

Meekeer County Sheriff's Office

2020 Activity Report



Mission Statement

To provide high quality professional services with honor, integrity and courage. These services shall preserve the peace and safeguard the lives and property of all Meekeer County residents through a proactive partnership with the community and our public safety partners.

Table of Contents

Sheriff Preface.....	1
Dispatching Services.....	3
Countywide Emergency Response Units.....	12
CodeRed.....	13
Patrol Services.....	13
Meeker County Contract Deputies.....	18
K-9 Services.....	20
Kandiyohi -Meeker SWAT.....	21
Meeker Safe Roads Coalition.....	22
Mental Health Response.....	23
Snowmobile/Boat and Water/ ATV/OHV Grants.....	23
Investigations.....	25
Drug and Gang Investigations.....	26
D.A.R.E.....	27
Training.....	28
Community Engagement.....	29
Jail.....	30
Court Security.....	34
Civil Process.....	34
Drug Take Back Program.....	36
Gun Permits.....	37
Emergency Management.....	38
Budget.....	39

Sheriff Preface

The 2020 year-end report is part of a continued effort to provide information to the public about your Meeker County Sheriff's Office. You will find statistical information relating to calls for service along with information on the different aspects of this office.

2020 was a challenging year as COVID had a major impact on our office. We have a great staff that stepped up to that challenge. Everything from dispatchers asking additional information of callers, to deputies determining how to safely handle public interactions, to office staff learning new ways to handle data and permitting requests, to jail staff dealing with quarantine and segregation of new inmates. Everyone in this office stepped up and handled the challenges safely and professionally. Emergency Management is a division of the Sheriff's Office and while this was a Public Health emergency, Emergency Management is the conduit for resources needed to address this crisis. Our Emergency Management Director has been on the front end of this crisis since the beginning and has done a fantastic job coordinating and working with many agencies on our COVID response.

While our overall numbers and calls for service were down because of COVID, we did see an increase in specific areas including pursuits, vehicle thefts, disturbances, mental health and criminal sexual conduct cases. We also saw a marked increase in drug related activity. The CEE-VI Drug Task Force did a phenomenal job this year in Meeker County. Not only were arrests up but we saw record methamphetamine seizures. Over 18 pounds of methamphetamine were taken off Meeker County streets in 2020. To put that in perspective that is over 3/4 of million dollars street value and enough for everyone in Meeker County to get high a couple times over.

With a marked increase in Mental Health related calls, we have partnered with Meeker County Social Services and Woodland Centers to better approach these situations. This includes on scene telecommunications with a mental health provider and a dedicated social worker for our jail. We recognize that while we are on the front lines, we are not the proper resource for the situation, so we are making efforts to ensure those in mental health crisis are provided the proper resource as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Although COVID has been a challenge, it also has afforded us opportunities that we would normally not see. Through CARES Act funding, the Sheriff's Office was able to obtain a Mobile Command Unit to be used during this pandemic and beyond. We were also able to acquire Ultra Violet cleaning devices for use in the jail to help mitigate the spread of COVID among inmates and staff.

In 2020 the Sheriff's Office began the final phase of a new software for Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD), Records Management System (RMS) and Jail Management System (JMS). This new software encompasses all aspects of the Sheriff's Office with a more user-friendly approach, enhancing productivity and information sharing.

We also reinstated our K-9 program with the purchase of a purebred German Sheppard in 2020. Our D.A.R.E. students proudly named him Chase. Chase is certified as a patrol and narcotics detection dog and will enhance our public safety efforts.

Another new venture for the Sheriff's Office is a mutual aid agreement with the Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office SWAT team. While Meeker County does not have the call load and resources for an independent team, we have a need. By partnering with the Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office, we can address that need with minimal cost. This is a tremendous tool that will enhance public safety for us.

Due to COVID, we were unable to fulfill our pledge of Community Engagement in 2020. We were, however, encouraged by the show of public support in 2020. This included a Defend Police fundraising campaign that raised nearly \$3,500 for our associations. These funds will be used for youth programs in our community. I truly appreciate the local support we have and I can't thank the public enough.



Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brian Cruze".

Brian Cruze
Meeker County Sheriff

Meeker County Sheriff's Office

326 N Ramsey Avenue
Litchfield, MN 55355

Dispatch	320-693-5400
Toll Free	866-333-3366
Jail	320-693-5415
Records	320-639-5414
Confidential Tip Line	320-693-5411
Watkins Station Office	320-764-6792

Website and Social Media

Website: <http://www.co.meeker.mn.us/217/Sheriff>



Twitter [@MeekerCoSheriff](https://twitter.com/MeekerCoSheriff)
Facebook at [Office of the Meeker County Sheriff](https://www.facebook.com/OfficeoftheMeekerCountySheriff)



Dispatching Services



The Meeker County Sheriff's Office Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) is responsible for handling all emergency and non-emergency calls for all agencies in Meeker County. The dispatcher is then responsible for assigning and dispatching the appropriate emergency responders to the reported incident.

The Meeker County PSAP received 6,262 911 calls in 2020. This represents a 5% increase in 911 calls over 2019. The vast majority of 911 calls received are by wireless sources. The Meeker County PSAP received 22,660 administrative calls in 2020. This was a decrease from 2019 of 4.5% which was directly related to COVID. In 2020, our dispatchers fielded 28,922 calls. This is an average of 79 calls per day and does not include outbound calls or 911 rebid calls. A rebid is a term used when we attempt to get a better location on a cellular 911 call.

The Meeker County PSAP generated a total of 14,070 calls for service for all law enforcement and emergency services units in Meeker County. This represents a 25% decrease from 2019. The Meeker County Sheriff's Office calls for service for 2020 were 7,422 which represents a 12.6% decrease from 2019. When we look at the call loads by month, these decreases correspond with the initial COVID lockdowns in 2019. During the summer months of 2020, our call loads started returning to normal levels.

The Meeker County PSAP continues to use a regional approach to answering text-to-911 calls. Our text-to-911 calls are sent to another county who in turn relays that information to our dispatch center to be handled accordingly.

With the installation of new software in 2017, we continue our transition to Next Generation (NG) 911. In 2021 we will add the technology to take Text-to-911 calls in our PSAP center. As NG911 moves forward our goal is to improve our ability to manage, locate and transfer calls better to enhance public safety. It will also provide opportunities to utilize technology and receive on scene pictures and video that can be provided to responding emergency units.



TEXT-TO-911

CALL if you can

Text if you **CAN'T**

ABOUT TEXT-TO-911

- Text-to-911 is now available throughout Minnesota. The service was deployed in December 2017.
- Text-to-911 can be the first contact option for individuals who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing or those with speech impairments.
- Text-to-911 should only be used when a person can't safely make a voice call.

Examples:

- When someone must stay quiet to remain safe.
- If peer pressure is strong.
- Text-to-911 is a discreet way to report domestic violence, home invasions, human trafficking, and suicidal individuals.

HOW TO TEXT 911

1. Enter the numbers 911 in the "To" field.
2. Text your exact location and type of emergency.
3. Send the message.
4. Promptly answer questions and follow instructions.

TIPS: Use simple words. Do not use abbreviations, emoji's, pictures or slang (BRB, IDK, THX, 2day and BTW). Do not text and drive!

Texting 911 with a false report is a crime. If you accidentally send a text to 911, send another text, or call 911 to let the dispatcher know that there is no emergency.

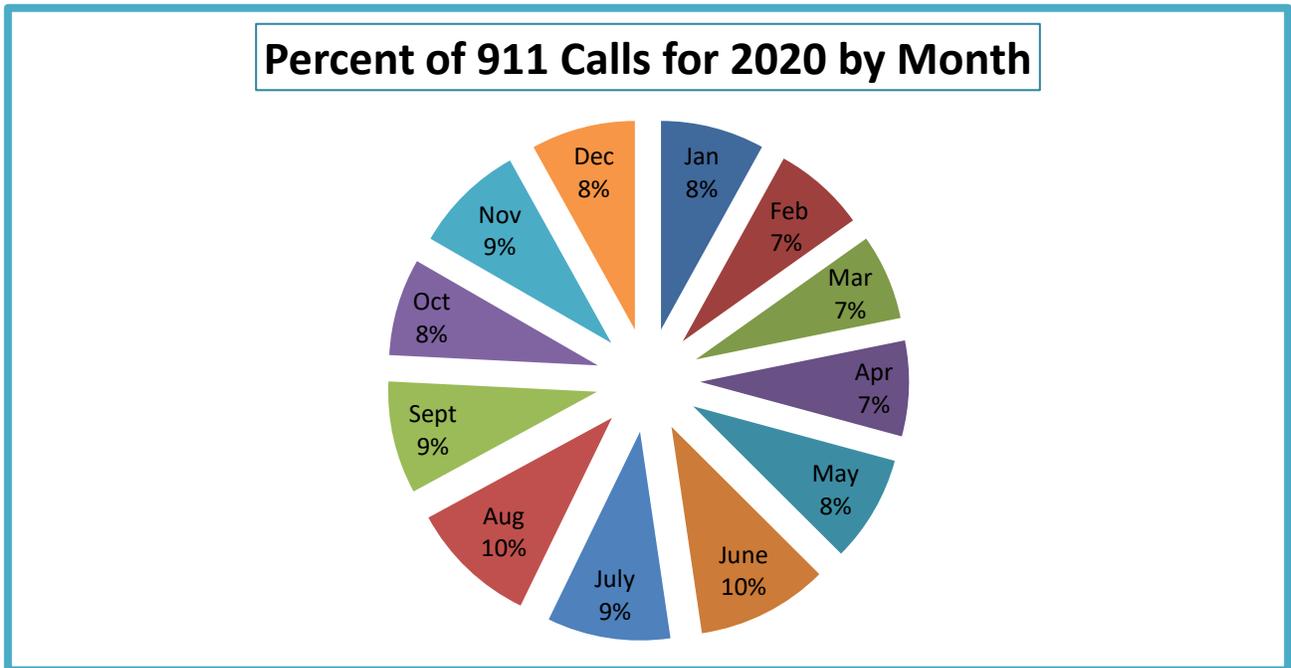
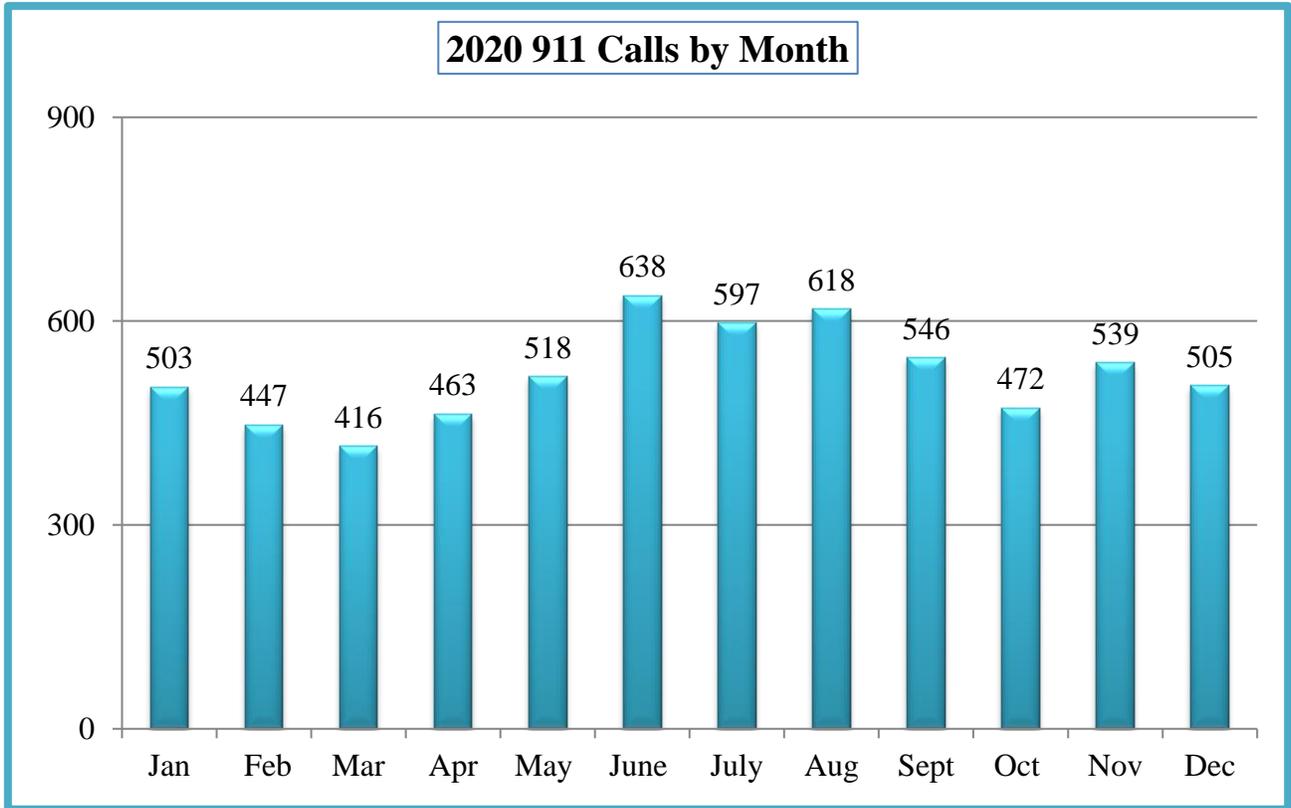
DID YOU KNOW?

