

Americus Police Department

2021 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



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Message from the Chief

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Community Relations

Turn to page 5 for a summary of our community involvement initiatives in 2021.

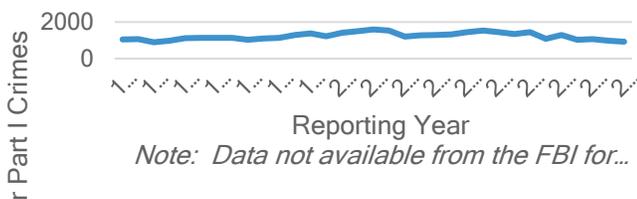


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Operations Analysis

Turn to Page 5 for an analysis of department operations, including traffic enforcement, vehicle pursuits, and use of force incidents.

Americus, GA UCR Part I Crime Totals
1985 through 2022



2021 CRIME STATISTICS

The number of reported Part I Crimes in the City of Americus continued the downward trend. Turn to Page 3 for a summary of current statistics and a look at the numbers over the past 36 years.

Message from the Chief



Looking ahead at the beginning of 2021, I had high hopes (like most everyone else) of a brand new year free from worrying about the CoVID pandemic. Now looking back, CoVID concerns continued to dominate our thoughts and activities throughout the year. In spite of continued restrictions we did our best to resume normal operations, particularly in our traffic enforcement and community relations efforts. As you read this report, you will see that we did a great job in both these areas.

At the first of the year, we published a report on crime activity in 2020 that showed a dramatic decrease in overall criminal activity for the city. That trend continues with our serious crime numbers for the city being lower for 2021 than they were in 2020. In fact, as you will see in the following pages, **crime in Americus is at a historic low**. Unfortunately, from January through June violent crime continued in specific neighborhoods with almost daily reports of shots fired and all too many young men and women injured or killed. This escalation of violence was not unique to Americus, but is a pattern of behavior being played out in cities large and small across the country.

To give you an idea of the scope of the problem, in 2017 we had one incident of shots being fired into a residence and made an arrest in that case. In 2018 there were six incidents. In 2019 the number almost doubled to eleven incidents. In 2020 the number more than doubled again to twenty-eight incidents. By the end of June, we had already documented nineteen incidents, putting us on pace to more than double the number from the previous year, yet again.

Although the increase in violent crime is not unique to Americus, we chose to try some unique approaches to gun crime reduction in 2021. Our most pressing and obvious issue was the dramatic increase in drive by shootings in 2020 and the first half of 2021. The shootings were primarily gang related and focused in four specific neighborhoods. We partnered with the GBI and two of their existing task forces to form a coalition to identify the individuals doing the shooting and seek enhanced prosecution for them. We had a meeting with members of the task forces, a representative from the GBI's gang unit in Atlanta, and all our local criminal justice partners. Working together, we were able to make several key arrests.

We also started a public information campaign and engaged with the local faith community to spread the message that gun violence is not the way to solve disputes and that it will not be tolerated. We cohosted two citywide prayer vigils and sponsored a community awareness campaign targeting gun violence in four specific neighborhoods throughout the month of June. To draw attention to the issue and seek solutions we published a 30-Day Prayer Guide that focused on specific streets in neighborhoods plagued by gun violence. We distributed the prayer guide to all the churches we could identify in the area and asked the pastors to share it with their church members and ask that they pray specifically for the violence to stop during the entire month of June. The response was overwhelming.

Once the prayer letter went out, we began receiving calls from pastors and church members across the city asking for specific ways that they could help. We had churches and community groups sponsoring cookouts and outreach events in the parks adjacent to the problem areas. Our officers attended as many of these events as they could to help and interact with the participants. The department participated with community organizers in a prayer vigil ending the June campaign and co-sponsored a vigil at the courthouse with the sheriff as part of National Faith and Blue Weekend in October.

A third tactic was to enhance patrol operations in the target neighborhoods. We did concentrated patrol in the four neighborhoods and focused traffic enforcement efforts in those areas. From January 1 to June 30 there were nineteen drive by incidents. From July 1 to December 31 there were only two. Prayer coupled with community involvement and a willingness to take action clearly works.

