



MEMO

To: Mayor and City Council

Date: August 30, 2024

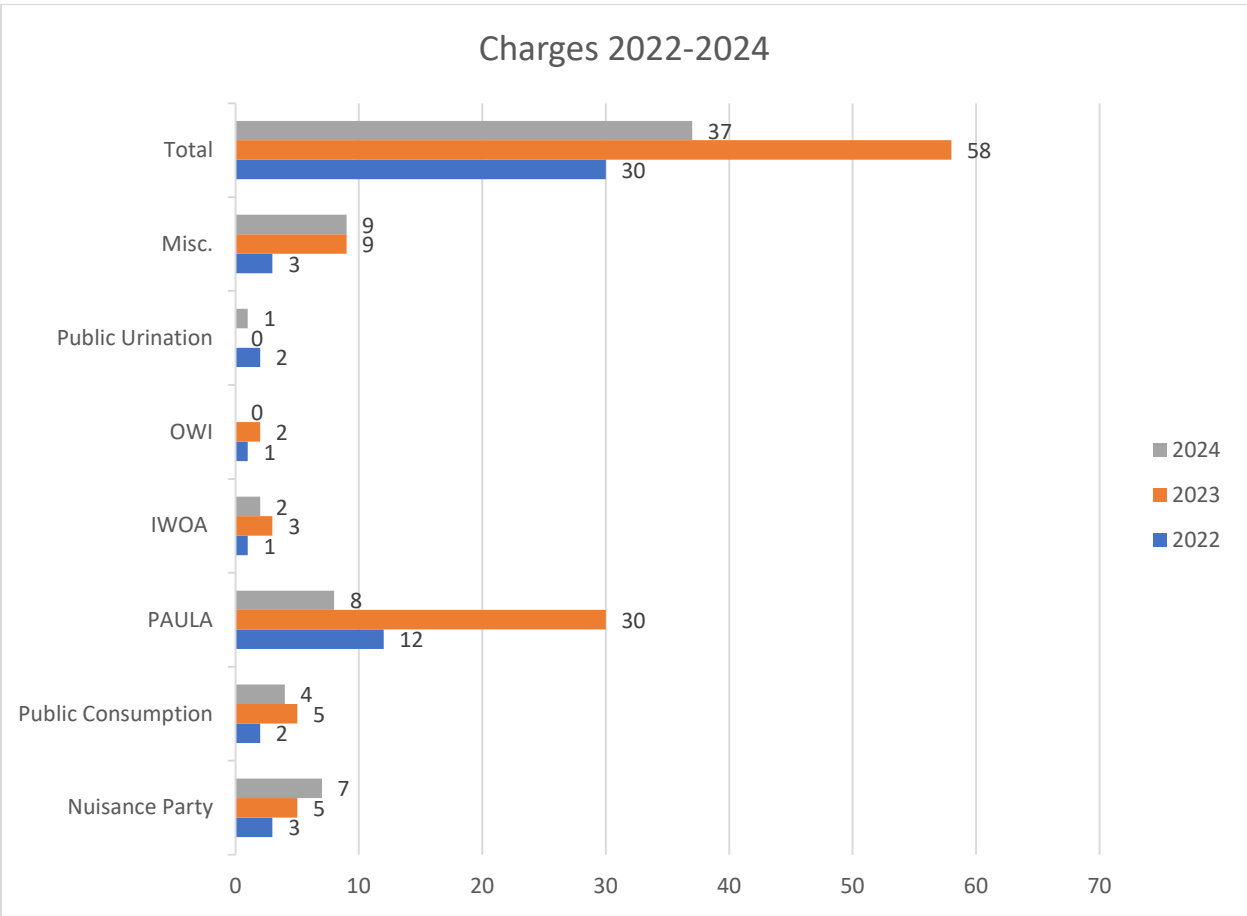
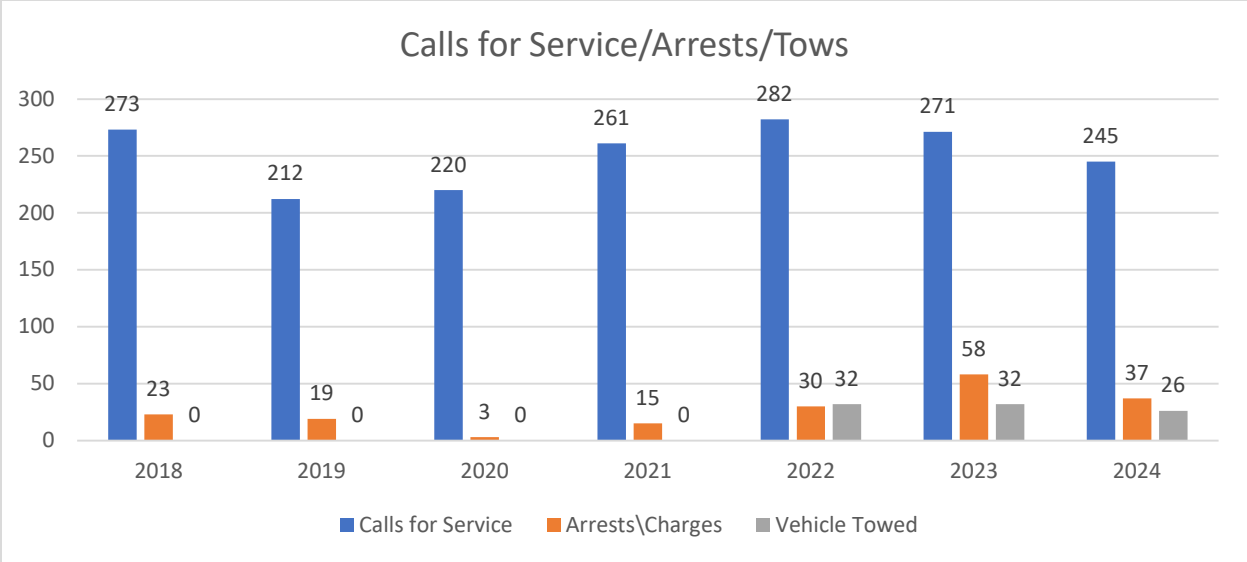
From: Geoff Huff, Chief of Police