Emergency response may be lengthened due to the time it takes for a text to 911 to be typed and sent. Delivery speed is not guaranteed.

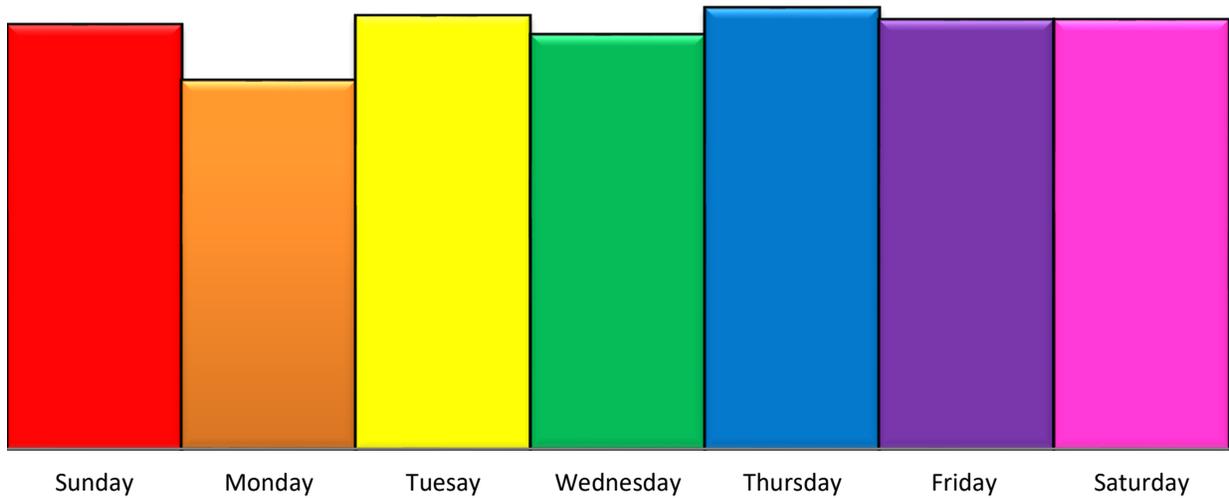
- Dispatchers prefer calls so they can get cues from background noise and voice inflections.
- If you text to 911, dispatchers will ask if they can call you.
- Location is not as accurate with text as it is with a call. Be sure to text your exact address.
- A text or data plan is required to use Text-to-911.
- Texts to 911 will get a bounce back message if you are roaming.
- Texts to 911 have a 160 character limit, can get out of order, or may not be received.
- There is no language translation service for texts to 911.



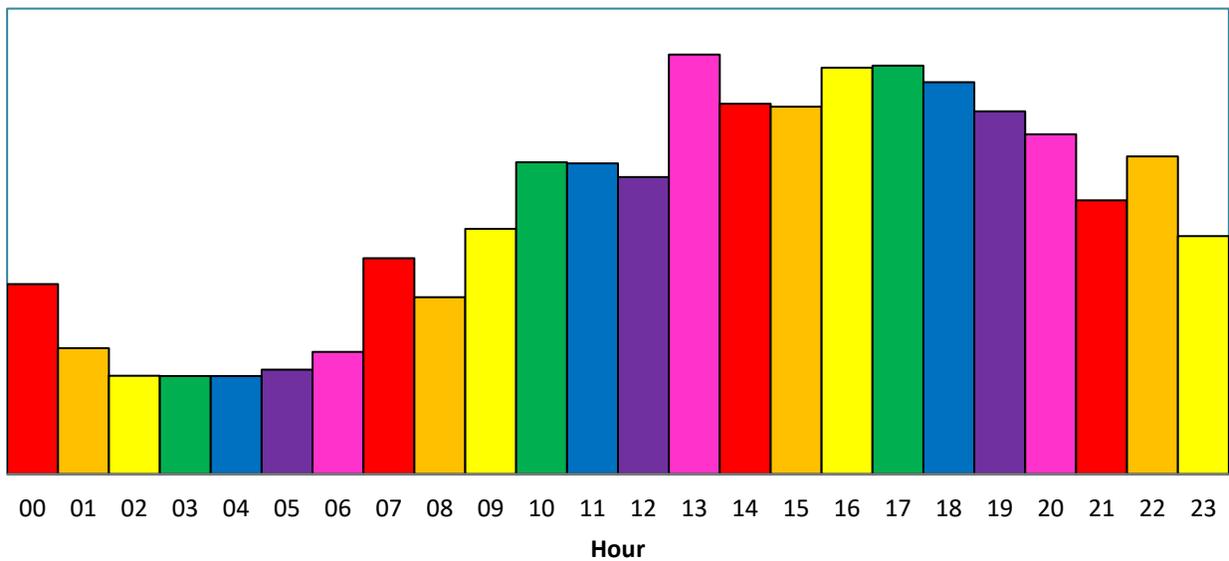
2020 - 911 calls for Meeker County: 6,262



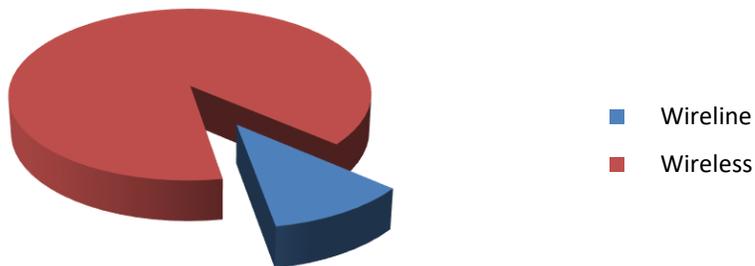
911 Call Volume by Day of Week Report Period 1/1/20 - 12/31/20



911 Call Volume by Hour of Day Report Period 1/1/20- 12/31/20



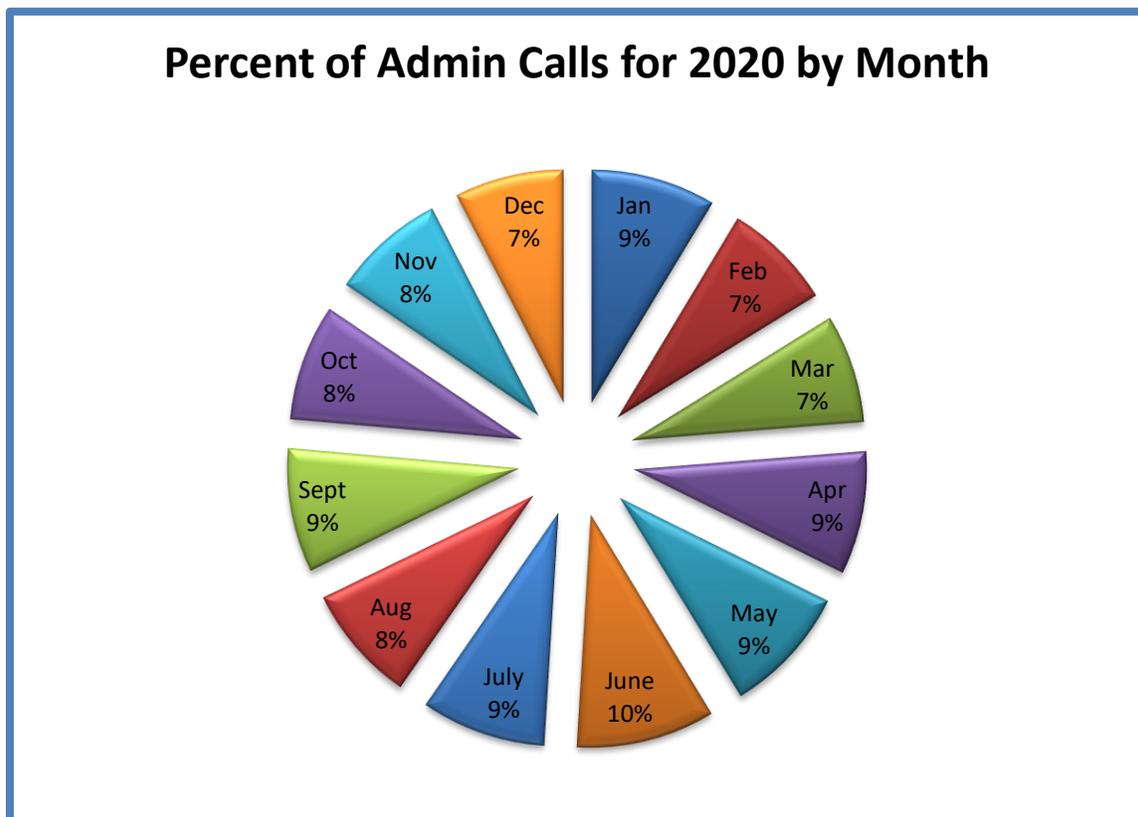
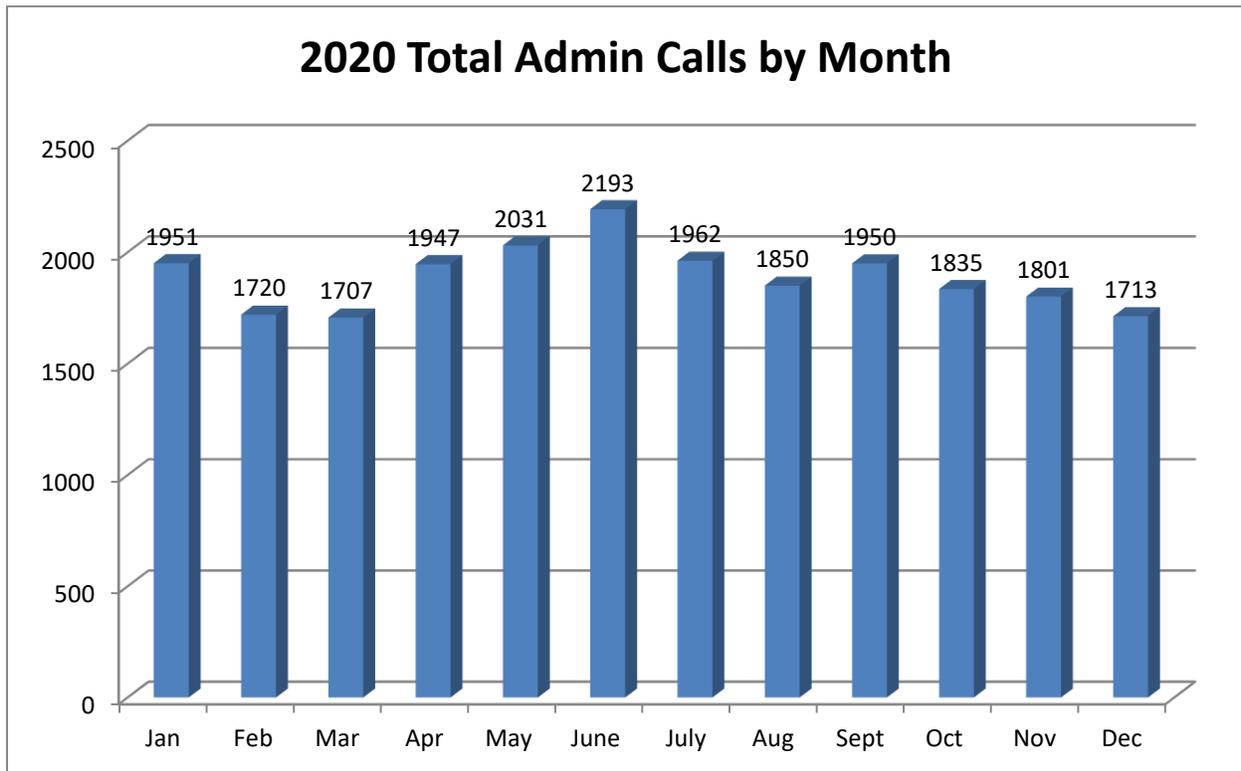
911 Calls by Cell Phone/Land Line Report Period 1/1/20 - 12/31/20