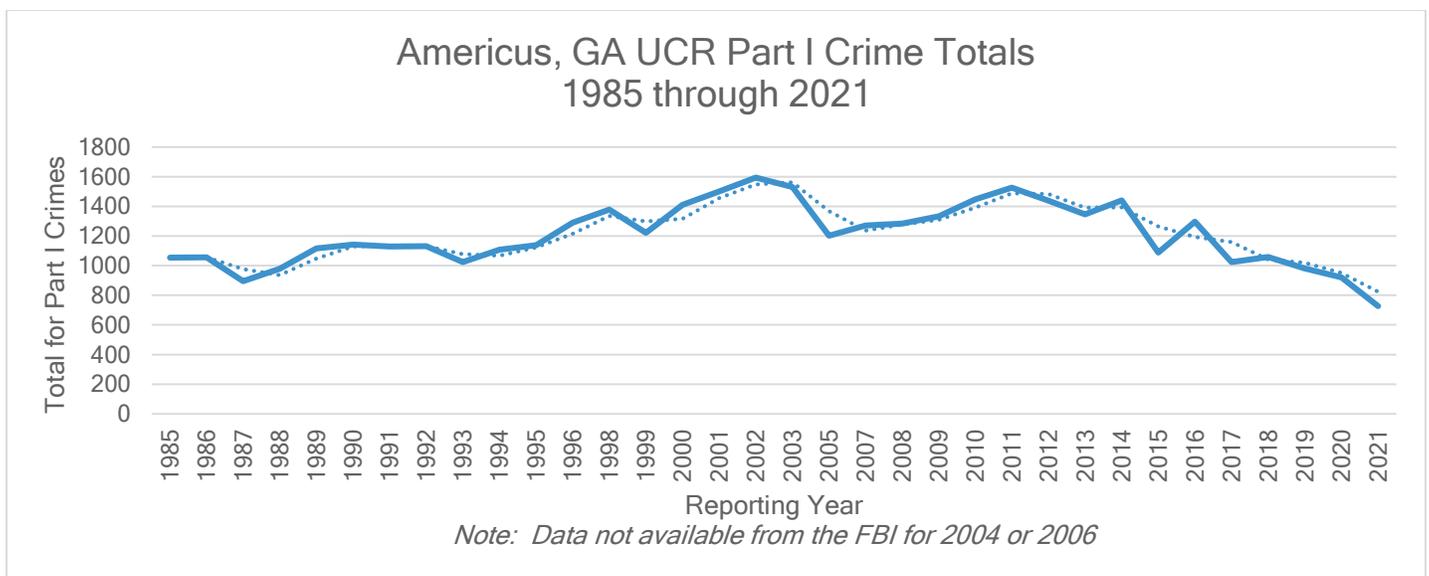
Accreditation

Two of our recent major accomplishments as an agency were to become a State Certified Agency through the Georgia Law Enforcement Certification Program and a nationally accredited agency through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). We were awarded accredited status by CALEA in November of 2019 following an extensive review of our written policies and a four day on site inspection. We were reaccredited by GLECP during the summer of 2020, and participated in our first CALEA file review in the midst of the pandemic. In November of 2021 we participated in our second annual CALEA file review, coming out with a perfect score on the files that were selected for review.



Accreditation is a big deal. There are only a handful of nationally accredited agencies in the State of Georgia and across the nation. Accreditation is important, because it encourages us to constantly review our policies and practices and stay current with the accepted best practices and legal changes that govern how we do business. Two of the main areas that open a law enforcement agency to liability are out of date policies and failure by employees to follow established policies and procedures. The accreditation process ensures that our policies and procedures are constantly being reviewed and updated as the standards are updated. Annual reviews of our files by CALEA staff ensure that we are current with best practices and that we are actually doing the things that our policies say we should do.

Crime Statistics



The men and women of the Americus Police Department work tirelessly 24 hours a day to provide a timely and effective response to criminal activity reported to us by the public. We also strive, through routine patrol operations, directed patrol, special projects and public education to prevent as much

crime as we possibly can. Our constant goal is to make the City of Americus a safe place to live, work and play.

Each month we report our crime statistics to the FBI along with most of the other law enforcement agencies in the United States. The FBI makes an annual summary of these statistics available to the public each year in a publication called "Crime in the United States". It is available on the FBI's web site and is usually one year behind, meaning that the report posted at the end of 2021 is based on 2020 numbers. Fortunately for us, we can access our crime statistics in real time and are able to provide the public with the information as soon as the calendar year ends.

We are pleased to report that our Part I Crime numbers for 2021 continued a downward trend, decreasing by a full 21% from 2020 and are the lowest they have been in over 30 years. In fact, going all the way back to 1985, which is the earliest date that these reports are available online, we have never had a year with lower numbers! Part I Crimes are the more serious crimes tracked by the FBI and include Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny from an Auto, Larceny Other, Vehicle Theft and Arson. These are all crimes that are generally reported to the police by the public and are driven by criminal activity, rather than police activity. These type crimes tend to be relatively constant in a community and are a good indicator of trends in criminal activity.

