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Subject: Connecting the Dots - Crimes statistics in Waynesville.

After listening to Brandon Gilmore's presentation of Waynesville Police Department Crime Statistics to the Aldermen + Mayor at the last Aldermen meeting, I'm afraid I walked away confused. I am trying to resolve three (3) sets of data.

• The Waynesville Police Department Community Meeting, that was held at 6:00 PM at 112 Virginia Ave., Waynesville, NC on 6/2/2022, main presenter Tyler Trantham, who is not here anymore,

• The Waynesville Police Department Community presentation to Aldermen + Mayor at the last Aldermen Meeting, 7/26/2022, presented by Brandon Gilmore, and

• https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/nc/waynesville/crime

I'm trying to connect the dots between the two Waynesville Police Department presentations with statistics from from neighborhoodscout.com. Here is a recap from neighborhoodscout.com.

Waynesville's CRIME INDEX is the worst in North Carolina….CRIME INDEX SCALE is 100-1 (100- the SAFEST / 1- the most UNSAFE)

1	Waynesville
1	Asheville
2	Canton
2	Sylva
3	Maggie Valley
4	Durham
5	Atlanta GA
5	Hendersonville
5	Greensboro
6	Hickory
6	Fayetteville
7	Charlotte
20	Raleigh
68	Winston Salem

 Waynesville's PROPERTY CRIME RATE (Per 1000 Residents) is the worst in North Carolina….

Waynesville	74.75
Canton	59.93
Asheville	57.22
Sylva	52.75
Maggie Valley	47.42
Hendersonville	42.15
Hickory	39.48
Durham	38.94
Atlanta GA	37.37

Greensboro   36.38
Fayetteville   34.61
Charlotte   33.66
Raleigh   21.34
Winston Salem   6.5

The first Waynesville Police Department Community Crime meeting was not recorded, nor have I been able to obtain a complete set of the power point presentation given by Tyler Trantham.

The following is taken from the draft of the minutes of the 7/26/2022 meeting of the second Waynesville Police Department Community Crime presentation by Brandon Gilmore.

C. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Mayor Caldwell asked that Assistant Police Chief Brandon Gilmore speak to the Board and audience concerning crime statistics for the Town of Waynesville.

Chief David Adams explained how the Record Management System compiles the statistics. He said that there have been improvements in the time he has been in Waynesville, especially in the Frog Level area, and he realizes there is still more work to be done.

Assistant Chief Gilmore presented a power point of offenses compiled from the January – June period and is a comparison to the previous year 2021. He explained that the "coding system" with the software program utilized in the Police Department often lumps numerous types of offenses into one category. He said he hoped that statistics from the more common offenses that often arise, and are quoted in meetings, will give more insight to the crime in Waynesville.

Top 5 Offense Decreases:
Shoplifting: Down 42.94 %
All Other Offenses (Misdemeanor Possession of Stolen Property, Misdemeanor B&E of Motor Vehicle, Misdemeanor Assault on LEO, some traffic related Offenses not including DWI): Down 14.29 %
Trespass or Real Property: Down 52.27%
Damage/Vandalism of Property: Down 33.72%
Simple Assault: 21.13%

Top 5 Offense Increases:
OFA (Order for Arrest/Warrant Service): Up 74.4%
Stolen Property Offenses: Up 275.0%
Weapon Law Violations: Up 87.5%
Driving Under the Influence: Up 50%
Arson: Up 400.0%

Individual Statics Related to Certain Offenses:
Crimes Related to Children: 50 Offenses Up 22%
Aggravated Assault: 14 Offenses
Simple Assault: 49 Offenses
Breaking & Entering's: 20 Offenses
Shopliftings: 93 Offenses (Majority from Walmart)
Thefts from a motor vehicle, building or motor vehicle parts: 72 Offenses
Motor Vehicle Thefts: 7 Offenses
Damage/Vandalism of Property: 47 Offenses

Trespass: 41 Offenses

Assistant Chief Gilmore explained that the rise in offenses is an increase in pro-active work enforcement for the Police Department, and not an increase in crime. He reminded everyone that these statistics change daily.

He said that primarily due to COVID, there has been an increase in crimes related to children. We account for this by long periods of time, where children have been allowed unlimited amounts usage with these platforms and other inappropriate internet sites. Our plans are to host some educational forums with the community, as we move forward to better educate parents in what to look for and hopefully, how to avoid children becoming victims.

The pre-trial release program is a program that says if a person is arrested, and meets a certain set of standards, they can get a bond. If the standards are not met, sometimes the arrestee can be arrested multiple times. Recently the program has changed, and more people are starting to get bonds. So hopefully the trend of being arrested multiple times will be broken soon.

Assistant Chief Gilmore explained what steps the Police Department is currently taking to decrease the homeless, and crimes in the Town. He added that the Board has approved an app for phones that give data from the Police Department pertaining to crimes. He said it will help give citizens the information they have been asking for.

Here's the problem.

Neighborhoodscout.com provides absolute numbers. There result is clear. Waynesville has the highest CRIME INDEX and PROPERTY CRIME RATE in the state of North Carolina. Who would want to live here?

Waynesville Police Department presentation provides a little snapshot in time, a couple of months, and compares it to the same time period the year earlier. An analysis appears to have been performed, and results are in percentages, increase/decrease from a limited time period to another limited time period. Talk about slanting the outcome of data. How do you connect the Waynesville Police Department Crime presentation to results from Neighborhoodscout.com?

You don't.

Perhaps the Waynesville Police Department can redirect there energy for their next Crime Presentation, so that one can connect the dots between these two sets of data.

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Haywood County Taxpayer.