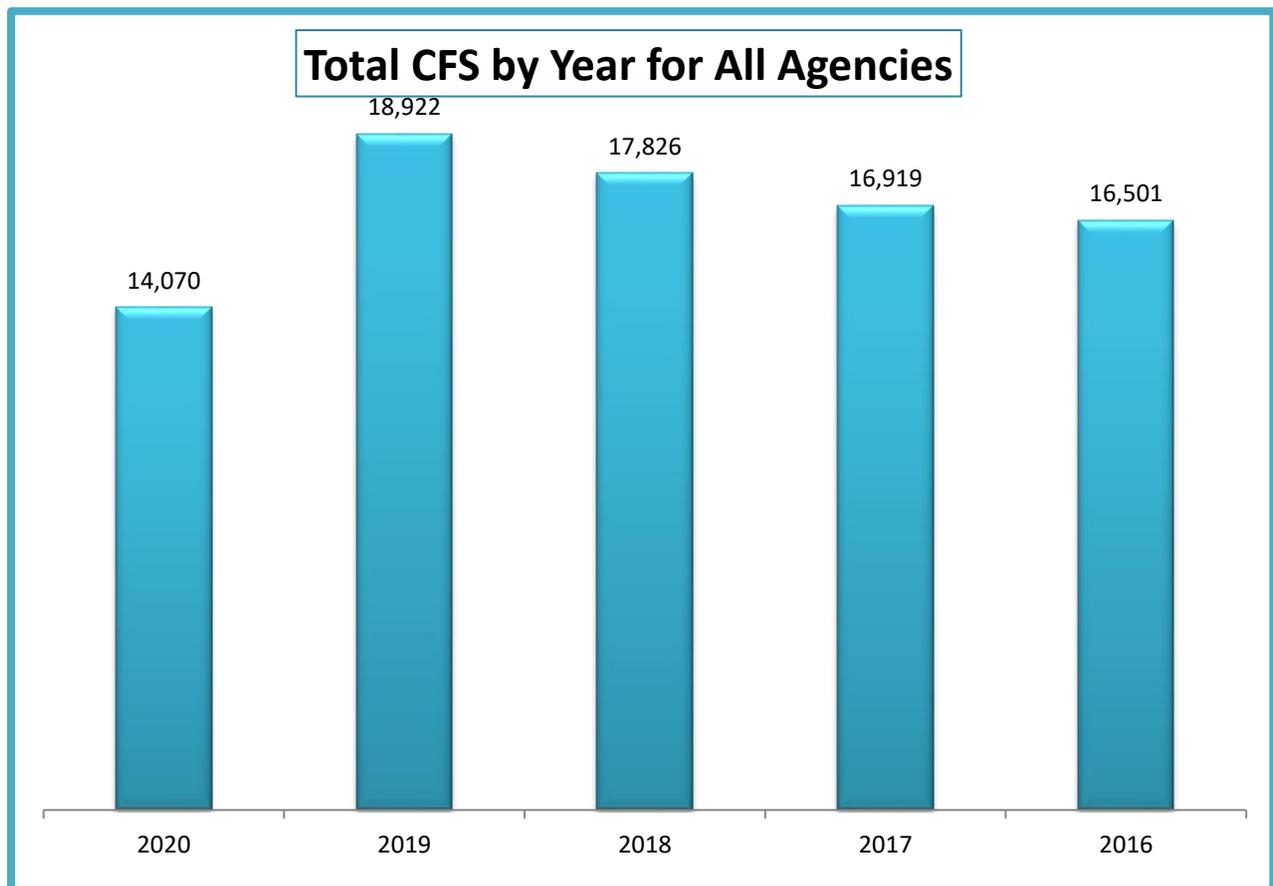
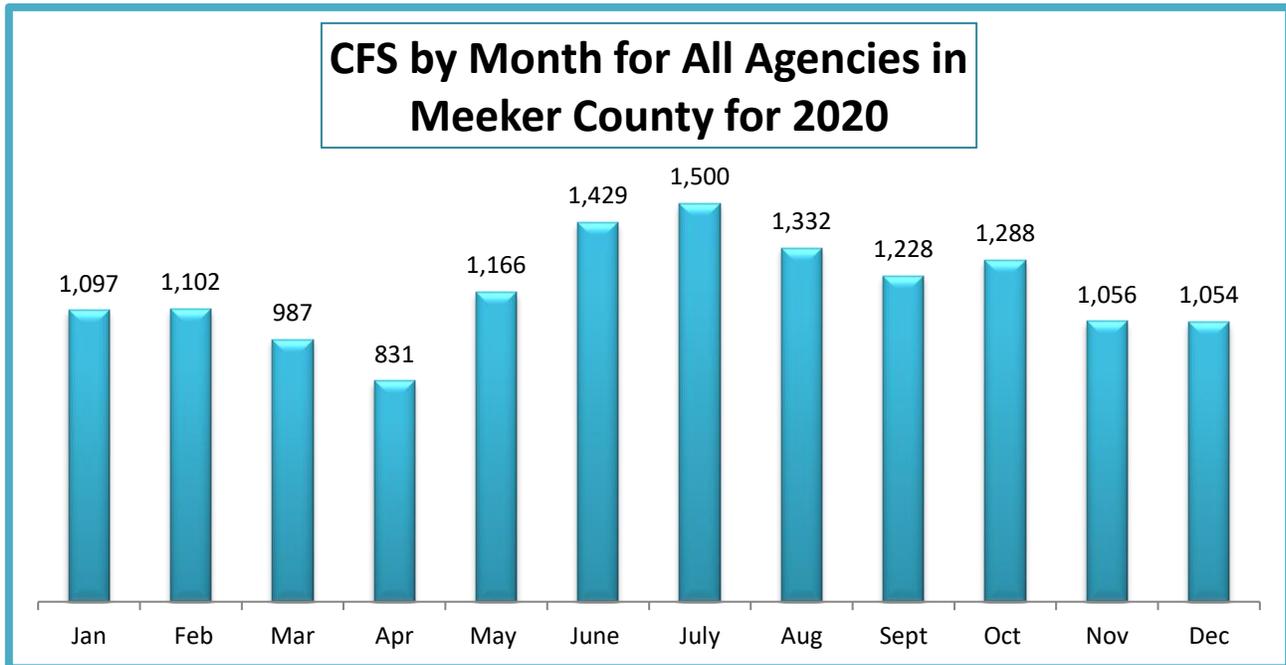
Type	Total	Percentage
■ Wireline	695	11.10
■ Wireless	5567	88.90
Total:	6262	100%

When we receive a cellular 911 call, we are set up to receive identifying information, to include locations, with those calls. There are times where we don't initially receive all of that information so we "re-bid" the call in an effort to get this information from the cellular provider. In 2020 our dispatch center re-bid 911 wireless calls 15,361 times.

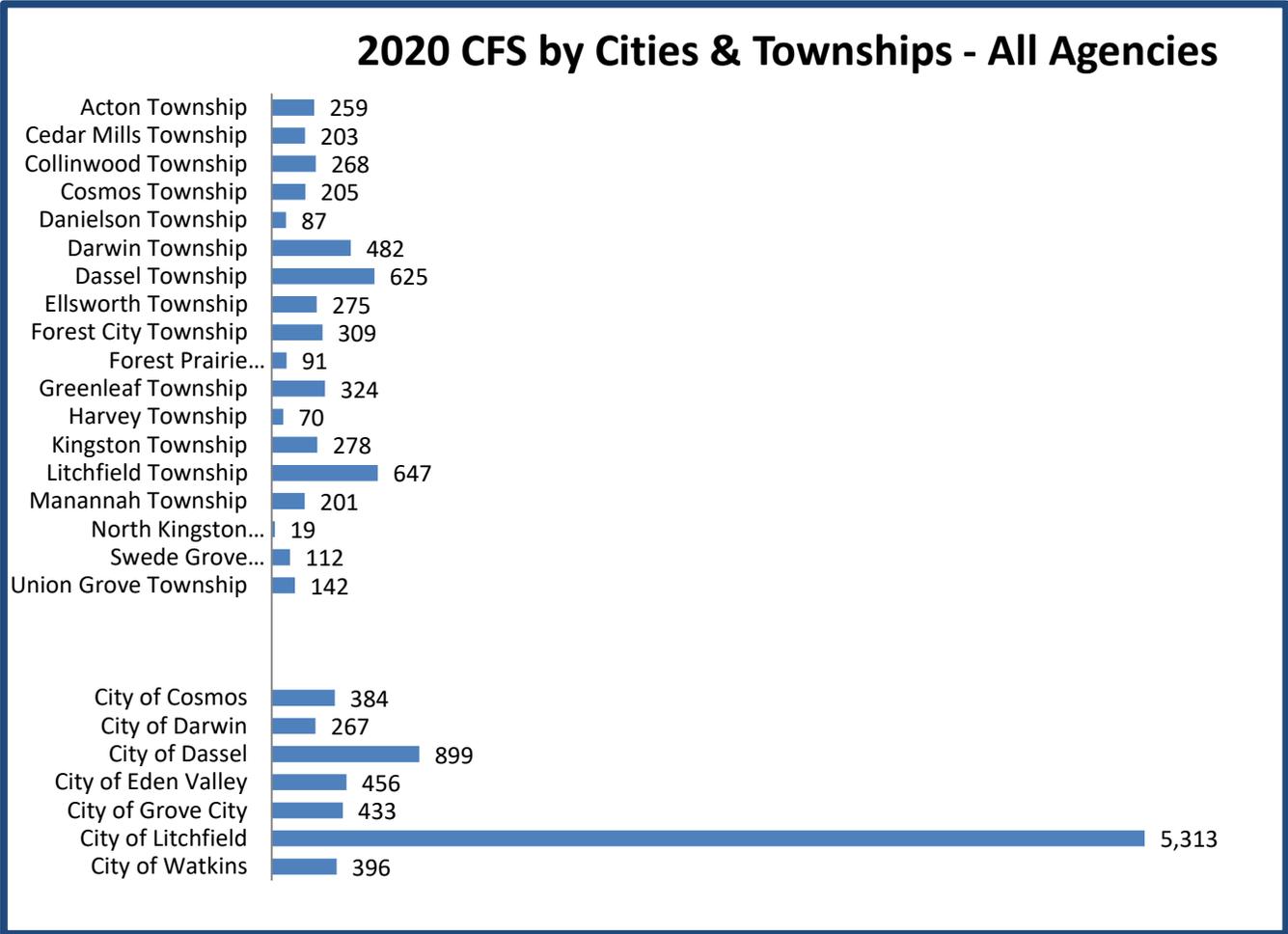
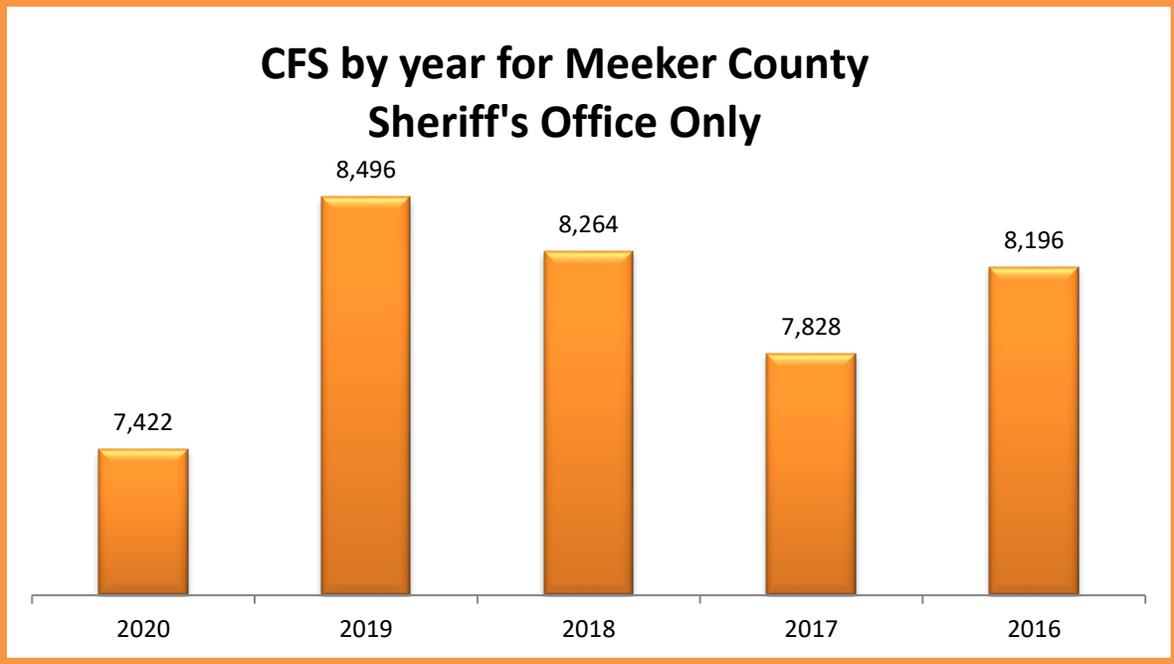
2020 Total Administrative calls for Meeker County: 22,660