Taking a closer look at the numbers, the overall decrease is primarily driven by a 26% decrease in property crime which involves the theft of, theft from, or damage to property. This category makes up over 82% of all the criminal activity reported in Americus. The three driving subcategories in property crime are thefts by shoplifting, theft from vehicles and theft from private property. As mentioned earlier in this year's report, crimes against persons have continued to increase over the past few years, increasing by just over 13% from 2020 to 2021. This category is driven primarily by gun violence in four distinct areas of town, as discussed above.

Crime analysis is a multifaceted process, and though as a police department we would like to take full credit for the reduction in overall serious crime, there are many different factors at work. Addressing violent street crime is difficult. We work diligently to identify those responsible for specific incidents and arrest them, but arrests do not address the root issues of poverty, erosion of family structure, and the proliferation of street gangs (which are glorified by our current pop culture). Addressing root causes of crime cannot be effectively accomplished by the police alone but can be addressed by the community as a whole, working together.

We also track and report Part II Crime numbers to the FBI. These are crimes that the FBI considers to be less serious such as simple assault, criminal trespass, drug charges, disorderly conduct, forgery, DUI of alcohol or drugs, etc. These numbers reflect both crimes reported to the police by citizens and crimes discovered by the police through patrol operations. Part II Crime numbers can vary considerably, based on the activities of the police. For example, the number of Part II Crimes documented by the agency decreased by 13% from 2019 to 2020. This would seem to be a good trend, but the major areas of decrease were in officer-initiated arrests, such as DUI's, drug cases and criminal trespass cases. These type cases decreased primarily because we scaled back on traffic enforcement and citizen encounters during the height of the pandemic. As we resumed more normal operations in the second half of 2020, our preventive patrol and traffic enforcement efforts increased, and our drug arrests and DUI arrests increased accordingly.

In 2021 our Part II numbers increased by 12% over 2020. This increase was driven by a 36% increase in disorderly conduct charges, a 49% increase in drug arrests, and a whopping 80% increase in DUI arrests. The latter two increases are due to a marked increase in our traffic enforcement efforts, which will be discussed in an upcoming section.

Community Relations

It is the responsibility of every employee of the Americus Police Department to foster a positive relationship with members of our community. All employees are encouraged to be active participants in community activities and many employees are members of local civic and service organizations and serve as volunteer coaches and mentors. Sgt. Carolina Pittman is responsible for helping to coordinate our community relations activities.



GREAT Camp Participants at the Carter Boyhood Home.

Our Community Outreach Programs rebounded somewhat this year, even with pandemic restrictions continuing to hamper gatherings. We were able to teach the GREAT Program through the school system, even though a portion of the classes were taught online. GREAT Summer Camp was a huge success with 12 students completing the program. We participated in four career fairs. We cohosted two citywide prayer vigils and sponsored a community awareness campaign targeting gun violence in four specific neighborhoods throughout the month of June. The department participated with community organizers in a prayer vigil ending the June campaign and co-sponsored a vigil at

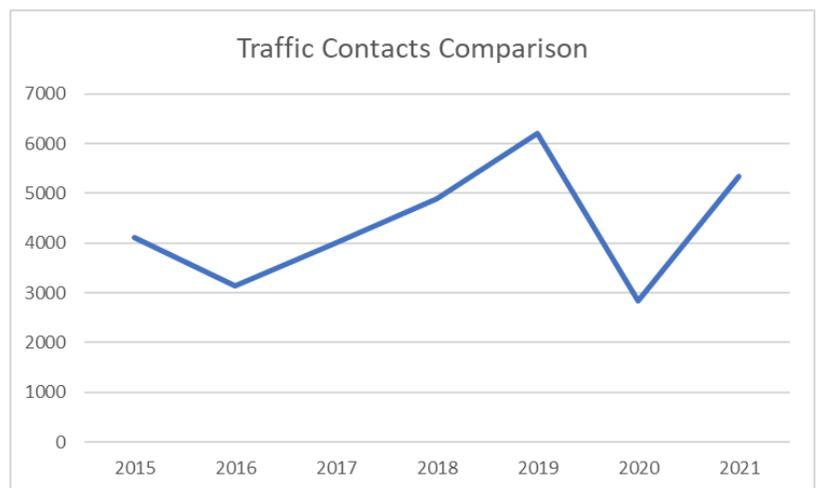
the courthouse with Sheriff Eric Bryant as part of National Faith and Blue Weekend in October. We also participated in six different community sponsored events and sponsored our annual Back to School Backpack Giveaway in partnership with SCSO, SGTC, Finnicum Motor Company, the Rotary Club, and First Methodist Church. Our final event for the year was Shop with a Cop. Calvary Episcopal Church volunteered to provide the meal for 32 kids plus guardians and volunteers. Due to the generosity of numerous donors, we were able to increase the amount given to each child to \$200.00.



