



Tami Schultz, right, receives her certificate from Police Chief Brad Johnston, left, during the last Citizen Police Academy class Wednesday.

Simulation: Chief Johnston wants to continue discussion at future academies

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a gun. The man then pulled the gun, and Randall had to react by pulling his firearm, equipped with a laser to shoot at the video screen.

“When we are in those situations and we are under that kind of stress, we revert to training,” he said.

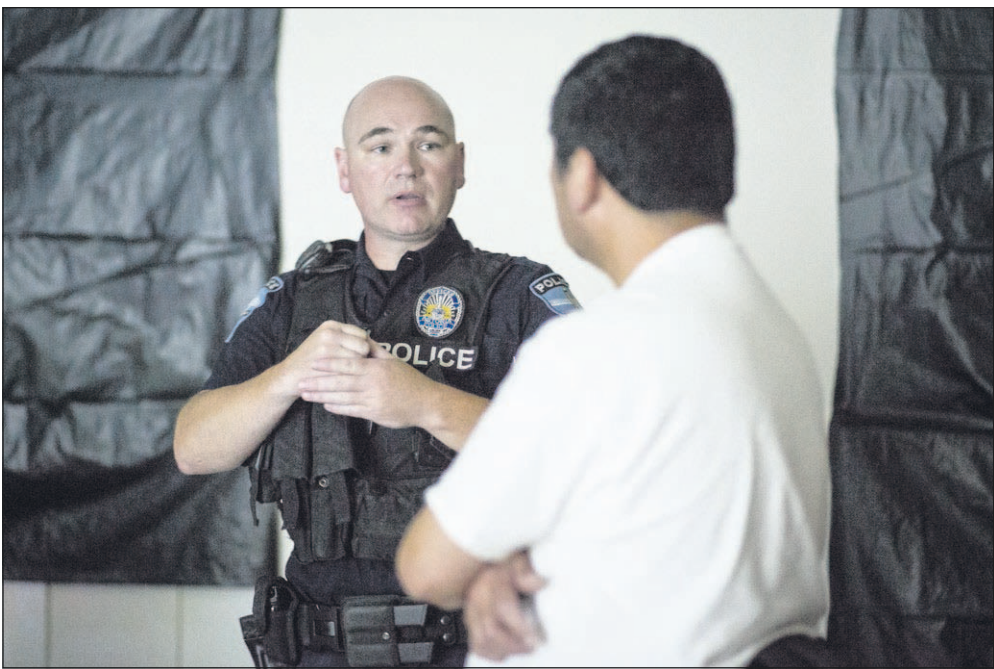
The first student to attempt the simulation had a scenario where he was backing up another officer on a traffic stop. On the screen, a woman in the stopped car pulls a gun and starts shooting. The student described feeling his heart rate spike and experiencing tunnel vision, where he could only focus on the shooter.

He was also surprised by how many shots he fired in less than one second. Randall asked him how he felt after the simulation. “Not comfortable at all,” he said.

Detective Thomas Litwin operated the simulation. He controlled the outcome of each scenario. For one where a mother and daughter were fighting, Litwin could select three options: Mother shoots daughter, mother complies or mother commits suicide.

After each simulation, the participants were asked why they did or did not use their firearm. Each person described how the incidents happened so fast they were often unable to react in time.

One student shot an unarmed drunk in a bar, while another accidentally shot an officer while searching for an active shooter in a school.



Astoria Police Officer Andrew Randall speaks with Craig Yamasaki after Yamasaki’s session with the use-of-force simulator. After each person used the simulator, the class had a discussion about how it went and if situations could have been handled differently.

“We have to explain why we did what we did because we are held accountable for what our actions are and what we based those upon,” Randall said. “We have to be able to articulate that, and this a good time to do that as a police officer.”

Back-and-forth discussion

When Johnston addressed the students during the final session, he showed a patrol video from a police shooting in Astoria at the Lamplighter Motel in February 2012. The incident involved two Astoria Police officers responding to a man in the hotel, who was building silencers for weapons.

A shootout took place before the man took police on a high-speed chase that ended on U.S. Highway 26. Johnston explained how the shots the officers fired at the hotel were warranted.

He handed out the use-of-force review completed on the case.

“When we look at reviewing the use of force, we are looking at what the officer knew or should have reasonably known at the time they used force,” Johnston said. “We are looking at the officer’s mind at the time they used force.”

Johnston then showed the video of a police officer in North Charleston, S.C., who

was charged with murder this spring after shooting and killing a man, who was running away.