2020 Total Calls for Service (CFS) for All Agencies in Meeker County: 14,070



2020 Total Calls for Service for Meeker County Sheriff's Office only: 7,422

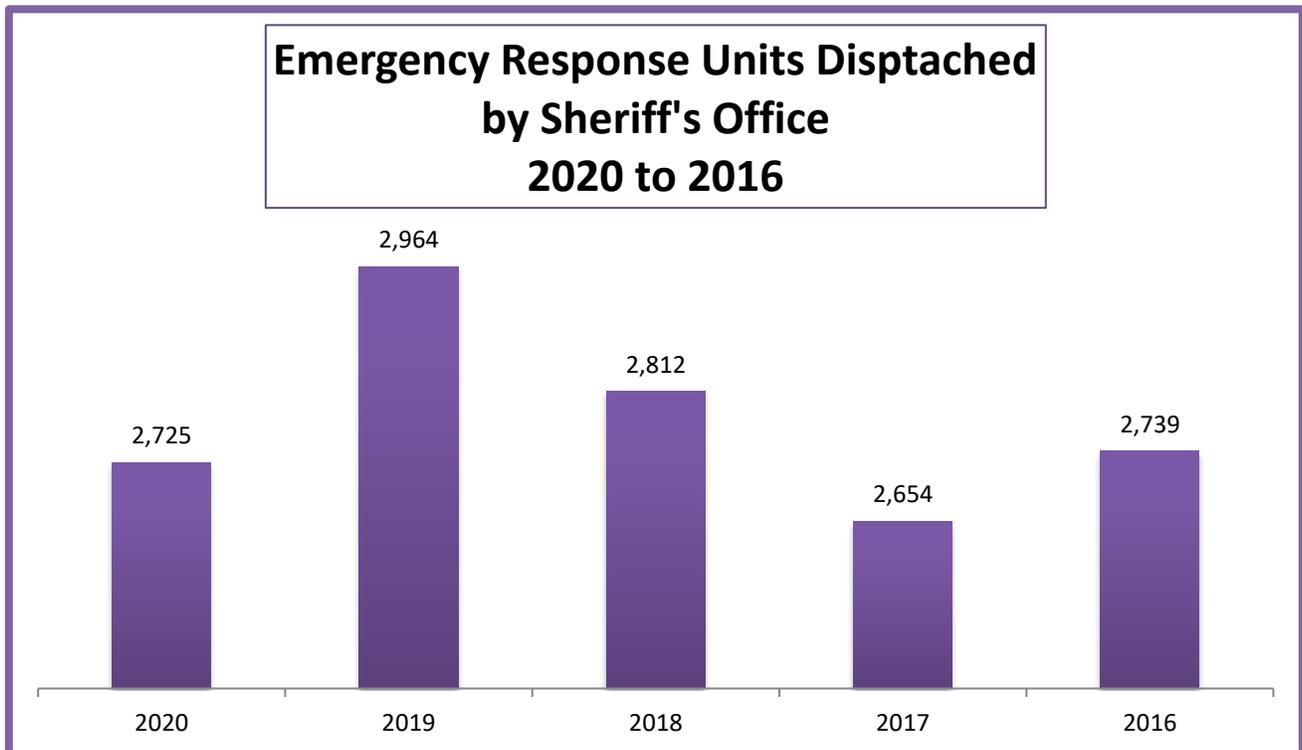




Emergency Response Units Dispatched
by Meeker County
Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center



Agency	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Cosmos Ambulance	58	75	75	70	99
Cosmos Fire & Rescue	16	28	31	29	27
Dassel Fire & Rescue	291	315	312	318	297
Eden Valley Fire & Rescue	168	160	151	125	154
Gold Cross Ambulance	998	1103	1042	1016	1050
Grove City Fire Department	29	24	79	27	34
Grove City Rescue	62	72	79	90	86
Litchfield Fire Department	124	115	118	112	138
Litchfield Rescue	477	472	455	388	399
Watkins Fire Department	31	24	27	30	26
Watkins Rescue & Ambulance	471	576	443	449	429
Total:	2,725	2,964	2,812	2,654	2,739





CodeRed is a free community notification system implemented by the Meeker County Sheriff's Office. The system is used to notify you of emergency and non-emergency events that could impact your safety. These notifications can go to landlines, cell phones, text messages and email. Code Red is also available through a mobile app on your smart phone. To sign up for this free service go to our website and click on the CodeRed banner: www.co.meeker.mn.us/217/Sheriff

Patrol Services

Meeker County Deputies patrol the county, respond to medical emergencies including vehicle crashes, respond to mental health calls, serve civil process papers, diffuse civil disputes, enforce criminal and traffic laws, respond to Calls for Service (CFS) and initiate criminal investigations.

Two of the leadership direction statements given to deputies to follow while out on patrol are: 1) "Meeker County Sheriff's Office personnel will work towards improved quality of life for all residents through pro-active patrols with an emphasis on investigations directed toward drunk driving and illegal drug activity." 2) "Meeker County Sheriff's Office personnel will work towards improved community relationships through pro-active community interactions (i.e. community events, presentations, trainings, etc.)." The high expectations of these directives will result in a more professional patrol unit that keeps public safety as a top priority.

With the implementation of a new records software, we are able to get more detailed reports on specific calls. In the chart you may notice no numbers or low numbers next to a significant number for 2020. This is because our old system was not able to pull out the specifics we now can and we don't have that data for years prior to 2020.

The 2020 total activity for Meeker County Sheriff's Office Deputies is as follows:

Criminal Calls for Service	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Abuse/Neglect/Maltreatment	10				
Abuse/Neglect/Maltreatment-Child	119	193	225	222	215
Arson	2	0	0	0	0
Assault	16	112	60	80	88
Domestic Assault	100				
Burglary	25	45	38	50	29
Criminal Sexual Conduct	28	2	12	17	21
Damage to Property	73	65	61	46	55
Damage to Property -Mailbox	22	15	18	23	27
Domestic Abuse No Contact Order (DANCO) Violation	13	14	7	0	0
Drug Crimes (including drug paraphernalia)	63	33	43	65	46
Forgery	0	3	5	6	7
Fraud	24	6	3	3	1
Harassment	43	62	51	66	66
Harassment Restraining Order (HRO) Violation	4	8	8	16	16
Homicide	0	0	0	0	1
Kidnapping/False Imprisonment	0	0	0	1	1
Order for Protection (OFP) Violations	12	18	14	21	21
Ordinance Violations	62	68	79	56	25
Pursuit - Vehicle on Foot	12	4	5	2	6
Robbery	0	1	1	1	0
Search Warrants Executed	6	8	12	16	13
Theft/Stolen Property	110	104	139	149	227
Threats	40	30	33	40	45
Trespass	32	25	27	24	16
Vandalism	5				
Vehicle Thefts	29	17	22	22	24
Warrant Arrests	69				
Weapon Violations	1	6	10	15	10

Other Calls for Service	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
9-1-1 Hang Ups/Misdial	262	115	89	133	187
Alarm	194	156	175	185	187
Animal Complaints-Dog	155	182	229	199	232
Animal Complaints- All Other	146	97	95	141	178
Assist Other Agencies	199	577	534	602	512
Civil Complaints	213	241	188	197	207
Deer Possession Tags Issued	42	38	35	28	32
Disturbance/Disorderly	99	37	52	55	65
Emotionally Disturbed Person	53	1	1	0	0
Fire	89	78	109	95	116
Juvenile Trouble	75	27	58	60	66
Medicals	196	256	246	260	282
Noise Complaints	33	43	46	28	41
Nuisance	12	12	12	11	14
Public Assists	288	262	297	266	272
Runaways	19	12	16	14	24
Scams	112	144	123	153	221
Shooting Complaint	27	17	22	6	0
Suicidal Individual	46	0	0	0	0
Suspicious Activity	370	292	315	346	394
Vacation Checks	12	24	36	72	36
Vehicle Unlocks	61	69	75	82	78
Vulnerable Adult	36	47	79	84	82
Welfare Check	198	177	151	134	130

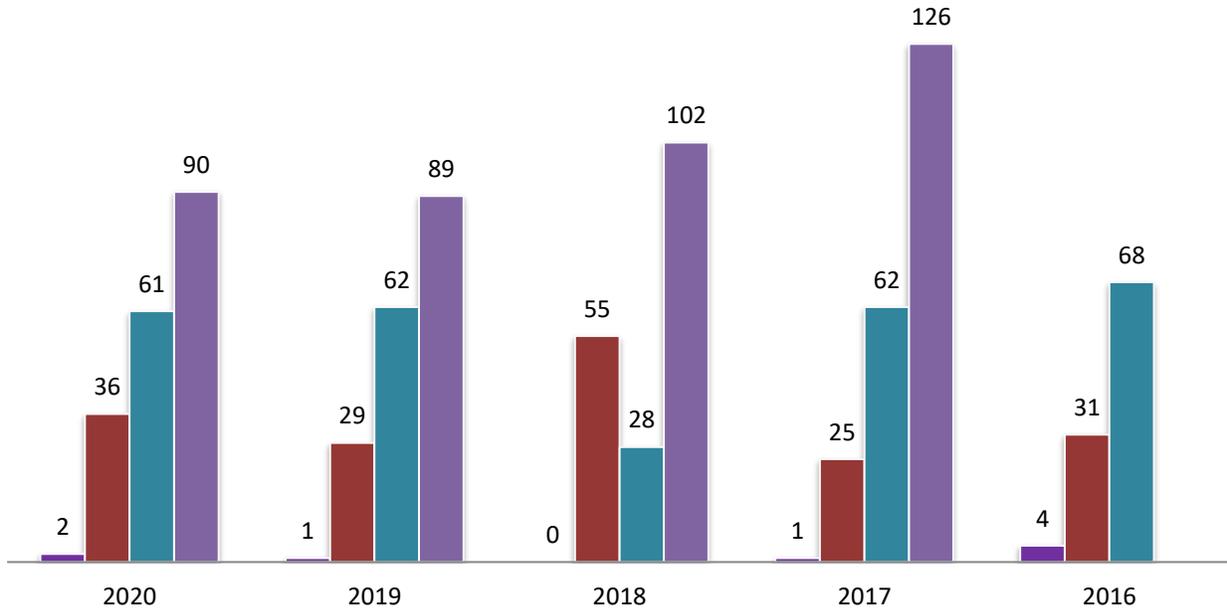
Meeker County Sheriff's Office Traffic Enforcement

Traffic Violations	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
School Bus Violations	4	3	3	1	3
Distracted Driving/Hands Free Violations	9				
Driver's License Violations	51	35	26	21	26
DUI	62	39	29	66	49
Drugs/Drug Paraphernalia	18				
Motor Vehicle Registration	17				
Open Bottle	6	1	1	6	1
Parking Violations	3	0	2	3	0
Reckless/Careless Driving	17	7	4	10	10
Seat Belt Violations	6	16	22	2	11
Speed	256	208	146	98	238
Stop Sign Violations/Yield Violations	15	5	14	3	9
Under 21 Alcohol Consumption	16	1	2	2	2
Vehicle Registration Violations	7	3	21	5	12
All other citations	219	213	138	106	185
TOTAL:	706	531	408	323	546