Shop with A Cop 2021

Traffic Enforcement Analysis

The number one goal of traffic enforcement is to try to decrease the number and severity of traffic accidents inside the city limits. Officers of the Americus Police department responded to 571 traffic accidents on the roadways of Americus and 255 on private property for a total of 826 traffic crashes in 2021. There were 56 reported injuries and one fatality. This is up slightly from the 545 roadway traffic accidents reported in 2020. An analysis of all traffic activity reveals that officers issued 2,658 citations and 2,677 warnings in 2021, for a total of 5,335 traffic



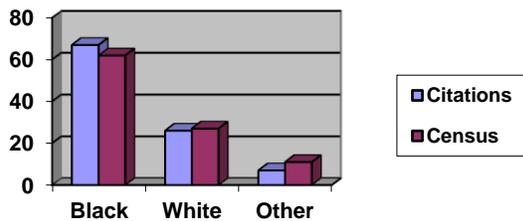
contacts, which is an 88% increase in traffic contacts from the 2,842 traffic contacts documented in 2020. This increase is directly attributable to the curtailing of traffic enforcement activity due to the CoVID 19 Pandemic in 2020 and the return to normal traffic operations in 2021, with safety precautions.

The total contacts for 2021 put us back in line with what we would expect for traffic enforcement efforts as depicted in the accompanying graph.

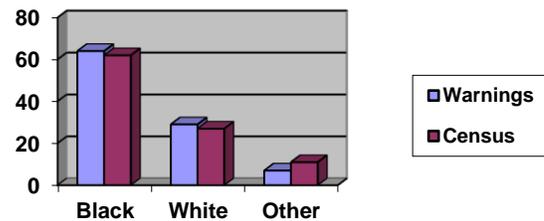
Biased Based Profiling is clearly defined in Chapter 14-1 of the Americus Police Department Standard Operating Procedures Manual as the targeting of people based on their race, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, age, cultural group, or any other identifiable group. This practice is strictly prohibited. For example, the fact that a person is African American, Hispanic, or a member of any other ethnic group is not a basis for suspecting that person of wrongdoing. Any law enforcement-initiated actions that rely upon membership in a particular people group, rather than on behavior are strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such actions include but are not limited to traffic contacts, field contacts, and asset seizure and forfeiture efforts. No officer of the Americus Police Department shall endorse or act upon stereotypes, attitudes, or beliefs that a person’s background increases the probability that the person will act unlawfully. An individual may only be detained and/or law enforcement action taken based on factors related to a violation or the investigation of a violation of Federal Law, State Statute, or Local Ordinance.

The percentages in the accompanying charts and analyses are based on the data captured from the issuance of electronic citations and warnings. The number counted as “Other” reflects all races other than Black, White, or Hispanic.

**2021 Citations by Race %
Compared to 2020 Census Data**



**2021 Warnings by Race %
Compared to 2020 Census Data**



There were no complaints made with the department in 2021 alleging bias-based profiling on traffic stops or officer/citizen contacts. As depicted in the graphs, the racial breakdown of citations is a close match to the racial composition of the City of Americus according to official US Census data (2020 census data). There is nothing in the statistical analysis that indicates disparate treatment of persons in traffic enforcement encounters according to their race. Analyzing the data by gender shows that females of all races receive fewer citations and warnings than males. A recent study by the University of Michigan indicates that the number of male and female drivers on the road is evenly split with 51% being male and 49% being female on average. However, traffic analysis data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) shows that 57% of all traffic accidents involve male drivers and that male drivers are involved in 72% of all fatal traffic accidents. This statistic is a close match for the percentage of males in our jurisdiction who receive citations and may be a good explanation for the difference in traffic enforcement by gender.

Written Citations and Warnings Issued

	Citation	Warning	Census
Black	65%	62%	67%
White	26%	31%	29%
Hispanic	8%	3%	2%
Other*	1%	4%	2%

Male	57%	53%	44%
Female	43%	47%	56%

**The Other category includes those persons whose race was not recorded on the citation.*

Vehicle Pursuits

A pursuit is defined by department Standard Operating Procedure as: An active attempt by a law enforcement officer in a motor vehicle to apprehend one or more occupants of another moving motor vehicle, where the driver of the fleeing vehicle is aware of the attempt and is actively resisting apprehension.

