Special Enforcement Unit

Memorandum

Commander Sonstegard
Sergeant Tim Kelley
Sergeant Bill Crisostomo
Sergeant Jon Keller

Date: October 22, 2013

To: R. Jason Benites, Assistant Chief of Police

From: Eric S. Sonstegard, Commander

Subject: *March for Justice* Protest and March (October 13, 2013)

Summary of Incident

On October 13, 2013, at approximately 1600 hours, a group of community members began gathering at Del Sol Park to protest and march in conjunction with the 1st anniversary of the officer-involved shooting of Alfonso Limon Jr. The gathering was publicized via the internet and community flyers and was organized by *Todo Poder al Pueblo*. By 1700 hrs, a crowd in excess of 150 people had gathered at the north end of the park and had formed a ring around the protest leaders. At approx. 1710 hrs, the group, still between 150-200 people, began marching westbound on Camino Del Sol from the park. As the crowd continued through the La Colonia neighborhood, it was chanting "Killer Cops off our streets!" and blocking traffic on several streets. They continued across Oxnard Blvd. and quickly made their way to the Oxnard Police station.

As the crowd got to the police station, it walked westbound on 2nd Street and southbound on "D" Street before stopping in front of the station on "C" Street. Members of the crowd completely enveloped the southbound lanes on "C" Street and Oxnard Police traffic personnel shut down north and southbound traffic on "C" Street. After approx. fifteen (15) minutes at the station, the crowd proceeded southbound on "C" Street towards Plaza Park where they completely enveloped all lanes of traffic on "C" Street. The crowd, still approximately 150 people, then proceeded eastbound on Fifth Street to northbound Oxnard Blvd. where they completely enveloped the northbound lanes before stopping at Cooper Road. At the intersection of Cooper Road and Oxnard Blvd., community organizer Francisco Romero could be seen lining the crowd up across Oxnard Blvd. For approx. fifteen (15) minutes, the crowd completely enveloped all lanes of Oxnard Blvd. Traffic personnel were forced to divert traffic off of Oxnard Blvd. at Palm Street and Second Street. At approx. 1835 hrs, the crowd began to walk eastbound on Cooper Road and they stopped at the memorial site on Garfield Street south of Cooper Road. The crowd filled the street and prevented traffic flow in the area including a SCAT bus and a pizza delivery driver that were unable to move their vehicles for several minutes.

By 1920 hrs, the crowd had dissipated and approx. thirty-five (35) people remained at the memorial site. At approx. 1935 hrs, all Oxnard Police personnel assigned to the incident were demobilized and the operation was terminated.

After the crowd had left the police station, chalk writing was observed in a variety of locations around the Oxnard Police station and the writing included *"Killer Cops"*, *"Justice for Limon"*, *"Justice for Mahoney"*, *"We will never forget"*, and *"Asesinos off our streets!"*

Critique

- Pre-Incident Preparation-The operational plan was completed four (4) days prior to the planned event and distributed to all pertinent personnel as well as neighboring agencies that may be called upon for mutual aid (VPD, VCSO, OXFD, PHPD). The strategies contained in the operational plan were based on lessons learned from previous incidents with the same group (*Todo Poder*) The following areas were emphasized after last year's incident:
    - *All department personnel were advised a week in advance of the incident and personnel were encouraged not to park their vehicles in the visitor parking lot or on Third Street where they may be subject to vandalism.*
    - *Day shift personnel were advised in advance that they may be subject to being held over shift so they could make any necessary family notifications.*
    - *Morning shift personnel were asked to begin their shift at 1630 hrs. to prevent a shift change in the middle of the incident.*

- D.O.C. Operations-The incident command post was located in the Oxnard P.D. DOC adjacent to the Communications Center and was activated at 1600 hrs. Last year, we found that the decentralization of the DOC from the police building complicated communication issues and made it more difficult to streamline our information flow.
    - *There continues to be no dispatch console in the DOC. This makes it difficult for the incident commander to monitor radio traffic. Accommodations should be made to have the tactical dispatcher as close to the incident commander as possible.*
    - *Dispatch personnel conducted their shift change in the middle of the pre-planned incident. Arrangements should have been made to alter their shifts to prevent confusion during a peak traffic time.*
    - *Phone chargers should be made available for the numerous personnel working several hours in the DOC.*
- Communications/Dispatch-A tactical alert was initiated at 1600 hrs. and a 10-33 initiated at 1710 hrs. These were two items learned from last year's incident.
- Intelligence/Surveillance-We had a 10-officer surveillance element (OXPD/VCSO) tasked with monitoring the protest/march from beginning to end. This was conducted via plainclothes officers in vehicles video recording the incident.

  video surveillance element was staffed at the police station to overtly video monitor the crowd's activity while at the police station.
    - *We continued to have difficulty providing real-time video footage of the crowd back to the command post. This was identified as an issue last year and was not addressed. The Investigations Bureau has been tasked with researching and purchasing the necessary equipment.*
    - *We received very little information from the surveillance component to the command post. . Senior Officer Long was very busy in the command post handling a variety of duties. There should have been a more streamlined command structure for the surveillance element to provide real-time information.*
    - *There needs to be better video coverage of the front of our police station. This should include the capability of positively identifying subjects committing crimes.*
    - *Video was captured of the chalk writing at the front of the station but no pictures were taken. This made it difficult to capture for documentation purposes.*
    - *We should have made our intentions clear to the surveillance element about what actions we wanted to capture on video and what the purpose of the video coverage was.*

- Crowd Control/Mobil Field Force/Traffic-One (1) Traffic Strike Team, One (1) Special Action Team (SEU), and Four (4) MFF squads were pre-designated in the operational plan. We deployed MFF Squad II to the Fire EOC prior to the incident to prevent over-crowding at the police station. We restricted the flow of traffic in and out of our parking lot during the event to prevent our automatic gates being kept open by the crowd.
    - *Traffic personnel shut down intersections that allowed us to restrict traffic flow into the area of the crowd while still maintaining distance between officers and the crowd. Traffic personnel should verbalize the traffic impact on ("Palm and A is completely impacted, "Oxnard Blvd is completely stopped") to assist with potential criminal complaints. Traffic personnel should also notify the command post that sworn personnel are escorting TSA's to the traffic points.*

Overtime

- **Total Overtime Expenses – $12,380**
    - Police Sergeant-$2368.44 (25.5 hours x $92.88/hour)
    - Police Officer III-$2172.21 (26.5 hours x $81.97/hour)
    - Police Officer I/II-$7516.80 (108 hours x $69.60/hour)
    - TSA-$322.56 (10.5 hours x $30.72/hour)