



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

# FINDLAY POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Introduction

### A message from Chief James Mathias

Welcome to the Findlay Police Department's 2024 Annual Report. The department has evolved into an organization with an authorized strength of 67 sworn Officers and 19 non-sworn support personnel. The 88 dedicated full time employees and the 9 Auxiliary Officers of this police department are committed to their duties and they strive every day to provide professional and fair law enforcement services, as well as prompt and efficient emergency services dispatching, parking enforcement, and customer service. I am so proud of all of our personnel that make up our great organization.



The police department is extremely appreciative of the overwhelming support and encouragement from the Findlay community. We also thank those who question us as we try to be transparent while earning public trust each and every day. We grow and improve only if we are challenged or we challenge ourselves.



The department accomplished several key goals in 2024. We added the Axon Fleet 3 cameras in all marked patrol vehicles by May to complete this video evidence package. Truleo software purchased to review all Axon videos with AI technology. This software enables our department to ensure we maintain the absolute highest levels of professionalism for our

community while also enhancing accountability and reinforcing the highest performance standards. Darksite Dispatch upgrades and remodeling were completed for more effective and efficient operations of both City and County dispatching in the event of emergencies operations. Shadow was retired after 12 years of service (13-year-old German Shephard) & K9 handler Ofcr. Paugh was assigned back to the Patrol Division for operations. Ofcr. Frey was selected as next K9 handler and we purchased Axel (16-month-old German Shephard) in early August and were a certified team by September. Eight of the sixteen disaster sirens and poles are being replaced due to their age of equipment and reliability. Gas masks were replaced for all sworn Officers due to age of this equipment (five years) and reliability. Axon Taser 10 devices replaced other taser equipment





that was out of warranty with some parts not accessible any longer, not as reliable, and also old technology for increasing our less lethal capabilities and de-escalation attempts of use of force with persons.

Training of all personnel was kept up to CALEA and OPOTA standards. We are compliant with 2024/Year 1 CALEA web-based assessment through CALEA, Law Enforcement Accreditation. Captain Hendren, Lt. Welch, and Lt. Hill all completed the FBI LEEDA Leadership

training. They were presented with the Trilogy Award by completing the FBI LEEDA Supervisor Leadership Institute, Command Leadership Institute, and Executive Leadership Institute classes.

We had several staff changes in 2024 with adding three new Police Officers, two new Dispatchers and two new Auxiliary Officers. Two of these full-time officers were lateral transfers from neighboring agencies while the third had just completed his Basic Peace Officer Training in late summer. One Auxiliary Officer was previously a full-time officer with this department, while the other has previous experience with the Hancock County Sheriff's Office. Vice Narcotics/METRICH personnel assignments were also made in September for one Sergeant and two Detectives. We brought in two new dispatchers at the end of the year and they are both starting their training assignments.

The department worked hard with recruitment efforts to hire additional personnel for both police and dispatch vacancies. We have one Officer on a long-term Military deployment and he expected to be back by the summer of 2025.

The entire staff at the Findlay Police Department looks forward to continuing its mission, meeting whatever challenges that lies ahead, and appreciates the support it receives from the Findlay community and the various partners that help us meet the needs of the community.



*Chief James Mathias*

**OUR VISION**

**We will promote a safe and secure community through fair and professional policing.**

**OUR MISSION**

**We are dedicated to preventing crime, enforcing laws, protecting life and property while upholding the constitutional rights of all.**

**OUR VALUES**

**We value professionalism, integrity and teamwork with respect for each.**



**2024 Officer of Year  
Eric Lehman**



Officer Lehman joined the FPD on 6/8/2015. Prior to this, Officer Lehman worked at the Bluffton Police Department and the Owens Community College Police Department. Since being hired at the FPD, he has served as an FTO, a member of the Crisis Management Team, a Firearms Instructor, and a Subject Control Instructor. Officer Lehman was previously awarded a letter of commendation in February 2020 for his part in successfully convincing a barricaded subject to surrender.

**2024 Civilian of the Year  
Chase Miller**



Chase Miller joined the Findlay Police Department as the Parking Enforcement Officer on 4/22/2019. Chase played an instrumental role in updating the parking ticket technology. This update streamlined the ticket issuing and payment process. His great work ethic and dedication to his job make him a valuable part of the FPD.

**PATROL DIVISION**



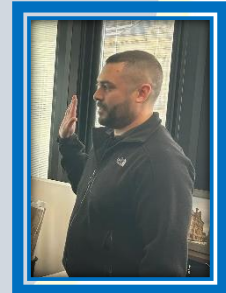
The Patrol Division is the largest, most visible component for the Findlay Police Department and is the backbone of our organization. It provides the basic police services of preserving the peace and protecting the lives and properties of others. In our mission, we are dedicated to preventing crime, enforcing laws, protecting life and property while upholding the constitutional rights of all. We will promote a safe and secure community through fair and professional policing. We value professionalism, integrity and teamwork with respect for each other and the community we are proud to serve.

The manpower allocated to the Patrol Division for 2024 consisted of one Lieutenant, six Patrol Sergeants, forty uniformed Patrol Officers and nine Auxiliary members. The Division operates on a shift schedule consisting of three shifts, with Sergeants and Officers working four 10-hour shifts followed by three consecutive days off. The shifts are configured to overlap, maximizing available personnel during peak periods of activity. Along with their patrol duties, many of the officers have other specialized assignments that require additional skills and training.