The Americus Police Department is aware of the tendency for a violator to attempt to avoid arrest by fleeing the police. We are also aware that pursuit of violators poses a threat to the safety of all concerned and to non-involved citizens. This department therefore acknowledges both the utility of pursuit actions as necessary for apprehension and the importance of protecting the life and property of all persons. The decision to initiate pursuit is that of the individual officer, but at no time shall an officer act outside the parameters of department policy regarding chase or pursuit.

Pursuit is a judgment-initiated call that relies on good common-sense decisions on the part of the officer. Officers shall consider the following question when initiating pursuit; "Will the risk to other drivers be heightened because of the pursuit; and does the severity of the violation justify the risk involved?" Many factors must be considered when an officer decides to initiate pursuit. They include, but are not limited to:

1. Severity of Violation
2. Weather Conditions
3. Time of Day
4. Area of Pursuit (Open highway, residential, school zones, etc.)
5. Traffic Congestion/Pedestrian Activity
6. Jurisdiction

Traffic law enforcement is a major function of this department. Officers may employ basic apprehension action in order to stop a traffic law violator. However, once a traffic violator has clearly exhibited a refusal to stop for police and an intention to elude, the officer shall cease pursuit and resume safe driving practices and attempt to bring the suspected violator to justice by other means. Pursuit of a motor vehicle for any traffic or misdemeanor violation is strictly prohibited.

When an officer knows that the occupant of a vehicle is a forcible felon (armed robbery, aggravated assault/battery or other violent crime, see OCGA 16-3-1) he/she may initiate and continue pursuit until such time as the forcible felon is apprehended or the risks associated with the pursuit outweigh the risks associated with the felon's escape. The primary principle the officer must keep in mind is the level of threat to innocent persons that the felon may pose if he or she escapes, compared to the possibility of injury to the pursuing officer or others resulting from the pursuit. Even in the case of a forcible felon, if at any time the officer or his/her supervisor feels that the threat of injury to others caused by the pursuit is greater than the threat of injury if the felon escapes, the pursuit must be terminated.

When an officer knows that the occupant of a vehicle is a felon, but not of a forcible nature, he/she may initiate pursuit of the felon vehicle. The standard for termination of the pursuit is much lower, however, for a non-forcible felon. Since the felon poses no known threat to life if he/she escapes, the lives of pursuing officers and innocent bystanders must not be risked in apprehending the felon. The pursuit may continue only as long as the pursuing officer and his/her supervisors feel that the pursuit does not pose a significant threat to the lives of others. If conditions change or the fleeing suspect exhibits a

reckless disregard for others or an intentional attempt to hurt others, the pursuit must be terminated. For example, if a non-forcible felon disregards a stop sign or light, passes other vehicles, or in any way exhibits dangerous driving practices, the pursuit must be terminated.

Juvenile drivers are statistically known to be less safe drivers than adults. Juvenile offenders are more likely to make poor decisions and take unnecessary risks when attempting to elude capture in a vehicle. When the pursuing officer knows or is almost certain that the fleeing vehicle is operated by a juvenile and the offense is a misdemeanor or non-forcible felony, pursuit should be immediately terminated. If the fleeing juvenile is known to have committed a forcible felony and poses a threat to others if allowed to escape the officer may initiate pursuit. However, the pursuing officer must take the age of the offender into consideration and should terminate the pursuit if the juvenile exhibits a pattern of driving which poses a greater risk of injury to others than the risk of the juvenile's escape.

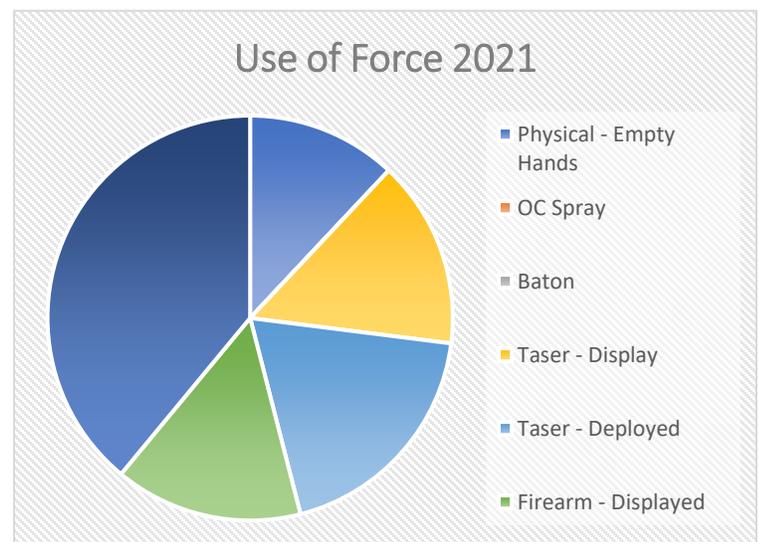
There was only one pursuit reported in 2021. The pursuit was initiated when officers attempted to stop a vehicle driven by a suspect who had just committed a murder. The suspect fled and officers pursued for a short distance before the vehicle turned onto a dead-end street and the suspect was apprehended without injury.

