almost double the number of non-pursuits from 2016 to 2017. It's only logical that more accidents and injuries will occur if this trend continues.

Lastly, we urge you to direct the Chief to refocus the department under his command to addressing basic traffic violations. It was shocking and disappointing to find out (again from the FPC) that in the year 2015, there were 890 instances in which a non-stolen vehicle with known license plates fled, and the MPD only cited the owner of the vehicle 176 (19.8%) times. We believe this lack of enforcement of simple matters like this has contributed to the lawlessness on our streets. As a city, we can't allow a potential lack of discipline on the backend (i.e. the judicial penalty) to inform and dictate our level of enforcement on the front end.

Respectfully,



Robert J. Bauman
Alderman, 4th District



Robert G. Donovan
Alderman, 8th District



Mark J. Borkowski
Alderman, 11th District



José G. Pérez
Alderman, 12th District



Tony Zielinski
Alderman, 14th District



Russell J. Stamper, II
Alderman, 15th District