*Timothy Saltzman*

Throughout the year, three new patrol officers were hired to fill vacancies within the department. In 2024, the Findlay Police Department welcomed Nathaniel Staley, Zachariah Dewese, and Adam Bour. Officer Staley and Officer Bour were lateral transfers coming from the Hancock County Sheriff's Office and Reynoldsburg Police Department respectively. Officer Dewese attended the basic police academy at EHOVE Career Center in Milan, OH the first part of 2024 before beginning his Field Training Program in September.



*Kyle Plumley*

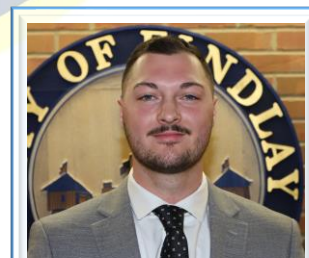
We also added two Auxiliary Officers to the department. Officer Kyle Plumley left his full-time position in March as a police officer, but has joined our Auxiliary and Timothy Saltzman, formerly of the Hancock County Sheriff's office was sworn in in April.



**Nathaniel Staley**



**Adam Bour**



**Zachariah Dewese**



The following are some of the notable event stats and their comparison from the year prior:

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>% + or -</u>	<u>Actual #</u>
<b>Calls for Service</b>	46488	44410	-4%	-2078
<b>Arrests</b>	1643	1380	-16%	-263
<b>Warrant Service</b>	758	597	-21%	-161
<b>Domestic Disputes</b>	419	491	+17%	+72
<b>Assaults</b>	107	112	+4%	+5
<b>Homicide</b>	0	1	+100%	+1
<b>Sex Offense</b>	117	85	-27%	-32
<b>Theft/Fraud/Forgery</b>	587	547	-7%	-40
<b>Theft of Motor Vehicle</b>	40	15	-62%	-25
<b>Robbery</b>	10	10	0%	0
<b>Unlawful Entry</b>	59	52	-12%	-7
<b>Property Damage/Vandalism</b>	151	100	-33%	-51
<b>Drug Complaints</b>	363	257	-29%	-106
<b>Alcohol Violations (OVI not included)</b>	49	36	-26%	-13
<b>School Walk Throughs</b>	179	311	+74%	+132

Traffic enforcement continues to be an emphasis for the Patrol Division, with the overall goal of reducing traffic accidents and increasing motorist safety. The number of property crashes decreased, however, injury crashes increased. The FPD handled two fatalities during 2024. The number of OVI's decreased, along with a decrease in the number of citations written. There were also 6 motor vehicle pursuits in 2024, compared to 12 in 2023.



The OVI's, citations, and crash reports were broken down as follows:

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>% + or -</u>	<u>(Actual #)</u>
<b>OVI</b>	116	88	-24%	-28
<b>Traffic Stops</b>	3778	3860	+2%	+82
<b>Citations</b>	2335	2243	-4%	-92
<b>Property Crashes</b>	726	511	-30%	-215
<b>Injury Crashes</b>	187	209	+12%	+22
<b>Fatal Crashes</b>	2	2	0%	0

**CIT**

A Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) is a police mental health collaborative program. The term "CIT" is often used to describe both a program and a training in law enforcement to help guide interactions between law enforcement and those living with a mental illness. The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program is a community partnership of law enforcement, mental health and addiction professionals, individuals who live with mental illness and/or addiction disorders, their families and other advocates. Crisis teams support people who might otherwise need

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
<b>Total Calls</b>	402	329
<b>Oldest Person</b>	96	79
<b>Youngest Person</b>	12	8
<b>Guns Involved</b>	2	7
<b>Knives Involved</b>	8	21
<b>Other Weapons</b>	0	11
<b>Injuries</b>	4	0
<b>Arrests</b>	7	9
<b>CIT on Scene</b>	402	329
<b>Total Hours</b>	300	267



*CIT Officer of the Year  
Officer Chance Collins*

to go to the hospital, for example, due to psychosis, severe self-harm or suicide attempts. They usually include a number of mental health professionals, such as a psychiatrist, mental health nurses, social workers and support workers.

The Findlay Police Department requires all officers to be trained in CIT. Most senior officers are trained in CIT, with the remaining officers scheduled to receive training during the next offered class in early 2025.

**Quick Response Team**

The Quick Response Team (QRT) is a team of passionate individuals who work to provide prevention and specialized behavioral health and substance abuse services to individuals, children and families in our multi-cultural communities in order to strengthen family life and promote personal growth. They offer a nurturing environment focused on personal growth and self-care through trainings and the development of skills. Family

Resources are dedicated to supplying employees with the necessary skills and tools essential to be successful in their roles. They continuously analyze the formal structure to support the program (e.g., referral protocols, policies and Memoranda of Understanding among the participating partners). They also work with recovery providers to create "fast tracks" to treatment and recovery support via the development of referral agreements that triage individuals having an overdose event. They maintain the program in a way that complies with state and federal patient confidentiality requirements. They receive overdose event data and schedule visits within seventy-two (72) hours with the Patrol Officers of the Findlay Police Department. They also work with the Health Department to coordinate the disbursement of Naloxone to patients/clients. For 2024, there were twenty-one (21) suspected overdose reports compared to seventy-four (74) in 2023. There was one (1) suspected overdose death reports compared to six (6) in 2023.

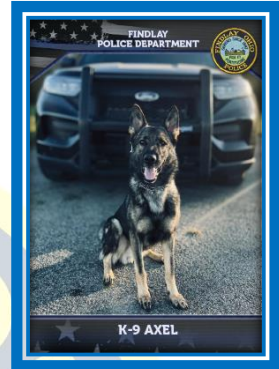


## K-9 Units



The Findlay Police Department retired K9 Shadow in August of this year after serving the Findlay Police Department and the citizens of Findlay for almost 12 years! K9 Shadow is enjoying retirement at home with his handler, Officer Paugh.

