Show Me the Money

For more than a year I’ve been working with the City Manager and his staff (and the occasional briefing to the Mayor and City Council) on what I call a “market adjustment”. Simply put - are we as competitive as we need to be to attract new officers and retain those we have?

Last fall, after much badgering from me as they could stand, the city finally began a market study of the other Valley agencies. It was an attempt to do an “apples to apples” comparison of pay and additional compensation benefits (shift differentials, longevity, CEP, court stand-by, etc), merit steps (and the time it takes to advance through them).

What they found was something we already knew; you can’t really do an “apples to apples” with other agencies. You can compare apples, but we have much more money than just apples. But enough about the fruit.

“but what’s really deplorable is our starting salary. It is the lowest – that’s – “the lowest” of any agency in the valley.”

It’s true, there are a few other agencies in the valley that have a higher top step than we do. That’s bad enough, but what’s really deplorable is our starting salary. It is the lowest – that’s – “the lowest” of any agency in the valley.

To accomplish this, I have worked with city hall and convinced them that Phoenix needs to begin offering a “hiring bonus” program to compete with the many valley agencies that already do. Some agencies throw money haphazardly at recruits with no guarantee that the new officer will be successful. Then they can’t recover the funds when the new officer fails to make probation.

Our program is designed to attract new candidates with a $1000 ‘graduation’ bonus (some agencies offer as much as $5K) and then another $1K when probation is completed (not at the end of PT0). This, coupled with starting a new officer at merit step 3 and graduation (up from step 2) will mean our “starting” salary would be about fourth (out of 13) instead of last. It’s a start in the right direction and the city is willing to begin this in mid-contract (July).

No officer currently on the job will be “passed” by any new officer. Provisions are in the plan to prevent this from happening. But this only addresses recruitment. What about those already “on the job”?

As important as the “top end” is, we know we have many more opportunities to increase our compensation though CEP, court, court stand-by, shift differential, weekend shift differential, or the advantage of a city vehicle if you work a particular detail. Each assignment has its own unique opportunities for additional earnings. It is the primary reason we bring in almost five times the laterals than we lose. You may know officers from other agencies that will tell you how much they wish they had our CEP.

Another huge benefit for our officers is our ability to select the ‘vacation buy-back’ and ‘sick leave as salary’. No other department offers this opportunity to those nearing DROP to increase their pensionable income through this voluntary program.

These are all important negotiable benefits. But I believe over the last few years our ‘additional compensation benefits’ have not been enough to keep us ‘competitive’ with agencies that advertise the slightly higher ‘hourly’ rate. Not every potential new officer looks at the ‘bottom line’ budget. It’s where the second part of my argument to the city comes in.

If the hiring bonus program will get them in the door – let’s make sure we can keep them. I’m working on additional compensation for those of us who are already here and doing the job. Let’s not disrespect our hard working cops by only focusing on recruiting the new guy. This is a much tougher fight but they’re listening. I believe we can be successful - but understand this, at no time in our 2 year history have we been granted additional compensation in mid-contract. The value of these productive working relations has been beneficial. Stay tuned.

Briggs / Scott Memorial

We all owe Scott Sayban (and his wife Jodi) a huge thank you for his involvement in this year Briggs / Scott Memorial Golf Tournament. With less than 3 months to go before the tournament Scott stepped up and helped organize a group of additional volunteers to make this the best tournament we’ve ever had.

During the seven years Scott Sayban has been the tournament chair taking over the duties from Dennis Neibich and Dick Voot the Briggs / Scott Memorial has raised over $95,000 for TAPS. That’s close to 20% of the total TAPS assets!

I know I speak for all the golfers as well as those who have helped out over the years in offering Scott and his very understanding wife Jodi, our sincere thanks for being involved once again.
Procedures for City Overtime while Working Off-Duty

By William Batzdorf

Recently, Maryvale precinct began a pilot program reference vouchers for prisoners of off-duty employees. During the pilot program the on-duty unit would wagon the prisoner to the precinct and the off-duty employee would follow in their personal vehicle. The off-duty employee would then complete the necessary ACDC booking and wait for a wagon to transport the prisoner to the jail. The off-duty unit would then go back to their off-duty job.