Other Traffic Related Calls	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Traffic Stops	2253	2685	2457	1943	2347
Abandoned Vehicles on Roadway	71	144	139	249	315
Driving Complaints	210	248	311	373	371
Motorist Assist	102	105	154	48	
Traffic Hazards	86	98	74	35	
Vehicle Off Roadway	63	105	65	30	

2020 Meeker County Sheriff's Office Reported Traffic Accidents

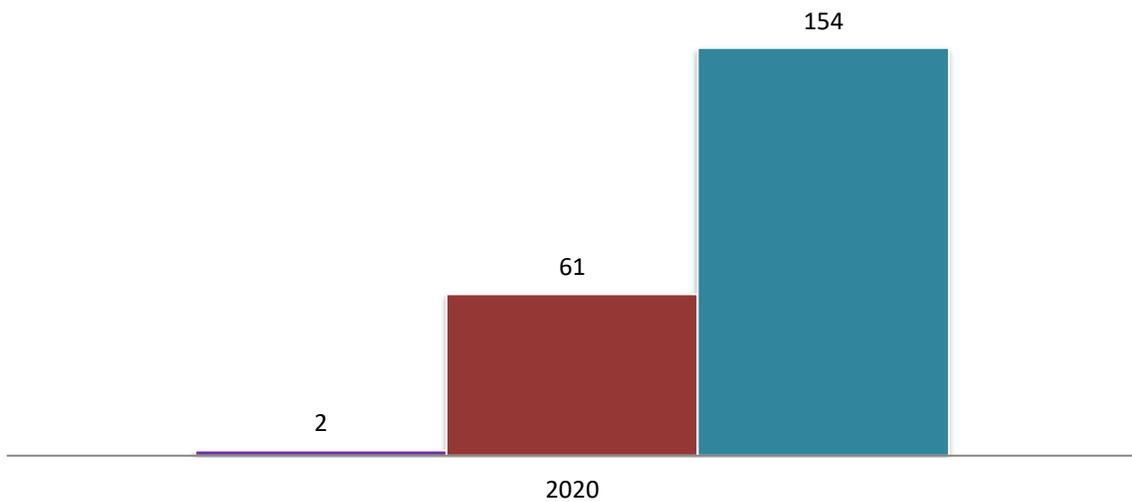
■ Fatal
 ■ Personal Injury
 ■ Property Damage
 ■ Motor Vehicle/Animal Accidents



Motor Vehicle/Animal Accidents were added starting in 2017

2020 Total Traffic Accidents for All Agencies in Meeker County

■ Fatal
 ■ Personal Injury
 ■ Property Damage



Meeker County Contract Deputies

The Meeker County Sheriff's Office contracts with Dassel, Grove City and Watkins for full time policing services, and Cosmos for part-time policing services. The total activity for each contract city for 2020 is as follows:

Contract Town Activity	2020 Calls for Service
Cosmos	339
Dassel	752
Grove City	389
Watkins	298

2020 Criminal Calls for Service	Cosmos	Dassel	Grove City	Watkins
Abuse -Neglect-Maltreatment	2	0	1	2
Abuse-Neglect-Maltreatment-Child	12	14	14	5
Assault	1	0	1	1
Burglary	1	3	2	2
Check Forgery	0	0	0	0
Criminal Damage to Property	4	8	10	2
DANCO Violation	0	0	2	2
Disorderly Conduct	0	0	0	1
Disturbance	6	9	6	4
Domestics	9	16	10	7
Drugs/Paraphernalia	1	3	1	4
DUI	0	1	1	2
Forgery	0	0		
Harassment/Stalking	1	7	7	6
HRO Violations	1	0	1	1
Homicides	0	0	0	0
Identity Theft	0	0	0	0
Lost/Found Property	0	2	1	0
Motor Vehicle Accident	1	11	5	2

Order for Protection (OFP) Violation	0	2	1	3
Pursuit Vehicle/Person	0	1	0	0
Robbery	0	0	0	0
Scams/Swindle	3	10	2	5
Sex Crime Offense	2	5	1	2
Stolen Vehicle	0	2	1	
Tamper w/MV	0	0	0	0
Thefts	4	17	7	5
Threats	1	6	3	2
Trespass	2	2	2	5
Weapons Offenses	1	0	0	0
Weapons Offenses	1	0	0	0

2020 Other Calls for Service	Cosmos	Dassel	Grove City	Watkins
9-1-1 Hang Ups	2	17	9	4
9-1-1 Mis or Accident Dial	6	16	4	7
Abandoned/Stalled Vehicles	2	2	1	
Alarms	9	18	19	18
Animal Complaints	18	48	10	6
Assist Other Agencies	7	14	5	7
ATV Complaint	1	1	1	2
Burning Complaint	0	0	0	0
Carbon Monoxide Alarm	0	0	0	0
Debris on Roadway	0	0	0	0
Deliver Emergency Messages	0	0	0	0
Driving Complaints	6	24	6	9
Escorts	1	7	0	0
Fire Calls	0	3	2	2
Funeral Escort	0	0	0	0
Gas Drive Off	0	0	2	7
HAZMAT/Chemical Spill	0	2	0	0
Medicals	6	22	5	5
Motorist Assist	1	6	3	1

Noise Complaints	0	10	1	7
Open Doors - Residential & Business	0	5	0	0
Ordinance Violations	3	4	12	4
Public Assist	12	42	26	20
Warrants Arrest	0	1	2	1
Vacation/Security Checks	0	1	0	0
Shooting Complaint	0	2	4	1
Suspicious Activity/Person/Vehicle	10	47	23	23
Tobacco Violation	0	0	0	0
Traffic Stops - Citations /Warnings	163	172	84	21
Unlock Vehicle	1	9	3	5
Welfare Check	8	22	20	10

K-9 Services



Chase – MCSO K-9

In 2020 the Meeker County Sheriff’s Office re-started our K-9 program. We purchased a purebred German Sheppard from Slovakia. Our D.A.R.E. students were tasked with naming our K-9, they chose Chase. Chase and his handler, Deputy Borscheid, spent 12 weeks together training in 2020 before Chase could be put out on patrol. Chase is United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) certified in patrol and narcotics detection. Our investment in the program was approximately \$20,000 which included Chase, training and K-9 squad equipment.



Deputy Borscheid and Chase at K-9 training.

Kandiyohi - Meeker SWAT

In 2020 we formed a partnership with the Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office SWAT team. SWAT stands for Special Weapons and Tactics. While we recognized a need for a specialized team in Meeker County, we didn't have the call load, resources or financial means to create an independent team based on sporadic need. By joining with an established team, we have access to resources, training and knowledge that would otherwise not be available to us. With this partnership, the team is available for high risk incidents throughout Meeker County. In return, we have personnel dedicated to the unit that can be utilized in Kandiyohi County. Kandiyohi County Sheriff's Office SWAT is a long standing, well established unit that is highly respected throughout the region.

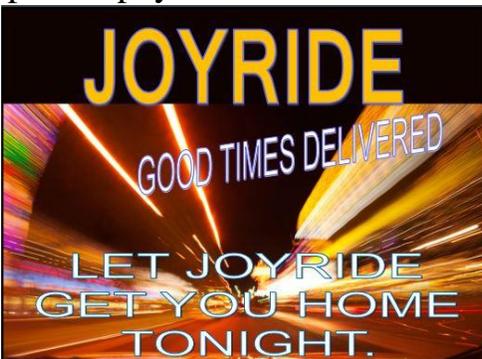


Once this partnership was formed the name was changed to reflect the new team and is currently referred to as Kandiyohi Meeker SWAT. We currently have five members of the Meeker County Sheriff's Office assigned to this team. The utilization of this team is based on an established threat matrix which means the team is only used in high risk situations. This is meant to better protect the public and the deputies assigned when those situations arise. In 2020, the Kandiyohi Meeker SWAT team was utilized in Meeker County for a high-risk drug warrant in Litchfield in

June, a barricaded subject call in Forest City in November and team members were utilized to do a high-risk search warrant in Acton Township as the result of a shooting in October.

Meeker County Safe Roads Coalition

The Meeker County Sheriff's Office is partnered with the Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Meeker County Safe Roads Coalition. This coalition brings the State TZD philosophy to the local level. The Joyride program and School Safety Day are an



example of the work from this coalition. Joyride is a program that gives those who are celebrating at local bars an opportunity to get a safe and sober ride home. School Safety Day brings first responders into the school to educate our young drivers on the serious consequences of distracted driving and driving under the influence. The coalition also works on bringing traffic education to

the public at various health and community expos along with setting up child safety seat inspections.

What is TZD?

The Toward Zero Deaths approach is based on the belief that even one traffic-related death on our roads is unacceptable. This “zero deaths” idea was first adopted in Sweden in 1997 as "Vision Zero" and since then has evolved to several state Departments of Transportation (DOT), including Minnesota, that have identified zero deaths as a core objective in their Strategic Highway Safety Plans.

TZD uses a data-driven, interdisciplinary approach that targets areas for improvement and employs proven countermeasures, integrating the application of education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma services (the “4Es”). A combination of strategies from different focus areas is often most effective for solving a particular problem.

Mental Health Response

Meeker County patrol deputies often times are the first responder for someone in a mental health crisis. While our deputies are trained to handle these situations, we recognize they are not the best resource for the person in crisis. We have seen an increase in these calls in recent years, especially during the pandemic. Through our partnership with Meeker County Social Services and Woodland Centers, the Sheriff's Office started a pilot program in 2020 to address mental health calls. This program allows the patrol deputies on scene to directly contact a mental health provider via telecommunications through tablets the deputies are issued. This gives the deputies the tools they need to assess the situation better and provide initial services on scene. Too often, we don't have the tools to make a proper assessment which means the person requires transport to a hospital for evaluation. Partnering with the Mental Health Professionals from Woodland Centers allows the deputies to better assess the person's needs while on the scene. Services are provided immediately to those assessed as being in a mental health crisis. In addition to the telecommunication services, the Sheriff's Office also utilizes Woodland Centers' Mental Health Urgent Care Team. This team can respond to the scene and provide in-person assistance to those in immediate need as well. Our goal with these partnerships and programs is to get people who are in mental health crisis the proper resources as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Snowmobile / Boat and Water / OHV Patrols



The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office is responsible for Snowmobile, Off Highway Vehicle (OHV), and Water Safety patrol and enforcement. Patrol deputies and seasonal water patrol deputies work these patrols year round. Grant monies received from the State of Minnesota help with enforcement efforts and needed equipment.

Snowmobile Safety Enforcement Grant

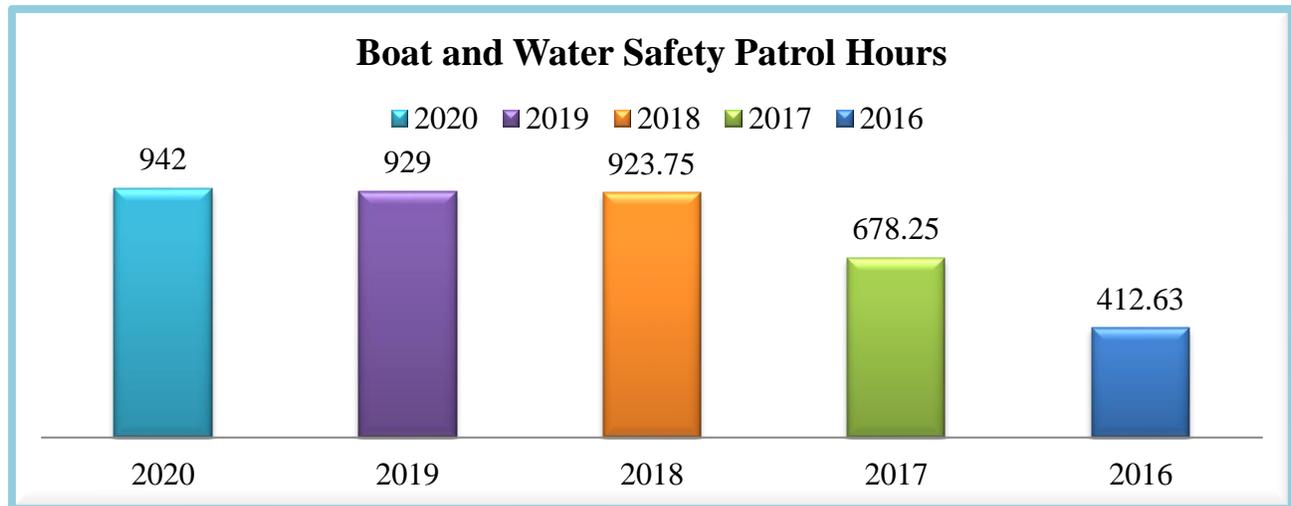
The Snowmobile Safety Enforcement Grant for fiscal year 2020 was \$3,947.00. The fiscal year runs from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. We received 5 snowmobile complaints in 2020 and two reports of snowmobile accidents.