With the retirement of K9 Shadow, the Findlay Police Department welcomed a new K9 named Axel. Axel is a one-and-a-half-year-old German Shepherd and has been teamed up with Officer Frey as his K9 Handler. Together, they completed a Police K-9 Academy at Von der Haus Gill in Wapakoneta, Ohio. Along with a new K9, we were also able to purchase some new equipment, including a new bite suit for training purposes.



The Findlay Police Department has a long history of providing exceptional police canine services. Currently, the department is served by K9 Axel, partnered with Officer Frey, and K9 Deke, partnered with Officer Atkins.



The dogs spend both their working and off duty-hours with their handlers. The canines are cross-trained to handle patrol duties, such as building searches and tracks, as well as drug detection. The teams receive extensive weekly training in both areas. The teams are also requested to aid other law enforcement agencies. The K-9 units provided numerous presentations during 2024 to school and community groups, as well as during events. The dogs are always well received during these demonstrations.

The K-9 units trained a total of 84 times for a total of 370 hours. They were utilized 58 times for street deployments or narcotics sniffs. In addition to the aforementioned weekly training, both K-9 units completed a week-long advanced training through the Ohio Tactical Officers Association (OTOA).



## Other Equipment

The Findlay Police Department camera trailer is primarily used to monitor large crowds at events throughout the City. There were four events in 2024 in which the camera trailer was deployed along with utilizing it to monitor downtown during the unofficial cruise nights.

The FPD has two department owned drones (sUAS), one of which is equipped with thermal technology and the other is used to assist on CMT call outs. The drones were utilized during 13 call outs in 2024 as well as used to assist other City departments such as the Mayor's Office, Fire Department, Zoning and Water Departments. There are

currently six trained drone pilots for the department. Training for the drone pilots occurred quarterly in 2024.

In addition to the Body Worn Cameras that were purchased and implemented in 2023, the FPD installed and activated dash cameras on all patrol vehicles in the spring of 2024. Along with the BWC project, the department has purchased Truleo, AI driven software used to review all body camera footage. It then provides reports to both identify positive and negative interactions by our officers and the public. This allows the department to acknowledge exemplary conduct, but also identify issues that may need addressed through training or otherwise.



### Training and Facilities

The City of Findlay Training Center provided numerous training opportunities for Findlay Officers and Dispatchers in 2024. Officers completed the state mandated continued education training in the City rather than traveling to neighboring agencies. The training center also provided an opportunity for the police department to host training open to other departments in the area. We hosted BAC recertification classes, Active Shooter training, Criminal Interdiction, and Basic Telecommunicator to name a few. The department conducted annual in-service training in topics such as Officer Response to Active Shooters, Driving, Firearms, Use of Force, Taser, Less Lethal Munitions, Self-Defense, and Legal Updates.



In addition, several officers received the following training classes: Forensic Interviewing, Crime Scene Photography, Criminal Patrol Drug Interdiction, Reasonable Force, Reid Interview Techniques, Basic Interview and Interrogation, Advanced Interview and Interrogation, Constitutional Use of Force, Prosecuting Drugged Drivers, Road Spike Deployment, and Drone training.

### Patrol Division Goals for 2025

- To ensure the safety and security of all citizens of Findlay and its visitors.
- Prevent and prosecute crime through efficient and effective deployment of law enforcement personnel and resources.
- Recruit and retain highly qualified law enforcement professionals through competitive pay, benefits and advancement opportunities.
- Provide training to our officers that is current, useful, and will enhance our officer's skill sets.
- Continue to host comprehensive trainings that will benefit our officers along with neighboring departments' officers.

## CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Crisis Management Team, or CMT, is comprised of four important components. Each component is specially trained in both tactical responses and Crisis Intervention training. The CMT trains on a monthly basis. That training encompasses tactics and firearms training. Scenario training is also held to improve search warrant executions and response to hostage/barricaded person situations. All positions on the CMT are voluntary positions. All CMT members have other day to day duties, but they come together as a unit when they are needed. CMT members are always on call.



The CMT is comprised of four groups, the Emergency response team (ERT), the Crisis Negotiator Team, the Tactical Dispatchers, and the Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS). The CMT is led by the CMT Commander.



The largest component is the Emergency Response Team (ERT). The ERT is staffed by the Tactical Commander who oversees the operations of two squads of up to eight members each. Each squad is supervised directly by a Team Leader, who is one of the eight squad members. The ERT is staffed by four Sergeants, nine Patrol Officers, and one Detective. At year's end, one squad was operating at seven operators and the other at five.

The Crisis Negotiator Team (CNT) is another component of the Crisis Management Team. There are up to four negotiators on the team, and currently a sergeant heads the group. These officers are specially trained Crisis Negotiators who are responsible for interaction and communication with anyone involved in a barricade incident, hostage, or similar situation.

The Tactical Dispatchers make up the third part of the CMT. They are responsible for radio communication among members of the CMT as well as any additional agencies that are assisting with an operation. Tactical Dispatch is also responsible for information gathering and organizing while assigned to the Mobile Command Center during call outs. The four dispatcher positions are staffed by Findlay Police dispatchers, led by the Senior Communication Officer.

The Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS) members complete the fourth component of the CMT. TEMS is staffed by eleven members of the Findlay Fire Department. The medics provided the ability to have immediate medical aid whenever the CMT was activated. An FFD Captain heads the TEMS group.



During 2024, the CMT assisted the METRICH Drug Unit in serving search warrants for drugs. These were search warrants that were considered to have a higher than normal degree of risk involved. The CMT assisted in executing three search warrants. All three search warrants were served without any injuries reported to anyone involved.