Effective immediate this program will go citywide on a case-by-case basis. The following procedure will apply:

1. First, the off-duty employee will ask for a wagon over the radio.
2. When the on-duty unit arrives they will inform the off-duty employee if they will do all the booking paperwork or if the off-duty employee will need to follow them to the precinct and complete ACDC booking.
3. If the off-duty unit is required to go to the precinct he will advise the supervisor for approval. The on-duty supervisor will determine if the off-duty employee will be required to go to the precinct to do the paperwork or if his on-duty unit can do the booking.
4. After obtaining supervisor approval, the off-duty employee will be placed on an “on-duty” status. They need to clock out of their off-duty job and inform their employer that they are going to the precinct. (The off-duty employee will stay logged into their off-duty job at the precinct. They are unable to change hours once you log in.)

The officer will go to the precinct and complete the ACDC booking paperwork and wait for a wagon to transport the prisoner to the jail.

At the conclusion, the officer will go back to their off-duty job.

Per the current MOU, the off-duty employees will be paid three hours of overtime. Operations Orders 5.1.14.11.3 states “officers will not be entitled to concurrent compensation from the off-duty employee while on-duty status.” This means you cannot clock back into your off-duty employer until the end of the three hours. For example, if while working Food City from 1700 – 2000 hours you get placed on an on-duty status at 1800 hours and you return to the food city at 2000 hours (all 10:31 is done at precinct) you cannot clock back into Food City until 2000 hours. Your time sheet for the day would be 1700 – 1800 hours Food City, 1800 – 2000 hours city overtime, 2100 – 2300 hours Food City. Employees should err on the side of caution and avoid giving any perception of dual-compensation from both the city and your off-duty employer.

The off-duty employee will complete an overtime slip and send it up through their chain of command. They will list the approving supervisor’s name on the overtime slip.

Any questions regarding this policy can be directed to the Off-Duty Work Detail at 602-262-7323.

Personal Insurance
- Homeowners
- Auto
- Life
- Yacht/Boat
- Umbrella

Business Insurance
- Business Auto
- Umbrella
- D&O Liability

Bonds
- Fidelity and Surety Bonds

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I have tried to figure out a way to thank everyone for what they are doing and have done for Brian and our family. There are no words that can express the way everyone has made us feel. People that I have never met call me to see if there is anything that we need or if there is anything they can do for us. The generosity of everyone has just been overwhelming. It has been truly amazing, the way that everyone has been supporting us, and most have never met Brian. PLEASE know that everything that has been done for Brian and our family is very much appreciated. If there is ANYTHING that we can do for anyone else, please do not hesitate to let us know. Please keep us in your prayers.

Sincerely,
Jacque Howe
(Wife of Officer Brian Howe)

Welcome
NEW MEMBERS

Daniel Abril
James Blanco
Eric Boardman
Edward Carmos
Vincent Cole
Andrea Cowperthwait
Weston Elliott
Angelique Estrada
Philip Golt
Rachel Granzow
Scott Holloway
Mark Holtzen
Billy H. Honneycutt II
Benjamin Ippel
Charles Kirdland
Raymond Lashley
Gregory Lavelle
Brad Lorenz
Mustafa Masad
Ginger Mathery

Quentin Maxey
Robert Murphy
Matt Neuhaus
Samantha Pimentel
Juan Polend
Timothy Reese
Kristyna Robinson
Rudy Romero
Erick Slevius
Dale Starr
Timothy Sullivan
Bryan Tamaray
Jeffrey Tobey
Daniel Tomco
Joseph Villarreal
Alejandro Villavicencio
Paul Vogler
Dustin Watts
Timothy Wheeler
Scott Womack

LA Fitness
$59.00 Registration Fee ($49 discount regularly)
$24.99 per month Multi-Club
Additional family members: $49.00 Registration Fee $24.99 per month
Call Aaron King 480-238-4600. PLEA contact person!

Wetarpark tickets now on sale at the PLEA Office, Parks open Memorial Day weekend thru Labor Day: $17 Adult/Child. Members can also purchase single day tickets, season passes and Goldad activities at discounted prices thru a link on PLEA’s website, www.arplea.com

Mark your day planner and attend the membership meetings on the last Tuesday of every month at 7:30, 12:30, and 5:30. Ballots counted at 5:30 meeting.
Chicken Shot

If it wasn’t so funny I would cry.

You can never find a witness when you need one.

Ever wonder why crimes don’t get solved; well it’s because no one wants to be a witness or if you are in the hood a “snitch”. Recent news story about Rapp star Cam’ron that he would not tell the police if he knew that he was living next door to a serial killer is just an example. He did say he would move, but he wouldn’t tell on his friend. Good to know if you live next to Cam’ron.