Subject: **Summary of Cyclone Welcome Weekend 2024**

Enhanced operations for Cyclone Welcome Weekend (CWW) began for the Police Department at 5:00 p.m. on Friday (August 23) and generally ended at 4:00 a.m. on Sunday (August 25). The weather for CWW 2024 was pleasant with highs in the mid-80s with high humidity. There was a brief rain shower in the early morning prior to 8:00 a.m.

The first major observation was it did appear there were fewer people in town again this year. The strategy of posting signs for Immediate towing of illegally parked vehicles seemed to work again as there were not many illegally parked vehicles. We towed a total of 26 vehicles, which was 6 fewer than last year where we towed 32. A combination of social media warnings, general media stories, large noticeable signs posted, and the work of going door to door contributed to continued success with our parking issues of the past. With staff shortages at the Police Department and University, the door-to-door campaign was not as robust as past year. However, in speaking to students they were well aware of the parking and enhanced fines.

Calls for service (CFS) were down by 26 from 2023 (271 down to 245). In addition, total charges decreased from 58 to 37. We also encouraged officers to get out early, prior to 8 am, to set the tone early that underage possession and consumption in public would not be tolerated. Our observation this year was the event started later than in the past. In past years, we were seeing a lot of underage possession and consumption starting at 8:00 a.m. However, this year we did not observe as much of this until later in the morning towards noon. It is worth noting that some individuals had multiple charges so there were 30 individuals charged with the 37 violations. Also, many of the charges were released on citation without a physical arrest. Public intoxication and interference with official acts are charges that result in a physical arrest.