Boat and Water Safety Grant



The Boat and Water Safety Grant runs from January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. The grant for the 2020 fiscal year is \$6,965.00. The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office also partnered with the county Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program and has additional resources for dedicated AIS inspections. We received 14 boating complaints and investigated two boating accidents. In 2020, the total AIS hours were 180 for which the AIS committee reimbursed the Sheriff’s Office \$3,074.00



Boat and Water	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Complaints	14	17	11	12	16
Temporary Structure Permits	26	25	46	45	60

OHV Safety Enforcement Grant (Off-Highway Vehicle)

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office received \$5,605.00 for the OHV Safety Enforcement Grant fiscal year 2020. The fiscal year runs from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. We received 27 OHV complaints in 2020 and investigated three injury OHV accidents.



Investigations

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office currently has three full-time detectives responsible for investigating criminal activity to include: child abuse/neglect, vulnerable adult crimes, welfare fraud, sexual assaults, financial crimes, fraud, computer/internet crimes, thefts, burglaries, death investigations (natural, suicide and homicide), robberies, etc. Of the 7,422 Calls for Service received for Meeker County Sheriff’s Office in 2020, 245 were forwarded to the detectives for further investigation. The detectives are also responsible for background investigations of potential new hires as well as internal affairs investigations.

Reported Deaths in Meeker County:

Meeker County contracts with Midwest Medical Examiner’s Office for coroner services. Death Investigators respond to the scene of reported deaths and work with the Sheriff’s Office to complete the death investigation. Of the 186 reported deaths in Meeker County in 2020, nine autopsies were performed as a part of those death investigations. "Reportable, Declined" includes deaths that were investigated but the actual death certificate was signed by a local M.D. The following is a report by the Medical Examiner’s Office for reported deaths for all of Meeker County:



Meeker County Deaths	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Motor Vehicle Accident	2	2	3	1	3
Natural	10	6	8	7	8
Non Motor Vehicle Accident	4	3	9	4	3
Reportable, Declined	165	139	162	145	115
Suicide	5	4	1	6	9
Homicide	0	1	0	0	1
Total	186	155	183	163	139

Drug and Gang Investigations:

The Meeker County Sheriff's Office has two detectives assigned to the CEE-VI Drug and Gang Task Force. CEE stands for Cooperative Enforcement Effort and the Roman numeral VI stands for the original six counties that were a part of the cooperative when it was formed in 1990. The CEE-VI Drug and Gang Task Force currently consists of the following counties: Meeker, Chippewa, Kandiyohi, Swift and Yellow Medicine. There is federal, state and local funding used for this initiative. The funding includes a per capita charge of \$5.00 in each member county. The counties that provide personnel are reimbursed salary and benefits. This year we saw record methamphetamine seizures and a sharp increase in arrests in Meeker County. The following is the reported activity for all of Meeker County:

CEE-VI Drug Task Force Statistics	2020	2019	2018
Arrests	54 (4 gang)	36 (1 gang)	60 (2 gang)
Drug and/or Gang Presentations	1 for 41 people	2 for 40 people	2 for 20 people
Searches	26	16	24
Children Removed	7	4	4
Asset Seizures			
Cash	\$79,257.00	\$14,487.00	\$13,480.00
Vehicles	1	0	2
Hand Guns	4	3	3
Long Guns	1	12	6

Drugs Seizures			
Cocaine	3.20 grams	28.41 grams	517.80 grams
Hashish	None	None	None
Heroin	.70 grams	.10 grams	5.20 grams
Marijuana	6,675.30 grams (14.70 lbs)	14,923.60 grams (32.90 lbs)	23,982.20 grams (52.87 lbs)
Marijuana - concentrate	None	141.70 grams	802.70 grams
Meth	8,333.79 grams (18.35 lbs)	413.16 grams (.91 lbs)	1,187.64 grams (2.61 lbs)
Prescription	52 pills	23 pills	3 pills



In a typical school year millions of school children around the world will benefit from D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), the highly acclaimed program that gives kids the skills they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs, and violence. D.A.R.E. was founded in 1983 in Los Angeles and has proven so successful it is now being implemented in 75 percent of our nation’s school districts and in more than 52 countries around the world.

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office provides this program to the 5th grade classes in both the Atwater Cosmos Grove City (ACGC) and Eden Valley-Watkins (EVW)



school districts. D.A.R.E. Deputy Josh Case is assigned to EVW and D.A.R.E. Deputy Sara Miller is assigned to ACGC. In 2017 we updated our D.A.R.E. program to the new curriculum called “Keepin’ it REAL,” which puts an emphasis on decision-making skills instead of drug

lectures. D.A.R.E. envisions a world in which students everywhere are empowered to respect others and choose to lead lives free from violence, substance abuse and other dangerous behaviors. At the completion of our 10 week program, we host a D.A.R.E. graduation for the families of the D.A.R.E. students. As a special treat, we bring in a magician who, through a very entertaining magic show, reinforces the D.A.R.E. teachings.

Training



The Meeker County Sheriff's Office remains committed to making the Sheriff's Office the best it can be and one the public can be proud of and trust. This is achieved through continued professionalism and highly trained Sheriff's Office personnel. The Minnesota Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Board is responsible for licensing Peace Officers in the State of Minnesota. As a requirement of this license, each deputy is required to complete a minimum of 48 hours of continuing education every three years. It is not uncommon for deputies to have two to three times the minimum number of hours. We train on all aspects of law enforcement including those we rarely encounter. The

public expects we will be trained and able to handle whatever situation we encounter. We take this responsibility very seriously and spend countless hours each year to better our skills and knowledge of this job. In addition to all the law enforcement training, deputies are also certified Emergency Medical Responders (EMR). Deputies routinely respond to and provide EMR level services on a variety of medical calls in the county.

ICLD

All full time employees are enrolled in the Institute for Credible Learning and Development (ICLD) leadership program through a partnership with the Minnesota's Sheriff's Association (MSA). The leadership program is a comprehensive, career-long leadership education and developmental program. Participants complete an in-depth journey by addressing relevant topics and proven theories offered by ICLD.

A majority of law enforcement professionals attending the ICLD program report the following positive outcomes:



- Increased officer safety.
- Increased organizational thought.
- Reduction in stress.
- Reduction in citizen complaints.
- Increased capacity in character building behaviors.
- Increased accountability and responsibility.
- Increased personnel engagement and job satisfaction.
- Improved personal self-awareness and decision-making.
- Improved integrity of personal and professional conduct.
- Enhanced personnel civic mindedness and involvement in the community.
- Increased cross-cultural awareness, understanding and tolerance.
- Increased ability to develop partnerships with community representatives.

Community Engagement

Due to the COVID pandemic, our opportunities for community engagement in 2020 were diminished greatly. While we still did some presentations to civic groups and used our volunteers in a limited capacity, the lock downs and restrictions that prevented public events and gatherings directly impacted our community engagement commitment. Despite the pandemic our Reserve Deputies, Sheriff Posse and Community Service Officer – Paramedics still volunteered over 500 hours in 2020.

Although our engagement with the community was limited, we did see our community step up and show their support through a local Defend Police campaign.

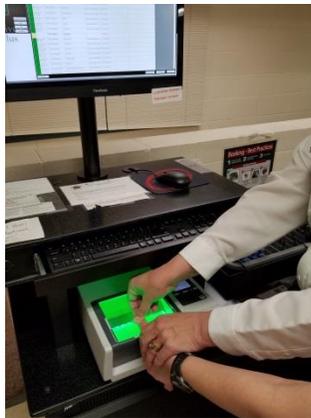
Through the sale of Defend Police signs, the campaign raised over \$3,500 for the Meeker County Sheriff's Deputy Association and the Litchfield Police Association. The money raised will be used for youth programs to promote positive interactions with law enforcement. The show of public support is greatly appreciated!



As we look to 2021 and hopefully the end of the pandemic, we will remain committed to our community engagement and a return to our public programs.

Meeker County Jail

The Meeker County Sheriff's Office Jail is responsible for housing inmates awaiting court, as well as those who are sentenced for misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor offenses. The average daily population for 2020 was 33 inmates per day. The Jail also boards inmates from other counties and the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DOC). The Meeker County Sheriff's Office charged \$57.50 per day in 2020 for inmates who were boarded for other jurisdictions. The boarding revenue received for 2020 was \$236,792. The average stay for all inmates booked into our facility in 2020 was 21 days.

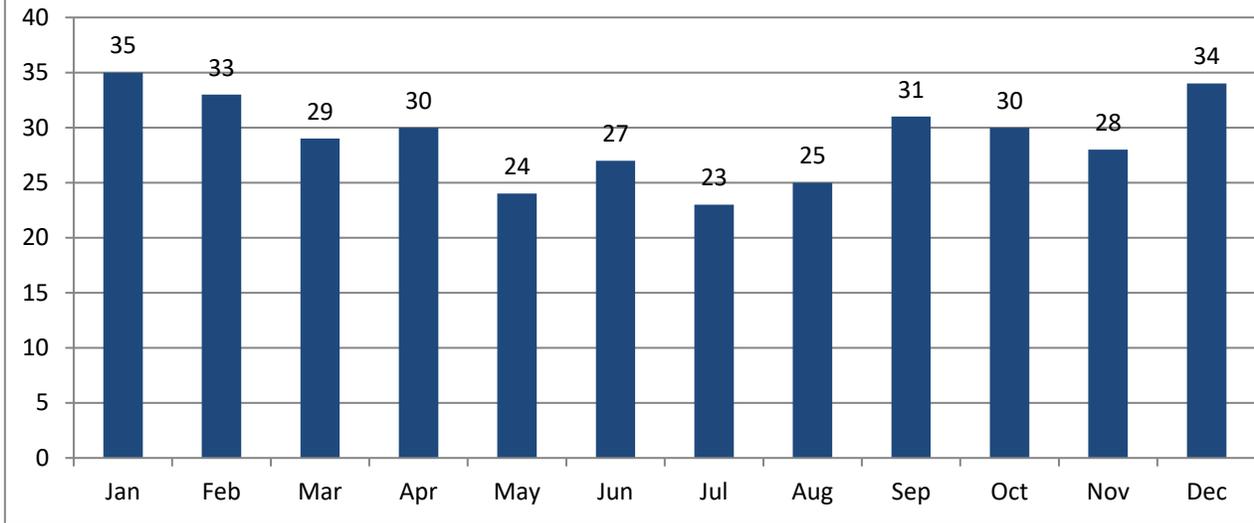


Meeker County Jail had their biennial MN DOC inspection in July 2020. The jail scored 100% in our mandatory requirements and 99% in our essential requirements. Some of our areas of concern were updating some training records to include nurse and kitchen staff and classification of inmates. These areas were corrected and approved by the DOC. We also had our PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) audit in May. This review is done every three years. The audit includes a thorough review of PREA policies and procedures. We received our final report in July and were found to be in compliance with all PREA regulations.