Aside from the search warrants, the CMT was activated on two separate occasions. Once was to assist patrol a pursuit that ended with a male suspect firing at officers. The team was never deployed for the incident.

The second occasion was a reported shots fired call involving a suspect with mental illness. The team was deployed and the male was taken into custody without incident. No one was injured in this activation.

Two members of the ERT command staff were able to attend an outside team leader training. The information learned was brought back and provided to the rest of the team.

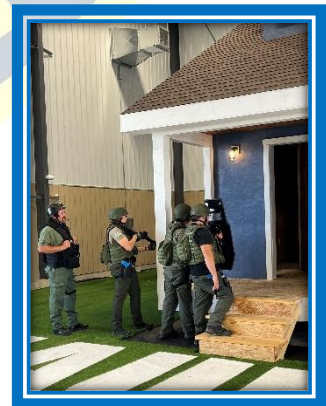
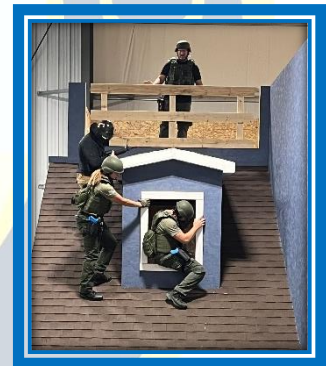


The CMT was able to training with several other agencies the calendar year including the Hancock County S.R.T., the Seneca County Regional S.R.T., and Wood County S.R.T. The groups worked on scenarios including scenarios involving team integration. The ability to work with additional agencies will be key to success in any large-scale incident.

The S.T.R.I.C.T. center opened In September of this year. The CMT was able to utilize it on multiple occasions as a training site for training days. The building is going to allow us to increase the realism of scenario training and may provide an opportunity to bring in more advanced trainings and trainers.

**CMT Goals and Objectives for 2025**

- Continue to train on a monthly basis
- Continue with scenario training
- Provide training opportunities from outside the department
- Fill the four open positions for ERT operator
- Train addition operators on less lethal tactics
- Increase our training with TEMS
- Increase training with Outs ide agencies
- Increase classroom trainings
- Host trainings
- Get new operators to Basic SWAT school
- Promote an Operator to team leader



## DETECTIVES DIVISION

In 2024, the Detective Division was composed of one lieutenant, four general detectives, and one sergeant along with two additional detectives assigned to the Hancock County METRICH Enforcement Unit. This staffing level remained unchanged from 2023.

The general investigation detectives primarily investigate major crimes such as felonious assault, rape, robbery, burglary and child sex crimes. Cases originate from various sources, but the majority originate from the initial response of a patrol officer. The division lieutenant reviews and evaluates the reports prior to making a determination to assign a detective the case.

Detectives work closely with the Hancock County Child Protective Services Unit to investigate child physical and sexual abuse cases. Both agencies utilize the Center for Safe and Healthy Children to conduct forensic interviews of juvenile victims.

The digital forensics portion of the Detective unit remains a busy area. The Findlay Police department and surrounding agencies frequently utilize the skills of Det. Kevin Spieker when it comes to the processing of digital evidence. Due to value of the evidence and the frequency of the usages, Det. Chris Brickner spent much of 2024 being trained in the digital forensic world to assist Det. Kevin Spieker with the high call volume.

For 2024, there were a total of 141 cases assigned to the detective division.

The total number of criminal charges submitted in 2024 was 1302. These charges were the result of an arrest or requesting charges upon completion of investigations.

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>3 year average</u>
<b>Misdemeanor</b>	718	946	791	818
<b>Felony</b>	399	572	340	437
<b>Juvenile</b>	152	111	78	114

### The 2025 goals for the Detective Division:

- Adding an additional detective
- Continue to expand digital forensic investigation capabilities
- Continue to grow our partnerships with external partners to reduce drug overdoses and investigate offenses involving juvenile victims

**VICE NARCOTICS UNIT/METRICH**



The Findlay Police Department Vice/Narcotics Unit is part of the Detective Division. Members of the Findlay Police Department Vice/Narcotics Unit are assigned to the Hancock County METRICH Enforcement Unit, a ten-county drug task force based out of Mansfield, Ohio. METRICH is one of the only de-centralized task forces in the state and is also the largest drug task force in the State of Ohio. The Hancock County METRICH Drug Task Force is funded by grants issued through the State of Ohio, therefore is able to operate at a significant savings for the taxpayers of the City of Findlay and Hancock County.

This was a unique year for the METRICH Unit due to some personnel changes. From January to August of 2024, the Unit was staffed with an Access Officer and one detective from the Hancock County Sheriff's Office, a supervisor and two detectives from the Findlay Police Department. The unit was one detective short from the HSO. In August, the Hancock METRICH Enforcement Unit replaced the acting Access Officer with a Sergeant from the Hancock County Sheriff's Office and a new supervisor was appointed by the Findlay Police Department. The detective positions were filled with two detectives from each agency, putting the Hancock METRICH Enforcement Unit at full strength.



The Hancock METRICH Enforcement Unit generated 185 reports throughout 2024. Of these, there were 130 narcotic cases, 79 field interviews, 4 liquor violations, 2 prostitution investigations and 2 overdose death investigation. Those cases resulted in 29 felony charges and 1 misdemeanor charge. In addition, solid evidence exists in both overdose death investigations which should lead to closing of both of those cases in the near future.



*Seizure from 404 Lester Ave on 9/18/2024*

The Unit also obtained 11 search warrants, including 4 warrants for houses and 2 GPS warrants. The majority of the search warrants requested were for cell phones and DNA. There were 19 arrests generated for the Patrol Division during surveillance operations and several new confidential informants were added.