While there were large gatherings in the University Impacted Area (UIA), it did appear there were fewer than last year. **However, we have seen a troubling pattern develop where we are returning to the same houses each year even though the residents may be different. Most of these parties have over 100 partygoers and some up to 500. Sometimes these addresses combine several residences into even larger numbers.** It is our belief that it is not possible to have a safe gathering at a private house party with these numbers. **This has led us to the conclusion that we need more participation from the landlords in resolving this problem. Therefore, the Police Department will be contacting these landlords on Knapp Street, Hunt Street, Wood Street, and Hyland Avenue.**

The Nuisance Party Code allows for the Police Department to cite:

*(2) Duty to Control Premises. **Any person who is an owner, occupant, tenant, or otherwise having any possessory control, individually or jointly with others, of any premises who either sponsors, conducts, hosts, invites, or permits a social gathering or party on said premises which is or becomes a public nuisance as defined in subsection (1) above, and which nuisance is either the intentional result of, or within the reasonable expectations of, the person or persons having such possessory control is deemed to be in violation of this section.***

Therefore, I will be personally contacting the owners of these properties to inform them we will start citing them in addition to the residents to ensure we have their attention and cooperation with this problem. In addition, staff is exploring whether or not repeated violations can result in a revocation of a Letter of Compliance for rental occupancy.

In contrast, we saw many apartment managers and security hired by apartment managers making a concerted effort to reduce party sizes and eliminate poor behaviors. At 111 Lynn, for example, when we observed items coming off a balcony, property management immediately issued a hefty fine and this ended the problem.

While the strategies we employ do appear to be working as far as discouraging people from coming from out of town, it would not be accurate to say the problem is *just* the out-of-towners as the draw is parties that are being hosted by ISU students. The nuisance party violations we write that are attended by 100s of people are being hosted by ISU students. This makes it incredibly important that we continue to collaborate with Iowa State University to further curtail this event.

We continued to see the phenomenon of the “borg.” This is generally an empty milk gallon container filled with water, vodka (or some other alcohol), some type of flavoring, and in some cases, an electrolyte packet. Officers continued to observe people walking from party to party with these. **We find this particularly troubling as there is no way to tell how much alcohol is really in the “solution” and can be very dangerous.**

<https://www.insider.com/experts-warn-college-drinking-fad-borg-going-viral-on-tiktok-2023-2>

We continue to see a reduction in public urination. We credit this to the change made last year in the code which clarified that this type of behavior also was prohibited on private property when in public view.

This year, we again addressed the event with increased staffing across the board. CWW presents a significant staffing challenge as the event is 20+ hours in duration. In contrast, VEISHEA required enhanced staffing from 6 pm to 4 am on Friday and Saturday night which was much easier to manage. Our overall staffing picture for the patrol division was slightly lower than last year due to our staffing constraints in both patrol and communications.

For CWW, police officers worked an additional 92 hours of overtime shifts, dispatchers worked an additional 11 hours of overtime shifts, and our Community Safety Officers worked an additional 71 hours. The overtime hours had a cost of approximately \$7,000. In addition, our exempt employees (supervisors) also worked several extra hours that is not overtime eligible, approximately 44 hours. This does not account for the meetings that have been attended in the last year, the setup of the Incident Command Post, food/water costs, etc.

There were also other costs especially for the parking piece. The signs for immediate towing were all purchased in previous years at a cost of \$2,180 plus about \$200 additional for supplies to install (temporarily). Fortunately, we had enough signs from the previous years to accommodate this year and it is likely we would not need to order any more for next year should we need them. It takes additional staff time to install the temporary signs and take them back down. Some of the signs were installed by the Street Department and some by the Parking Division. Other costs are vehicle costs, fuel, etc.

Anecdotally, we feel there were fewer people in town who were not ISU students again this year. Our strategy has been that Cyclone Welcome Weekend is for Cyclones. Even with the better weather, the unofficial events did seem to be smaller with fewer people, but still a problem. Our hope is to see the unofficial celebration activities continue to shrink to a manageable size so that everyone can experience an enjoyable and safe weekend before classes begin. To achieve this goal, we will work to obtain better cooperation from some of our landlords and owners.

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