But this kind of thinking goes on right here in the Valley of the Sun. It seems that officers went out on a call of “shots fired”. When they got there a number of Parks Department employees were standing near a body. Sounds like the callers were Parks Department employees, but the problem was the number of employees; seems that only a couple of them found the body. Then they called some others over and then they called a supervisor over. After the supervisor showed up someone asked if the police had been called. The answer was no, so they did finally call 911. Why the delay?

Well according to the employee, it is work (Parks?) policy to notify the supervisor responsible for the park concerning anything in the park. I guess a body would fall under the “anything in the park”.

I guess that calling your supervisor is necessary before calling police or fire if something happens in the parks. It isn’t a lack of phone in this case, just a policy to call a supervisor before doing anything. If that is truly the policy, maybe it should be revised.

Law Offices Of Michael Napier, P.C.

Michael Napier has been representing Phoenix officers for over 30 years. Mr. Napier is one of the most experienced labor and personal injury attorneys in Arizona. Mr. Napier has represented hundreds of officers before administrative bodies throughout Arizona, and has assisted critically injured officers and the survivors of officers in obtaining compensation for their injuries and losses.

Janet Feltz has been an attorney for over 21 years. Most recently, Ms. Feltz has been administrative hearing officer in discipline hearings and other employment matters before boards and commissions.

Anthony Cook has focused his practice primarily on personal injury and wrongful death lawsuits in which he has served as plaintiff’s counsel. He has experience in cases dealing with product liability, negligence, government claims and dram shop liability, to name a few.

In addition to the full services provided to PLEA members to protect their careers, the law Offices of Michael Napier, P.C. provide the following:

- Personal injury recovery (on or off duty) experienced representation at a reduced fee;
- Reduced fees for matters not covered by the PLEA legal plan;
- Free prelude to officer’s estate plan for line-of-duty deaths;
- Free consultations to members on any matter; and
- Referrals to attorneys or specialists for matters not handled by our firm.

2525 E. Arctic, 80th Floor • Suite 130
Phoenix, AZ 85016
(602) 248-9247 • www.napierlawfirm.com

Act now. Control your legacy

Sometimes, things don’t go as planned. That’s why naming a beneficiary to your DCP 457 and/or 401(a) account is a must. Whether you’re participating in the city’s 457 Deferred Compensation Plan, the 401(a) Plan, or if you’re an active employee who is only contributing to either Plan through Fringe (City) Contributions, having one means that you control who receives your benefit if you die before your account is paid out.

Note the following:
- Beneficiary Forms submitted prior to 2004 are not on file with Nationwide

- The Deferred Compensation Beneficiary Form is separate from any beneficiary designation forms you have completed for the city’s pension and life insurance programs.
- If you’re not sure if you have named a beneficiary, refer to the last page of your latest account statement, or call our local office at 1.800.891.AZ (4749) to confirm your beneficiary information or request a Beneficiary Form. You may also access a Beneficiary Form on the Plan website at www PhoenixDcp.com. Just click on “Plan Details and Forms” from the Employee Services page, and select “City of Phoenix Plan Forms” to print a copy of the Beneficiary Designation Form.
- If you don’t have a beneficiary on file, notification will be printed on your quarterly statements beginning with the Fourth quarter 2005 statement that will be mailed in January, 2007.

A portion of the proceeds will benefit officer Brian Howe.
INJURED! PINNACLE RISK ADDS INSULT TO INJURY!

By Jay Lucero

You are a Phoenix police officer. You have dedicated your life to protect and to serve. The department says they value you and appreciate your service. We are considered a family; aren’t we? I am confused then as to why the City would hire a company like Pinnacle Risk Management to represent them. If you are injured in the line of duty, you are forced to deal with Pinnacle Risk.

If your injury involves media attention maybe you have had better luck. Those of us who have sustained injuries in the line of duty, but with no media attention, have not been so lucky. I sustained a shoulder injury in the line of duty in 1995. I have had several surgeries since. In December of 2006, I re-injured my shoulder. I have been dealing with Pinnacle ever since. I returned to my doctor who had done the previous surgeries. He is one of the top orthopedic doctors in the state and treats numerous officers. Pinnacle sends you to their so called independent doctor, who is paid by Pinnacle Risk, to evaluate your injury because the word of your doctor is not good enough.

This company takes pride in denying claims. They do not return phone calls. They do not answer questions. They are rude and completely unprofessional. Your claim gets bounced around from one adjuster to the next and depending on who you talk to, you get a different answer.

Officer’s claims have been denied without ever being looked at by a doctor. When you are seen to a doctor, it is one that is paid to say what Pinnacle wants them to say. This company told one officer that she had to see the doctor that they wanted her to see, which is a complete lie. This officer had to call the Industrial Commission to be told that she could see the doctor of her choice. They tried to tell my doctor’s office that I had to have a test done by someone of their choosing, which, again, is a lie.