The following drugs/evidence were seized from investigations in 2024:

- 378.86 grams of Methamphetamine
- 83.9 grams of Crack Cocaine
- 9.48 grams of Fentanyl mix
- 22.87 grams of Fentanyl
- 3 grams of raw marijuana
- 20 Adderall Pills
- Small seizure of Mushrooms
- 1 gun
- 1 Chevrolet Equinox

The METRICH Unit works closely with other local, state and federal agencies. The unit has assisted the following agencies in 2024 with covert investigations:

- Ohio Investigative Unit
- Ohio BCI
- State Medical Board of Ohio
- State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy
- DEA – Toledo
- Ohio Adult Parole Authority
- United States Postal Inspectors
- Seneca Co. METRICH

The METRICH Enforcement Unit, along with about 40 other drug task forces across the state, are being hit hard by budget cuts on the state and national level. The hope is with the incoming Sheriff and Prosecutor in Hancock County, the Hancock METRICH Enforcement Unit will continue to be successful in 2025.

#### **VNU goals for 2025**

- Increase drug education presentations
- Increase drug offender investigations and arrests
- Increase forfeitures of money and property from drug offenders
- Work more with Prosecutors in the penalty process for users vs. dealers
- Focus efforts at additional areas to include human trafficking and solicitation locally
- Collaborate with more adjacent agencies and METRICH Units to broaden our knowledge base
- Continue cooperation with Federal, State, and local agencies to reduce narcotic activity in Findlay and Hancock County.
- Build a multi-step approach to help fund the task force for day-to-day operations
- Find sources of funds to begin rebuilding the “rainy day” fund
- Look at options for future movement out of our current facility

## SPECIAL SERVICES DIVISION

The Special Services Division of the Police Department is supervised by Lt. David Hill. The Division is broken down into several support areas of the Police Department to include Property and Evidence, Municipal Court Officer, Crime Prevention, Zoning Enforcement, Parking Enforcement, Police Records and the Communications Center.

### Parking And Records

The daily clerical responsibilities for Parking and Records are shared by two clerks. These tasks include entering and maintaining parking violations, scanning and filing case related documents, providing copies of police reports to the public, insurance companies, media, etc., receipting monies collected for various related fees, parking violations, equipment rental, false alarm charges, etc., and completing expungements/sealing of records.

The FPD currently has one Parking Enforcement Officer who is responsible for monitoring parking violations in the downtown area as well as additional designated areas.

	2023	2024
<b>Parking Tickets Issued: TOTAL</b>	5638	4714
<b>Parking Enforcement</b>	5507	4554
<b>Patrol</b>	131	160
<b>Parking Violations - Money Collected</b>	\$65,641.00	\$59,883.00
<b>Parking Lot Rental - Money Collected</b>	\$35,836.00	\$35,460.00
<b>Findlay Inn &amp; Conf Ctr</b>	\$21,795.00	\$21,795.00
<b>Remaining City Lots</b>	\$14,041.00	\$13,665.00
<b>Warning Tickets Issued</b>	191	972
<b>False Alarm Charges - Fees Collected</b>	\$1,750.00	\$750.00
<b>Bike License - Fees Collected</b>	\$16.00	\$12.00
<b>Records Room</b>		
<b>Report Charges</b>	\$168.00	\$146.00
<b>Postage Reimbursement</b>	\$5.00	\$2.00
<b>Cruiser Rental - Fees Collected</b>	\$2,652.00	\$225.00
<b>Totals</b>	\$106,068.00	\$96,478.00



Before



After

At the end of 2024, the Records office underwent a much needed remodel. The Records Clerks received updated office furniture and flooring, enhancing the workspace and making it more efficient to perform their jobs. Two new work stations were added to the back of the Records Room to accommodate additional Records employees in the future.

## Property and Evidence Control

The property and evidence control function provides for the security and control of seized, recovered, and evidentiary property as well as abandoned, lost or found property in the custody of the Department. This is critically important in supporting investigations, in helping to guarantee the successful prosecution at criminal/civil trials, in facilitating the timely return of property to its rightful owners, and in establishing the Department's reputation as an honest, reputable agency worthy of the public's confidence and trust. It is critical that a law enforcement agency's property and evidence control function develop and maintain strict measures for the receipt, handling, security, and disposition of property.



The Property Officer is responsible for the proper cataloging and storage of all property that is recovered by the Officers of the Findlay Police Department. He is also responsible for the disposition of this property.



Officer Doug Marshall continued in the assignment of Property Officer. Officer Marshall was assisted throughout the year by additional officers as staffing allowed. The additional officers assigned to the Property Room were able to vet items released by the courts and no longer needed.

The Property Officer turned over funds to the Auditor's Office "Safekeeping" Fund in 2024 totaling \$90,629.24. Unclaimed/unknown owner funds totaled \$1,809.77 and safekeeping known owner funds totaled \$89,840.00. An additional \$2,366.00 was paid directly to the Court(s) or owners, either pursuant to

a Court Order or to an agreement made by the owners.

In 2024, the Property Room was forced to seek an alternate location to incinerate property. We were also able to locate Oscos Industries in Jackson, Ohio who is able to incinerate items also for destruction ranging from handguns to prescription pills. In addition, the Findlay Police Department purchased "The Drug Incinerator", a portable drug disposal incinerator to assist



with the destruction of narcotics. Oscos Industries was used a total of three times throughout the year and “The Drug Incinerator” was used once. The Property Officer incinerated 39 boxes of prescription medications containing over 700lbs, over 300 street drug related items, three handguns and one rifle. A total of three court orders were requested to the City Law Director’s Office for all above mention items.