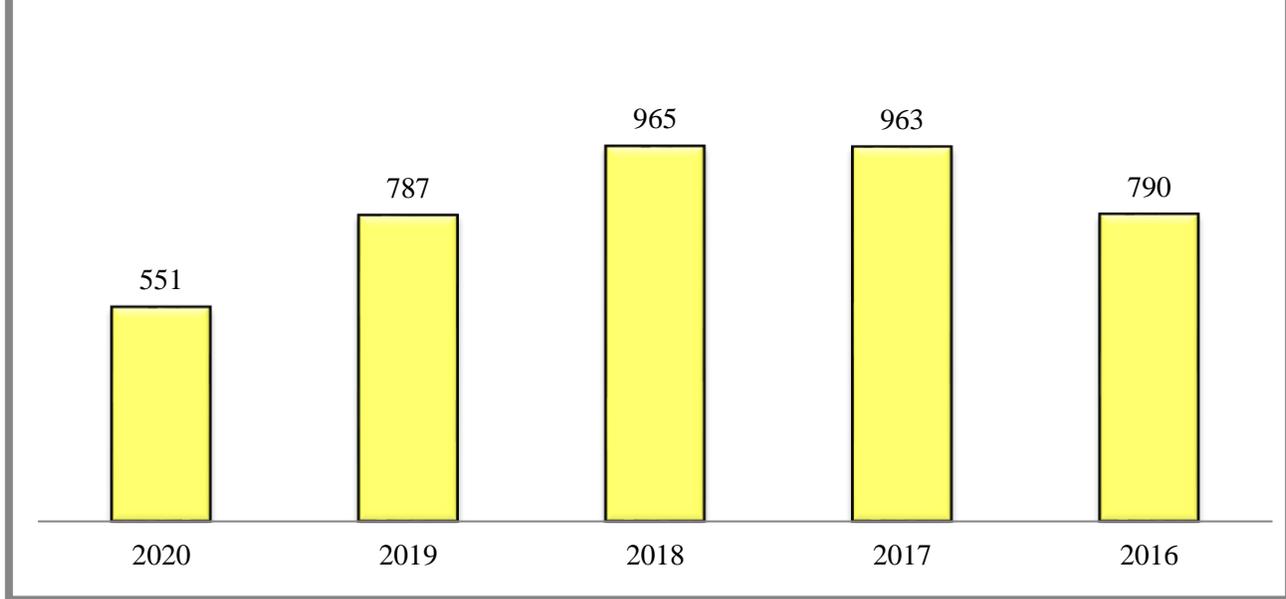
2020 presented a unique set of challenges for the jail in response to COVID-19. We had to segregate and quarantine individuals and adjust some of our day to day operations. This included a reduction in available programs for inmates and restrictions on visitation and some intakes. Through these efforts and the acquisition of UV Cleaners, the Meeker County Jail did not experience an outbreak or shutdown due to the COVID 19 pandemic in 2020.

In an effort to address inmate mental health in our jail, we have teamed with Meeker County Social Services for a new pilot program in 2020. Through this partnership we have a designated Social Worker to address the mental health needs of the inmates. The Social Worker and our Jail Programmer work together to identify inmates with mental health issues and the Social Worker works to find the appropriate resources to address those needs. The Social Worker will meet with the inmate as needed and will set up assistance and resources when the person is released. Our goal is to provide the inmate proper resources upon release to address their mental health needs to reduce the possibility of future arrest.

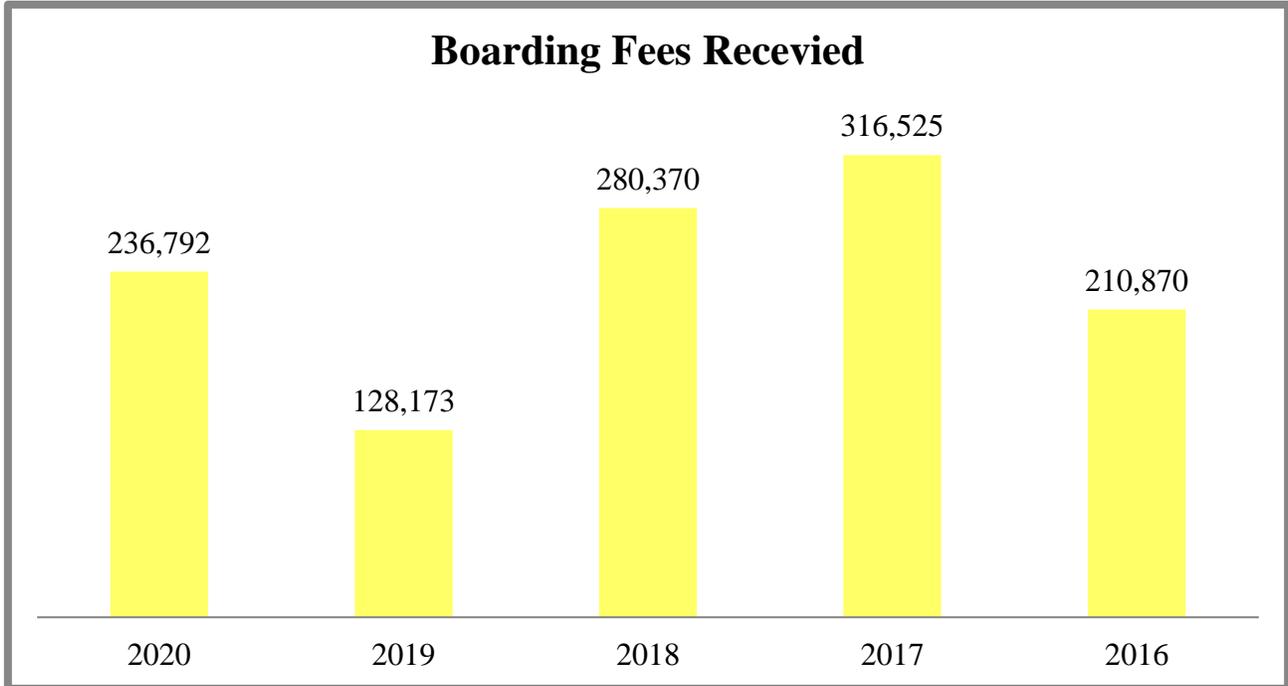
2020 Average Daily Count by Month



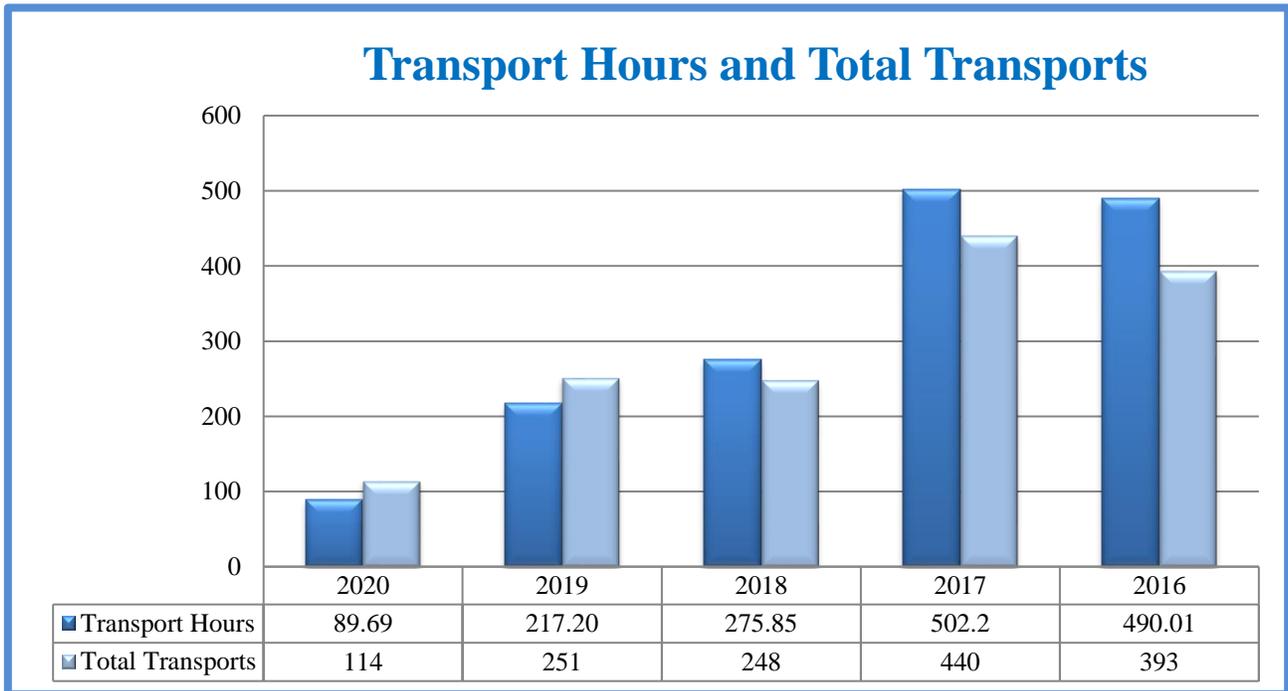
Total Bookings



Boarding Fees Recevied



Transport Hours and Total Transports



Court Security

The security of the Meeker County Courthouse is the responsibility of the Sheriff’s Office. In 2018 we installed a security check point on the court level. This check point is staffed during all hours court in session. This is in addition to armed bailiffs and a court security deputy. In 2020, ninety-nine knives were seized, numerous scissors, tools, a homemade shank, mace, and other sharp metal objects were also seized. Sixteen warrant arrests, one drug arrest was made at the check point and seven grams of methamphetamine were seized. Court security remains a high priority for Meeker County and we continue to explore options to improve prisoner movement in public areas to ensure public safety. Sheriff Cruze fully supports these initiatives to improve security and safety in the Meeker County Courthouse.



Civil Process Services



In 2020, the Meeker County Sheriff’s Office served a total of 279 civil process papers. The most common types of papers a deputy sheriff serve include Summons & Complaints, Subpoenas, Mortgage Foreclosures, Orders, Evictions, Writs of Recovery, Writs of Execution, Orders for Protection, Harassment Restraining Orders, and Affidavits. In 2020, the Sheriff’s Office collected \$15,341.50 in civil process service fees.

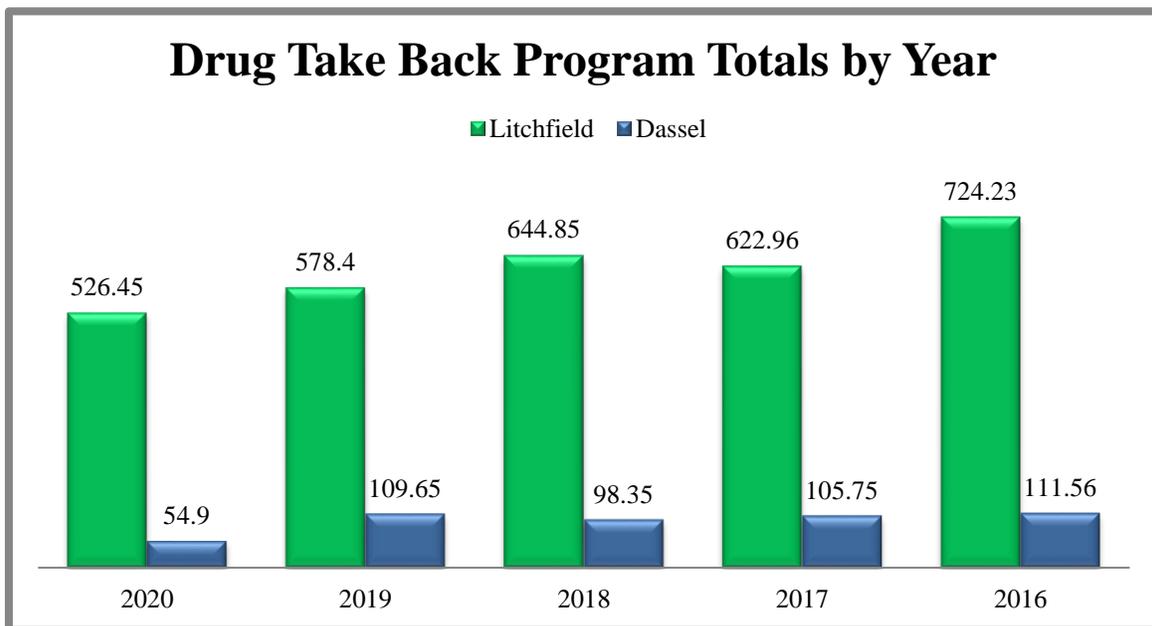
Sheriff Fees for 2020		
911 Recordings (911 calls, radio traffic on data CD/DVD)	\$30.00	Per hour (1 hr minimum charged)
Animal Fees:		
~Pound Pickup Fee	\$50.00	Per animal
~Impound Fee	\$5.00	Per day (charged after the first 24 hrs)