Officers are having to wait on average 4-plus months to get some sort of answer as to whether their claim is accepted or denied. This is ridiculous! Officers are having to hire and pay to attorneys just to get treatment and force Pinnacle to do what is right.

A 26-year veteran of this department had to have her private insurance company pay for her surgery because Pinnacle Risk continued to drag her case out to the point that this officer was afraid of losing her position. Eventually, her insurance company was reimbursed and her sick time restored. Why would the City stand by and allow this to happen? We should not have to live in pain for months until Pinnacle is trying to figure out a way of getting out of the claim.

I have not spoken to one officer that has had a good experience with this company and the complaints are all the same. One officer grew tired of fighting with Pinnacle and gave up. Because of this, an injury that should be Industrial is not. Another officer is not even sure if his claim is open or closed because he cannot get anyone from Pinnacle Risk to call him. Another officer had to have an attorney call Pinnacle because they were dragging out the process. Only after the attorney called was the claim expedited.

At this time, I am still awaiting surgery even though there is no dispute that my injury is Industrial. I believe that this company wants officers to get so frustrated that they just give up or use their private insurance company to pay. This is wrong and completely unacceptable. Pinnacle Risk is not held accountable for their actions or mistreatment of officers.

The City hired this company and, in my opinion, could dictate how Pinnacle Risk treats officers, however, the City does not. This company has been allowed to continue to treat officers in an unfair and despicable manner and take pride in how many valid claims they can deny or pay off on someone else.

The fact that the City hired this company to represent them is completely stupid. It is time Pinnacle Risk is held accountable for their actions. It is time the City steps up and demands that their officers are given the treatment and respect they deserve.

When officer is injured in the line of duty, we deserve proper medical care in a timely manner. We deserve better than Pinnacle Risk Management.

National Law Enforcement Museum

In July of 2004 PLEA members made the first of five $20,000 donations to help build the National Law Enforcement Museum. The federal government donated the land across the street from the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial a few years earlier for the site of the most comprehensive law enforcement museum in the nation.

Although the funds donated the land, they could not supply any money. Therefore, this $80 million project is being funded by public and private donations. PLEA was the second police union in the country to step up and commit financial assistance to this worthwhile project.

The article I wrote in May of ’04 announcing our $100,000 total donation has been reprinted in the information packets sent to police unions around the country. Other unions have used the article to assist their members in understanding the importance of this project and what it means to be involved.

The Museum project is trying to raise about $9 Million from law enforcement unions and the remainder from public donations and private corporations. Motorola is a primary sponsor with a $3 million donation. There are several other corporations committed to $1 million each.

Our commitment comes in the form of a once-a-year $10 special assessment to each dues. We do this each July and it comes out of our largest check of the year, the “uniform check”. Next month will be our fourth of five installments. The dues return to normal in August.

In 2004 our individual $10 donation was the average equivalent of one minute of pay for each of the 27 officers we had lost in the line of duty. But since then our losses have increased. Today, that same $10 equates to about 49 seconds per pay for each officer we’ve lost in the line of duty. Forty-nine seconds of pay for each of the more than thirty brother officers that has gone before their time. Small price for such a large loss don’t you think?

Grand Canyon University
Public Safety Programs

Helping you advance your careers

- The Bachelor of Science in Public Safety Administration program provides courses for adult students engaged in public-safety employment who desire to obtain new information, advance their careers, and increase their earning power. The program highlights the application of research methodology; the utilization of communication skills at the personal, professional, and public level; and the development of professional skills and knowledge in the field of public safety.

- The Master of Science in Leadership with an Emphasis in Disaster Preparedness and Crisis Management will provide courses in the areas of occupational health and safety, disaster preparation and crisis management, and environmental issues directly related to leadership skills development and content required of leaders in the area of emergency public safety and response.

Both programs can be completed in as little as 20 months. These programs can be offered in the cohort setting and usually at your location, one night a week. Both degrees can also be taken online.

If pursuing our Bachelors in Public Safety program, up to 18 transfer credits can be applied for training taken related to your job.

Lastly, we offer the Hero Scholarship of $1,000 for police officers and firefighters.

We will be at your site conducting information sessions on the following days and times: Tuesday, July 10 and Thursday, July 19, at 10 am and 3 pm.

For More Information Contact:
Mike Kozel
602-639-6853
mkozel@gcu.edu