Total number of items that entered the Property Room in 2024, were 3301 items. In addition to the items mentioned above, an additional 84 items were removed from the Property Room through return to owners, donation to local charitable organizations, conversion to city use, or disposal. A total of 24 bicycles were donated to Bikes, Books and Badges. A total of 17 60-day letters were sent out to property owners.



At the close of 2024, there were a total of 14,107 items being held in the Record Management System. The breakdown is as follows: 11,948 items for the Findlay Police Department and 2,159 items for Hancock METRICH (VNU).

A new shelf was installed, replacing the two filing cabinets used for safely storing handguns. This doubled the storage space and increased organization. Additionally, a label maker and barcode reader to the extra desk in the room. A 100% property audit was initialed and is progressing well. A key improvement is the use of a hand-held tablet to assist with the audit. The hand-held can inventory a location in a matter of seconds, instead of several minutes to even an hour. It is also used to move/consolidate locations, again in a matter of seconds. The addition of the hand-held tablet is by far one of the most valuable improvements to the property room in 2024.

**Property Room objectives for 2025**

- Expand Special Services by one full time employee to assist with property and court duties.
- Clean up of records into the new RMS found during audit.
- Attend Tyler Tech Conference to further develop handheld operations and property room operations.
- Initiate a rotating Property Audit system

## Zoning Enforcement

The City of Findlay Zoning Enforcement consists of one Findlay Police Officer. Officer Joe Smith continued this assignment for 2024.

Throughout calendar year 2024, the Zoning Officer investigated 19 dilapidated structures, 190 junk and material storage complaints, 121 abandoned junk motor vehicle complaints, and 200 high grass and weed complaints. For a total of 530 complaints.

A total of 45 cases were abated by the City of Findlay in 2024. The abated incidents included 4 structures were demolished, 28 properties mowed, 6 vehicles impounded, and 6 junk material clean-ups took place. There were 9 requests of charges submitted to the City of Findlay Prosecutor’s Office.

All other complaints were unfounded or the violations were handled by the property owners.

Zoning Officer also assisted other Divisions to include: Patrol division with approximately 187 incidents/investigations, Findlay Municipal Court Officer with serving or attempting to serve 213 summons/subpoenas. Also assisted by appearing in court on numerous occasions as well as assisting in Property. Several times throughout the year the Zoning Officer worked with the City of Findlay Public Works Dept. removing several thousand pounds of garbage/trash along the river.

Open Cases	CODE/PERMIT DESCRIPTION	2023	2024
	Dilapidated Structures	24	7
	Junk and Material Storage	82	51
	Abandoned Junk Motor Vehicles	59	18
	High Grass and Weeds	68	49
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>233</b>	<b>125</b>
New Cases Opened	CODE/PERMIT DESCRIPTION	2023	2024
	Dilapidated Structures	31	20
	Junk and Material Storage	179	190
	Abandoned Junk Motor Vehicles	278	122
	Noxious or Offensive Odors	35	0
	High Grass and Weeds	182	226
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>705</b>	<b>558</b>
Cases Abated and Invoiced	CODE/PERMIT DESCRIPTION	2023	2024
	Dilapidated Structures	2	4
	Junk and Material Storage	6	6
	Abandoned Junk Motor Vehicles	69	7
	High Grass and Weeds	22	28
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>99</b>	<b>45</b>
Cases Closed	CODE/PERMIT DESCRIPTION	2023	2024
	Dilapidated Structures	12	18
	Junk and Material Storage	97	139
	Abandoned Junk Motor Vehicles	215	104
	High Grass and Weeds	158	177
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>482</b>	<b>438</b>



## Crime Prevention

The 2024 Crime Prevention Office consisted of one officer supervised by the Special Services Lieutenant. Crime Prevention Officer Brian White continued to manage the Crime Prevention Office for the 2024 calendar year.



The Crime Prevention Officer is responsible for community outreach and safety presentations throughout the community. This includes programs at Findlay City Schools, St. Michael's School, public safety events and local businesses and organizations.

Many of the topics discussed in schools are topics not normally covered in class, with an emphasis on drug education and prevention, as well as social skills and relationship building. In 2024, there were 323 class presentations provided to students.

Topics discussed in the community related to crime prevention issues relevant to specific businesses and community crime trends. A total of 86 community presentations were provided for 2024. Officer White also conducted police department tours to various groups and numerous interviews were provided to the media on safety and crime prevention topics, as well as monthly radio interviews as part of WFIN's Crime Prevention segment.

The Crime Prevention Office is responsible for its own administrative duties such as scheduling, budgeting, record keeping and creating presentations. Officer White frequently reviews police reports for new crime trends to enhance crime prevention techniques and attends trainings and conferences throughout the year to keep up to date on issues pertaining to crime prevention. To further this effort, Officer White is currently the Vice President for the Ohio Crime Prevention Association. This organization is one of the largest state crime prevention organizations in the country. This position offers up to date materials for Crime Prevention, as well as free training at no cost to the City of Findlay or department.



Other duties assigned to the Crime Prevention Office include conducting background checks for solicitor, taxicab and panhandler permits issued through the City of Findlay. The Crime Prevention Office processed a total of 92 permits for the 2024 calendar year, up from 62. Crime Prevention is also responsible for producing crime statistic reports, attending job and safety fairs, organizing police department events, conducting security surveys and maintaining the various police department social media accounts and webpage.

## Neighborhood Watch

The Findlay Neighborhood Watch Program, commonly referred to as “Block Watch”, continues to be an asset to both the citizens of Findlay and the Findlay Police Department. Currently, there are 27 Watches in the Findlay Block Watch Program. While the structure and meetings of each Watch is determined by that particular group, most watches meet once a month to stay up to date of crime trends and issues facing Findlay.