Use of Force Analysis

Police officers are occasionally required to use physical force against persons who have committed a crime in order to make an arrest or to protect the life or wellbeing of others. It is the policy of the Americus Police Department that the value of human life is immeasurable and that officers will use only that force necessary to protect life and effect lawful objectives.

Department records show that officers of the Americus Police Department answered and documented 35,752 calls for service in 2021, down 3.05% from the 36,842 documented calls for service answered in 2020 and down 26.48% from the 45,219 calls for service answered in 2019. In 2021, officers made 1147 arrests in 2021 which is up 19.73%, inconsistent with the slight decline in call volume but consistent with more proactive policing. Out of all these arrests, there were sixteen (16) Use of Force Reports submitted by officers. There were an additional ten (10) Use of Force reports documenting force used against aggressive animals or animals in suffering to be dispatched. This translates that the reportable Uses of Force in 2021 for a forcible arrest percentage was approximately 1.39%. The race and gender of the officers involved were consistent with the demographics of the department. Only four of these incidents resulted in minor injury or complaint of injury to the suspects arrested and two of the incidents resulted in minor injury to the arresting officer. One of the suspects required actual brief medical care and one was transported to the hospital for complaints. No actual hospitalization was required for either.

The Americus Police Department is governed by the United States Constitution, State law and department policy in its use of force to obtain lawful objectives. Officers are given extensive training in the use of force and are supplied with several options for dealing with a combative subject. Each time that force must be used by an officer, the officer must file a written report detailing the incident. These reports are reviewed by the Chief of Police and the department's Command Staff.



There are several different types of force which an officer may have to use in performing his or her duty. The type of force used by the officer is dictated primarily by the person with whom the officer is dealing. The first force option which officers may employ, aside from the officer's presence on the scene, is verbal. Officers of the Americus Police Department are trained in the proper way to use verbal commands and communication skills to convince a person to comply with the officer's requests. In most cases, verbal direction is all that is required by an officer to safely affect an arrest. If the officer is unable to verbally gain control of a suspect or if the suspect becomes violent toward the officer or toward others, officers are authorized to use other means to gain control of the suspect.

The next force option is empty hand physical control of a suspect. Officers are trained in a variety of tactics designed to allow the officer to gain physical control of a suspect offering resistance to the officer's attempt to make an arrest. In the event that an officer is unable to gain physical control of a suspect or if the suspect is violent and causing or threatening to cause harm to the officer or other persons, officers are authorized to use a variety of non-lethal devices to gain control of the violent suspect.

All sworn officers of the Americus Police Department are issued oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray. OC spray is a non-chemical natural agent made from the essence of cayenne or habanero pepper. The spray causes immediate irritation to the mucous membranes in the eyes, nose, mouth, and bronchial tubes of the person being sprayed. The initial effects of the spray last for 15 to 30 minutes with a burning sensation lasting for up to 60 minutes. The spray impairs the vision of the person sprayed and causes an intense burning sensation to the exposed skin and mucous membranes.

Officers are trained to provide a suspect with facilities to flush the affected areas with water as soon as possible after exposure. Normally, copious amounts of water and washing with non-oil-based soap are all that is required to counter the effects of the spray. Rarely is further treatment at a medical facility required. Officers are instructed during training to watch for respiratory distress or failure during transport of the suspect to the holding facility.

All sworn officers of the Americus Police Department are issued an expandable baton. The baton is designed as a defensive weapon to be used against a violent suspect. Officers are trained in the proper use of impact weapons and will only use impact weapons to counter a physical attack on the officer or on others by a suspect.