Audio/Video Recordings on CD/DVD	\$30.00	Per hour (1 hr minimum charged)
Background Check: In-House	\$5.00	Per person (for private business or agency)
Civil Process Fees:		
~Notice of Intent to Redeem	\$100.00	Per notice
~Paper Service	\$80.00	Up to 3 attempts, mileage included
~Each Additional Attempt	\$30.00	Mileage Included
~Additional Papers at Same Address	\$30.00	Mileage Included
~Return of Unserved Papers	\$80.00	Mileage Included
~Redemption of Property Mortgagor	\$250.00	Per redemption
~Sale Notice - Posting 3 Copies	\$70.00	Per parcel
~Sheriff Sales	\$80.00	Per sale
~Writ of Execution Commission Service	6%	Per writ (\$20 minimum charge)
~Writ of Execution Service	\$84.00	Per writ
Deputy Time:		
~Standard	\$55.00	Per hour (3 hr minimum charged)
~Deputy: Squad Required for Roadway Escorts	\$75.00	Per hour (3 hr minimum charged)
~Deputy: Reserve/Posse time	\$20.00	Per hour
False Alarm Fees:		
~4th & 5th in a Year	\$25.00	Each
~ 6th & Subsequent in a Year	\$50.00	Each
Fax: Sent or Received	\$0.25	Per page
Firearms Storage Fee	\$1.00	Per day, per gun (30 day minimum)
Gun Permits:		
~Meeker County Residents: New	\$40.00	Per permit
~Meeker County Residents: Renew	\$35.00	Per permit
~Out-of-State Residents: New	\$75.00	Per permit
~Out-of-State Residents: Renew	\$70.00	Per permit
~Purchase/Transfer Permit	Free	Per permit
~Replacement Cards	\$10.00	Per permit
Impound Storage Fee	\$15.00	Per day (effective 5 days after date of Notice of Impoundment letter)
Jails Fees:		
~Fingerprint Cards: Meeker County Resident	Free	Per card
~Fingerprint Cards: Out-of-County Resident	\$15.00	Per card
~Booking Fee	\$25.00	Per booking
~Boarding Fee	\$57.50	Per day
~Pay-for-Stay Fee	\$20.00	Per day
~Huber Fee	\$20.00	Per day
~Huber Urinalysis Fee	\$30.00	Per sample
~Inmate Doctor Fee	\$15.00	Per in-house visit
~Inmate Nurse Fee	\$5.00	Per in-house visit
~Probation Urinalysis Fee	\$10.00	Per sample

~Probation Portable Breath Test Fee	\$5.00	Per test
Photographs:		
~Burned onto CD/DVD	\$10.00	Per CD/DVD
Records Clerk	\$25.00	Per hour (for persons requesting documents in large volume that are time consuming, 1 hr minimum in addition to document fee)
Reports/Documents:		
~Copies Printed	\$0.25	Per page
~Copies on CD/DVD	\$10.00	Per CD/DVD
Scanning	\$10.00	Per page or CD/DVD
Typing Reports	\$20.00	Per hour (1 hr minimum charged)

Drug Take Back Program

The Meeker County Sheriff’s Office continues this free service to Meeker County residents. This service provides a safe and secure manner of disposing unused and expired medications. The Sheriff’s Office has two Take Back boxes, one at our main office in Litchfield and one at the Dassel Office at the Dassel City Hall. In 2020 we disposed a total of 581.35 pounds of prescription drugs.



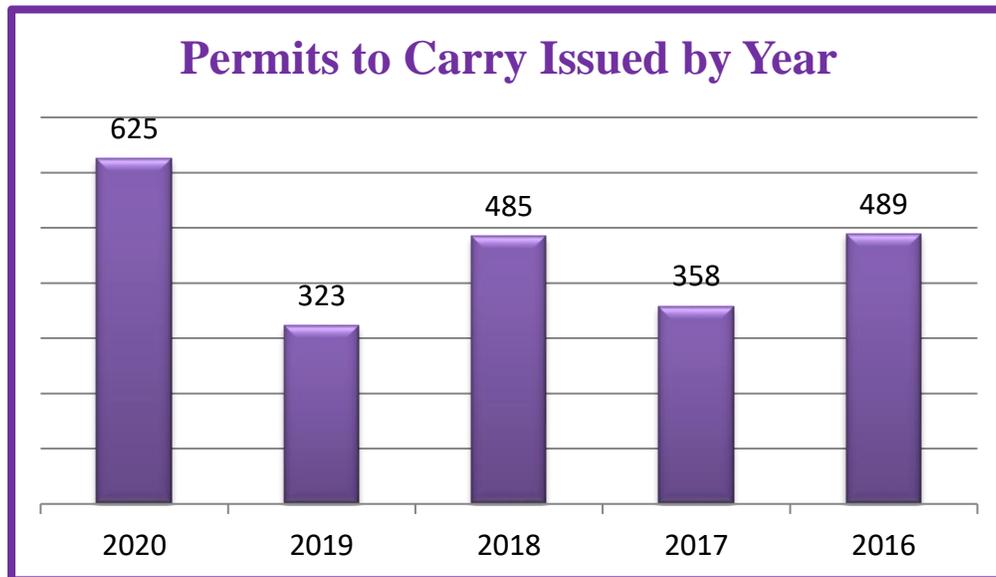
Gun Permits

The Meeker County Sheriff is responsible for issuing all Permits to Carry in the county and all Permits to Purchase for all residents who don't live in a city with an independent police department. In 2020 the Permit to Carry application fee was \$40.00 with renewals costing \$35.00. For each Permit to Carry approved, by law, \$10.00 for new and \$5.00 for renewal applications is submitted to the MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). Each year a report is made to the BCA in reference to our permit activity. This report can be viewed at:

<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/bca/bca-divisions/administrative/Documents/2020-Permit-to-Carry-Report.pdf>

Permits to Purchase: In 2020, there were 299 Permits to Purchase issued.

Permits to Carry: In 2020, there were 625 Permits to Carry issued.



Meeker County Emergency Management

Meeker County Emergency Management, under the direction of the Sheriff, has multiple areas of responsibility to include planning, preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery. Our planning objectives and our response efforts focus on saving lives, protecting property, meeting the needs of victims, reducing the effects of an emergency on essential facilities and utilities and minimizing the disruption on our community's financial livelihood. Our preparedness process includes multiple plans, whole community input, other county agencies, neighboring county emergency managers and regional planning.

Due to the ongoing pandemic in 2020, Meeker County Emergency Management provided lead support to Meeker County Public Health during the COVID-19 public health response. Beginning in January 2020, Emergency Management and Public Health directors began daily briefings to discuss the COVID-19 pandemic and the response plan to be implemented locally. Emergency Management assisted Public Health with creating an Incident Action Plan. Emergency Management also activated and led the virtual Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to aid with the implementation and coordination of the Meeker County Response to COVID-19. Emergency Management has been an active participant with Public Health to determine actions taken for access to county facilities, continuity of operations recommendations for county departments, and was the lead in managing County resource requests and acquisitions. Emergency Management has also led meetings with community partners and assisted Public Health with communications and outreach to the community at large.

As we look to 2021, Meeker County Emergency Management and Public Health will continue hosting vaccination clinics per the MN Department of Health (MDH) vaccination plan. Emergency Management continues to actively aid public health with planning and public liaison support while also assisting with on-site coordination of the clinics.

Budget



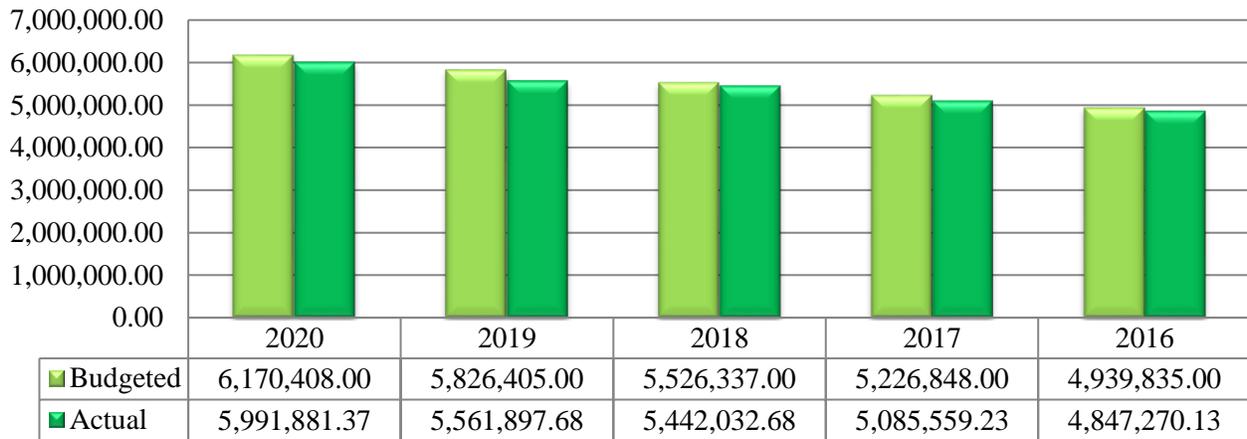
The following figures are taken from the end of year Revenue Expenditure Budget Report. The actual expenses for 2020 were 3% under budget. The major factor for this savings was the software installation in 2020 which negated the need for the budgeted software maintenance in 2020. Also, the addition of staff who were not hired at the beginning of 2020 and some staff shortages during the year factored in to the expenses being under budget. We did have an increase in actual revenue over budget directly related to the boarding of inmates in the jail and training reimbursements. By boarding inmates, we are able to offset the levy dollars needed to operate the jail. The jail revenue received in 2020 was 18.5% (\$291,205) of the actual jail expenditures.

The vast majority of the budget for the Sheriff's office is for personnel related expenses (salaries, insurance, overtime, on-call, etc.). In 2020, 78% of the actual expenses in the Sheriff's Office were personnel related. The remaining 22% was used for operational purposes including training, equipment, maintenance agreements, supplies, vehicle repairs, fuel, etc.

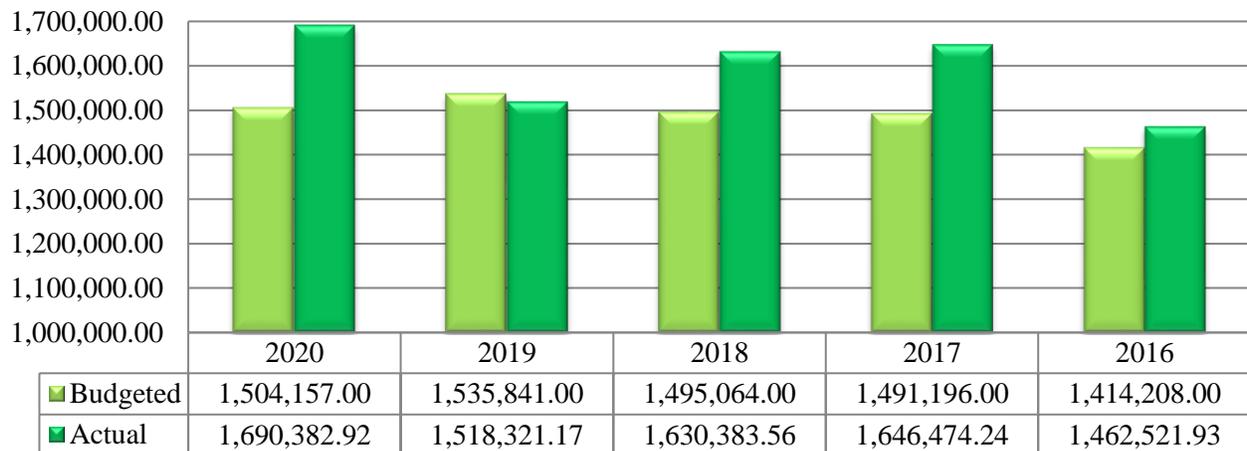
2020 Budgeted vs. Actual

Department	Budgeted Expenses	Budgeted Revenue	Budgeted Net	Actual Expenses	Actual Revenue	Actual Net
Sheriff	5,778,855.00	1,355,824.00	4,423,031.00	5,634,029.88	1,538,888.67	4,095,141.21
Emergency Management	79,026.00	25,000.00	54,026.00	74,815.31	24,747.54	50,067.77
Enhanced 911	130,126.00	98,333.00	31,793.00	124,427.43	98,332.80	26,094.63
Wireless Communications	182,401.00	25,000.00	157,401.00	158,608.75	28,413.91	130,194.84
Total:	6,170,408.00	1,504,157.00	4,666,251.00	5,991,881.37	1,690,382.92	4,301,498.45

Budgeted vs. Actual Expenses - Historical Review



Budgeted vs. Actual Revenue - Historical Review



Budgeted vs. Actual Net - Historical Review