Block Watch is a community program that is managed by each individual neighborhood. While many in area communities have turned to social media platforms for crime news, the Findlay Block Watch Program still allows a personal connection to the police department. The Block Watch “Captain” collaborates with the Crime Prevention Officer to develop ideas on solving common neighborhood problems. The Crime Prevention Officer also offers trainings on a wide range of crime prevention topics such as burglary prevention, personal safety, drug education and police department operations among others.

With most cities facing higher crime rates and budgetary constraints, Neighborhood Watch Programs serve to augment police personnel. Findlay’s Block Watch Program allows citizens to work hand and hand with law enforcement to help reduce crime, increase community pride and solve common problems.

## Community Outreach

The Crime Prevention Officer continues to expand community outreach by participating in numerous boards and committees throughout Findlay. These organizations are relevant to the mission of the Findlay Police Department and furthers the exchange of information and ideas between organizations. Officer White attended a total of 243 community meetings for 2024 and took on leadership roles in several of these organizations. These roles include Vice President of the Ohio Crime Prevention Association, President of the Fort Findlay Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #20 and President of the National Alliance of Mental Illness for Hancock County. Officer White is also the Vice-Chair for the Hancock County Community Partnership Committee, a Hancock County Crisis Intervention Team Coordinator and coordinates the Hancock County Special Olympics Torch Run among other roles.

Some of the community groups the Crime Prevention Officer was active with include:

- Crime Stoppers of Hancock County
- Community Partnership Council
- Community Awareness Committee
- Suicide Awareness Committee
- Hancock County Handle with Care
- Camp 911
- Ohio Put a Lid on It Bike Safety Coalition
- Hancock County Hidden in Plain Sight
- Ohio Crime Prevention Association



- Ohio School Resource Officer Association
- Findlay/Hancock County Crime Prevention Association
- TRIAD/SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Working Together)
- Help Me Grow Advisory Committee
- Hancock County Family Stability Committee
- Findlay Halloween Parade Committee
- NAMI of Hancock County
- Hancock County Crisis Intervention Team
- Welcome to a New Life Advisory Committee
- United Way of Hancock County Impact Teams

The Crime Prevention Division also represented the Findlay Police Department at a variety of community events such as sporting events, community resource fairs, safety expos, job fairs and medication collections.

### Flag City Night Out

Each year the Findlay Police Department hosts its signature event, Flag City Night Out at Riverside Park. The goal of this event has been to remain a free community event with donations from the community businesses allowing the event to take place each year.



We'd like to thank Heavenly Pizza, Coca-Cola, Utz Snacks, Movement Church, Hempy Water, Kona Ice, We Serve Coffee, Dick's Towing, Ary Entertainment, Hancock County Sheriff's Office Explorers/Yield Program, Findlay High School Marching Band and the Fort Findlay FOP Lodge 20 for their continued support of Flag City Night Out.

2024's event included the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Mascot Games, culminating with the Battle of the Biggs, which featured leaders from each law enforcement organization pairing up with child attendees in competition. Flag City Night Out also included music, inflatable obstacle courses, children's activities, and a variety of live demonstrations.

### Bikes, Books and Badges

The mission of the Findlay Police Department Bike's, Books and Badges Program is to return abandoned bicycles to the community, educate area children on the importance of bicycle safety and get officers more involved in community relation. As part of the "bikes" portion, 32 abandoned/recovered bicycles were refurbished and provided back to area residents for the 2024 calendar year. 8 new bicycles were either provided to Findlay City Schools as awards for good behavior, or awarded at police department events. The 32 bicycles constitute a significant reduction from previous years that can be attributed to lack of inventory. Officer White continues to explore partnerships in the community to continue to expand the bicycle program.



To further the mission of Bike's, Books and Badges Program "books" portion, Officer White presents to community 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders and daycares on the importance of wearing bicycle helmets and safe cycling. This is reinforced during the summer months with ice cream "tickets" being issued for children caught wearing their helmets. While traffic citations and tickets are generally punitive in nature, these tickets are gift cards for free ice cream donated to the Bike's, Books and Badges Program by Dietsch's Brothers Ice cream. We would like to thank them for their continued support of the Bike's, Books and Badges Program.

### Bicycle Rodeo



To kick off summer, the Findlay Police Department hosts an annual Bicycle Rodeo as part of the Bikes, Books and Badges Program. This year's event was held at the Marathon Center for the Performing Arts, which continues to be a great venue for ease of access to the community. In 2023 we saw a record turnout of 146 children participating in the event. 2024 was a similar year, with 142 attendees.

As part of the Bicycle Rodeo, children are taught the fundamentals of bicycle safety through instruction, obstacle courses and road courses. Awards are offered at the end of the event to children who showed exceptional skills. Free helmets are provided, as well as a reflective cinch back pack containing t-shirts, bike lights and safety materials. Other bicycle safety items and bicycle licenses were also provided at the event.

### Camp 911

CAMP 911 is a partnership between the Findlay Police Department, Findlay Fire Department, Hancock County Sheriff's Office and Hancock Public Health. CAMP 911 teaches a variety of safety topics to children entering Kindergarten. This also exposes children to a school-like setting and socialization with other children.

The week-long program held in June includes topics such as School Bus Safety, Electrical Safety, Fire Safety, Stranger Danger, First Aid, Bicycle Safety, Seatbelt Safety and Pedestrian Safety among others. This high demand program offered a morning and afternoon session with up to 100 students each. Officer White taught on topics such as bicycle and seatbelt safety.