The police department utilizes Taser brand electronic incapacitation devices for use by sworn officers. Taser devices utilize compressed nitrogen to project two small probes up to 21 feet. These probes are connected to the Taser device by insulated wire. An electrical current is transmitted through the wires to where the probes make contact with the body or clothing, resulting in an immediate loss of the person's neuromuscular control and the ability to perform coordinated action for the duration of the impulse. Officers receive extensive training in the use of the device before the device is issued. The department has also implemented a clear and comprehensive policy which guides the use of the devices.

The final force option which officers may use is deadly force. The use of deadly force is strictly governed by both Georgia law and department policy. The Americus Police Department Use of Force Policy is as follows:

An officer may use lethal force only when the officer reasonably believes that the action is:

1. In defense of human life, including the officer's life or
2. In defense of any person in imminent danger of serious physical injury, or

3. When necessary to stop or prevent the commission of a forcible felony where the victim is in imminent danger of serious physical injury or death, or
4. In the apprehension of a fleeing felon, when:
 - a. The officer has probable cause to believe that a forcible felony has been committed and the person to be arrested has committed it, and
 - b. The officer has identified himself as a police officer and given notice of his/her intention to arrest (time and circumstances permitting), and
 - c. The officer reasonably believes that the suspect's freedom represents a significant imminent threat of serious physical injury or death to the officer or to other persons, and
 - d. All other reasonable means of apprehension have been exhausted or are precluded before lethal force is used. (Americus Police Department Standard Operating Procedures Manual)

Each time that an officer uses force to arrest a suspect, the officer must complete a Use of Force Report which is submitted to the Office of Professional Standards. Each report is reviewed by the Chief of Police and critiqued by the department's Command Staff.

Internal Affairs

It is the mission of the Americus Police Department to provide service to all citizens based on the foundations of honesty, integrity, and respect. To ensure that all employees maintain a culture of transparency and uphold our foundational values, the Americus Police Department treats all complaints against our employees seriously and all complaints made to the department are thoroughly investigated. To file a complaint, a person may contact any member of the Americus Police Department or come by the Public Safety Building at 119 S Lee Street to fill out a complaint form. The complaint form contains the name of the complainant, the name of the employee against whom the complaint is made, and a brief written summary of the complaint. Persons wishing to make a complaint against an employee are encouraged to make the complaint in person; however, the department will take complaints over the phone, through the internet, or by other means. Each formal complaint is assigned a tracking number and logged for follow up.

Internal affairs investigations may also be initiated at the request of the Chief of Police. Such investigations typically involve violations of department policy or situations involving one or more supervisors. Requests for consideration of a disciplinary action may also be assigned for investigation through the internal affairs function.

There were eight complaints made against a total of seven different officers. Two complaints were made against one officer in two separate events. Two other complaints were filed against a different officer of two separate events but were recognized as being linked as each complainant in both were father and son. Three other complaints were made against another single officer in three separate events that also involved the same complaints filed against two other officers who were also present in those events.

Control Number	Date	Nature of Complaint	Finding
2021IA0001	01/19/2021	Harassment	Sustained Other
2021IA0002	06/21/2021	Civil Rights Violation	Sustained Other
2021IA0003	06/25/2021	False Arrest, False Imprisonment	Unfounded
0211A0004	07/22/2021	Rudeness	Unfounded for 1 ofc. & Sustained Other for another
2021IA0005	08/12/2021	False Arrest	Sustained Other for 1 ofc. & Sustained Other for another
2021IA0006	10/09/2021	Rudeness/Civil Rights Violation	Exonerated
2021IA0007	10/18/2021	Rudeness	Exonerated
2021IA0008	11/01/2021	Harassment, Rudeness, Abusive Conduct	Exonerated

The remaining complaints were made by different citizens from the community. All the complaints received by the department were recorded and thoroughly investigated. All the complaints were resolved in some manner and the results were relayed to the original complainant by way of letter, in person meeting, or a phone contact except one for which there was no accurate contact information provided by the complainant.

Recruitment

Through our recruitment efforts, we had 34 people apply for the position of Police Officer during 2021. That is a 42% increase from the number of applications received in 2020. Out of those 34, we were able to hire seven candidates. The Americus Police Department has an ethnic composition that is 16 percentage points over the community demographics for Caucasians and 10 percentage points under the community demographics for African Americans. This is a recent reversal of the ethnic makeup of the department, which has been consistent over the past five years. Other ethnic groups, including Hispanics, comprise 11% of the service population, and comprise 5.4% of the department's sworn officers. The number of ethnic groups listed as Other in Americus rose significantly in the 2020 census data. Although the composition of the department is not an exact match with the community, it is much more representative than other departments in the Southeastern United States, according to statistics from the US Department of Justice.