### Social Media

Social media continues to be a valuable asset for distributing information and alerts to citizens, as well as highlighting events hosted by the Findlay Police Department. The department continues to utilize Facebook, X (formally Twitter), Next-Door and YouTube to keep the public up to date on crime trends and public safety topics.

The police department sought the public’s assistance in several cases, which was highly successful in identifying suspects in criminal complaints. Social media, paired with the Citizen Connect Crime Map, offer great tools in keeping the public up to date on crimes occurring in their neighborhoods.

**Coffee with a Cop**

Coffee with A Cop is a nationwide effort to bridge the gap between citizens and law enforcement. Monthly events were held at Coffee Amici, where members of the community could meet to discuss issues in their neighborhoods, or simply enjoy a cup of coffee while getting to know officers.



The success of the program relies on its simplicity. There is no set agenda and the topics discussed are random by nature.

Due to the success of Coffee with A Cop, a second monthly event was added in 2022 to focus on seniors. This event is held at 50 North on the third Thursday of the month and continued through 2024. This will also continue into 2025.

**New for 2024**

In the summer of 2024, the Findlay Police Department was awarded a community relations grant provided by the Findlay-Hancock County Community Foundation. The purpose of this grant was to further facilitate community relations between the department and Findlay community. The Crime Prevention Office utilized the monies from this grant to partner with Kona Ice and offer several social events throughout the summer to distribute Kona Ice to area residents during the



summer heat. This event proved to be highly successful, with plans to research funding, continue and possibly expand into 2025.

The Crime Prevention Office also paired up with the Fort Findlay Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 20 Foundation. The FOP 20 Foundation offers Cops and Kids Programming with the purpose of bringing officers in Hancock County and community youth together. This partnership pairs well with the mission of the Findlay Police Department Crime

## Communications

The Findlay Police Department communications center is a lifeline to both residents and officers, as it is the central hub for all emergency communications within The City of Findlay. Our communication center operates twenty-four hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.



Employees are cross-trained in call-taking and dispatching police and fire to ensure seamless service is provided at all times. Our center is often the first point of contact for those in need of public safety services and our dispatchers are true first responders. Our team of dedicated dispatchers are masters of multitasking and navigating numerous software programs, multiple phone lines, non-emergency and emergency radio traffic. The dispatchers are professional and compassionate when aiding the community.

Patrol officers & firefighters rely on the dispatchers to serve as a link between them and residents. Dispatchers provide information to officers and firefighters to help keep them safe as they respond to calls for service. Our dispatchers manage a seemingly impossible amount of information flow throughout each shift.



Dispatch enters data into the Tyler New World Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and the Law Enforcement Automated Data system (LEADS). All of the dispatchers are certified by the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) in Emergency Medical Dispatch

(EMD) and Public Safety Telecommunicator. There are currently three dispatchers who are also certified communications center training officers. All dispatchers are CPR certified.

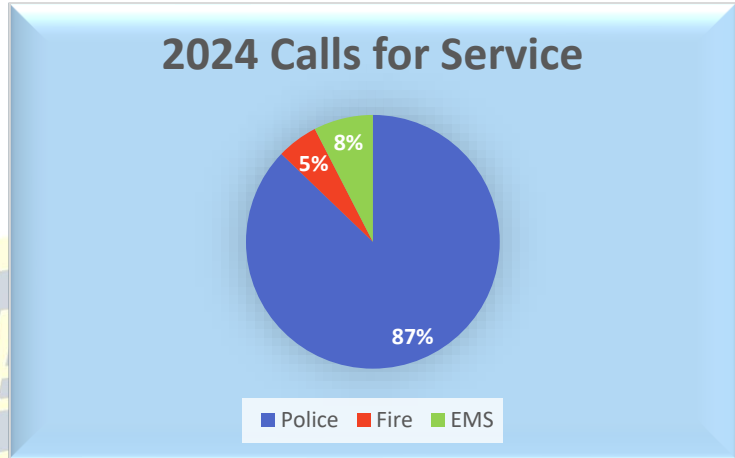
In 2024, the communications center received 36,904 calls and placed 36,749 telephone calls. Of those calls received, 13,073 were 911 calls from both cell phones and landlines making an average of 36, 911 calls received per day. In addition, the Findlay Police Department has the capabilities of receiving 911 calls via text. There were a total of 67 text to 911 calls received throughout the year.

911 Call Breakdown		
Service Type	Number of Calls	% of total
Business	539	4.12%
Residential	126	0.96%
VOIP	947	7.24%
Wireless	11,281	86.29%
Other Sources	180	1.38%



For 2024, a total of 53,844 CAD calls were entered by dispatchers for Police, Fire and EMS services.

**Findlay Police 44,410**  
**Findlay Fire 2,685**  
**EMS 3,851**

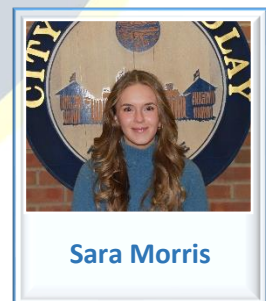


The dispatchers are responsible for entering Findlay Municipal Court warrants and summons. A total of 683 bench warrants were entered into the LEADS & Tyler New World programs and 429 process and discharge warrants entered into Tyler/New World. There were also 262 summons to appear entered into the Tyler New World program.



The Findlay Police Department, along with the Hancock County Sheriff's Office, completed the "Dark Site Dispatching Center" located at Findlay Fire Station #4. This site is to be used as a secondary location for all dispatching needs.

In late 2024, two new dispatchers joined the department. Both Sara Morris and Courtney Wolph started in December.



**Communications Goals for 2025**

- Add additional outside training for all Dispatchers
- Have all Dispatchers complete updated Active Shooter Response training
- Implement Dark Site Rotation for Dispatchers