One area of concern for this department and for police departments across the country continues to be the lack of female sworn employees and female applicants for employment. Based on current census estimates, females represent 51.5 % of the available workforce in the Albany Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Within the police department, however, females represent only 13.5% of the sworn ranks. Although this percentage is slightly better than the national average of 11.6% for female sworn officers, there is clearly room for improvement in our recruitment and employment efforts.

As of January of 2022, we have seven vacant positions for police officer (one of our current officers is on long term military leave). We have aggressively recruited applicants through advertisements and attendance at career fairs over the past year. The demographic composition of the applicants processed in 2021 and the demographic of the department are depicted in the following tables.

Recruitment Activities from January 1 to December 31, 2021

Race/Sex	Applications Received	Applicants Hired	Percent Hired	Percent of workforce
Caucasian/Male	15	3	20%	16%
Caucasian/Female	0	0		18%
African American/Male	8	3	37.5%	30.5%
African American/Female	6	1	16.7%	26.5%
Hispanic/Male	0	0		2%
Hispanic/Female	1	0	0%	2%
Other	0	0		5%
Total	34	7	20.6%	100%

Current Composition of Sworn Employees

	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Number on Staff	16	0	14	5	2	0	37
Percentage of Staff	43.2%	0%	37.9%	13.5%	5.4%	0%	100%

Department Profile Compared to 2020 Census			
	Black	White	Other
Department	51.4%	43.2%	5.4%
2020 Census	62%	27%	11%

Community Partners

The police department could not work in this community effectively without the cooperation and support of our community partners. It would be impossible to list all the groups and individuals that have given us support over the past year. One group, however, does deserve recognition for their major contributions to the agency.

The Smarr-Smith Foundation was incorporated in 2017 following the murders of Officers Nick Smarr and Jody Smith on December 7th, 2016. The foundation provides funding for scholarships at our two local colleges and also provides money to local law enforcement agencies for training and equipment. As of the end of 2021 the Foundation has given over \$34,000 in grants to local law enforcement agencies and given over \$7000 in scholarship funding to Georgia Southwestern State University and South Georgia Technical College.



Thanks to the generosity of the Smarr-Smith Foundation we were able to purchase new Tasers for all our patrol officers in 2019. This allowed us to make sure that all sworn personnel assigned to enforcement activities are equipped with this non-lethal force option. We also purchased First Aid/Trauma Kits for all our patrol units in 2019 and 2020.

Unfortunately, due to pandemic restrictions, the Annual Paint the Town Blue Gala had to be cancelled in 2020 and 2021. This is the primary fundraiser for the foundation and severely hampered the foundation's ability to provide scholarships to the colleges or grants to the local departments. Persons wishing to contribute to the foundation may do so through the web site:

<https://www.smarrsmithfoundation.com/>.

Donations can also be made continually each time you make a purchase on Amazon.com through Amazon Smile. By using Amazon Smile, a portion of every qualified purchase will go to the charity of your choice at no additional cost to you. For information on how to sign up, go to:



<https://www.aboutamazon.com/news/community/how-to-sign-up-for-amazonsmile>

Be sure to designate The Smarr Smith Foundation as your charity of choice.

Employee of the Year

Sgt. King Mitchell was selected as our Employee of the Year of the Year for 2021. He was recognized for his hard work by being selected as Employee of the Month in January of 2021 and again in September. Sgt. King is currently assigned to D Team with Lt. Tim Allen.

We Do Not Forget



Members of the Americus Police Department, Sumter County Sheriff’s Office, and the Georgia Southwestern State University Police Department partnered with the Taylor Family Foundation, Bennett Trucking and the Thunder for the Wreaths organization to sponsor a National Peace Officer Memorial Day Observation on May 15th, 2021. Thunder for the wreaths is a motorcycle and classic car event that raises money for the Wreaths Across America Program. They approached the Smarr Smith Foundation about incorporating Peace Officer Memorial Day into their awareness ride on May 15th. The event was held at the Sumter County Fairgrounds and was very well attended. Along with the bikes and classic cars, Bennett brought a trailer wrapped with graphics honoring law enforcement which was used as the backdrop for the wreath ceremony.



Public Safety Memorial

The City of Americus in partnership with the Americus Junior Service League designed and built a Public Safety Memorial in front of the Russell Thomas Public Safety Building. The monument commemorates all those public safety officers who have given their lives in service to their community and is dedicated to all the men and women of Sumter County who serve as Law Enforcement Officers, Firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians. It was dedicated on December 7th.