“What you just watched is a criminal act, that is no use of force,” Johnston said.

The two videos helped spark a discussion with the students. The back-and-forth dialogue is something Johnston wants to continue at future citizen academies and with the community as a whole.

“Anytime we can bring a connection between the community and the police department we are doing a great service,” Johnston said. “I don’t know many better ways to build relationships with the community.”

Plea deal: He has to register as a sex offender

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The allegations surfaced when the girl was at a camp and was told to write down a wish on a piece of paper. She wrote something in regard to how she wished she could tell her mother about the abuse, or how she wished Mitchell would stop, Buzzard said.

The tampering and bribing charges relate to Mitchell sending emails to the victim and her mother with scripts about what to say if questioned by law enforcement officials, and promising the girl a trip to Disneyland if she stayed quiet.

“She is not doing this for any type of vindictiveness or to get him out of her life,” Buzzard said. “She did want him out of her life, but that is because he was touching her improperly.”

Mitchell was originally charged with 30 counts of first-degree sexual abuse, two counts of tampering with a witness and one count of bribing a witness.

The other charges were dropped and he pleaded to a lesser charge of attempted sex abuse, as part of the plea deal.

At the court hearing Thursday, Mitchell acknowledged friends and family who supported him over the past year, and hoped the settlement offered some closure for them.

About two dozen people attended the court hearing, some in support of Mitchell and some



Michel Mitchell, right, appears with his lawyer, Jay Frank, left, during a sentencing hearing at the Clatsop County Courthouse Thursday.

in support of the victim and her family.

The same closure Mitchell hoped for was not felt by the victim’s grandmother and mother, who also spoke during the hearing.

The girl’s mother detailed what her daughter had to endure to get Mitchell convicted. The past year consisted of an interview at Clatsop County’s child abuse resource center, a three-hour medical examination for sexual assault and sitting through a grand jury hearing, where she had to relive the details of the case.

“My daughter, like all of the many victims of sex crimes, will live with this the rest of her life, dealing with what Mitchell did to her,” she said.

She shared statistics from the National Crime Victimization Survey by the U.S. Department of Justice that show sexual assault is one of the most under-

reported crimes, with 68 percent not being reported. Children between the ages of 7 to 13 are the most vulnerable to sexual abuse, statistics show.

“When my daughter met Mitchell, she was a beautiful, joyful 7-year-old child,” the girl’s mother said. “He stole her beauty and innocence by violating her, and left her with permanent emotional and psychological damage that she may never overcome.”

While on probation, Mitchell will be required have no contact with the girl or her family, and complete drug, alcohol and sex offender treatments and evaluations.

In addition, he will have to register as a sex offender.

“I hope you keep an open mind and welcome the opportunities that are presented to you while on supervision,” Judge Matyas said. “That is the only way you will be successful, and I hope you are successful.”

Pantry: Warrenton allocated \$20,000 for association to spend on social giving

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The funding recommendations came from the Warrenton Business Association. An all-volunteer advisory board whose budget comes from business license fees, the association regularly identifies local causes and events to spend the city’s money on. For this fiscal year, the city allocated \$20,000 for the association to spend on social giving.

In addition to the \$5,000 for the food pantry, the association also recommended \$3,000 for a youth camp hosted by the Warrenton Christian Church and \$5,000 for the North Coast Christian School to set up a fence at a Hammond playground.

Because the three recommendations fell under the same line item generically labeled “nonprofits,” the City Commission had no idea it had signed off on funding religious organizations until City Manager Kurt Fritsch flagged the problematic expenditures while approving the grants.

“The social services line item was not broken out as to who the money would go to,” Fritsch said.

The city decided to let the North Coast Christian School expenditure go forward because the playground fence serves a public, nonreligious purpose. The Warrenton Christian Church withdrew its request for funding when the church realized it had applied for city funds through the Warrenton Business Association.

The \$5,000 originally designated for the food pantry is still residing in the city’s accounts, Fritsch said.

Founding principle

At a work session with the business association earlier this month, Fritsch said that most communities work to maintain the separation of church and state when it comes to spending city money.

“It is clearly standard

practice to keep that separation,” he said.

City Attorney Harold Snow pointed out that the Oregon Constitution forbids the appropriation of public money for religious purposes.

“That’s a fundamental first principle,” he said. “The separation of government and religious institutions is the founding principle of our country, really.”

Commissioner Tom Dyer responded that he didn’t see an issue with city funds going to churches doing charity work and per-

forming good deeds, like hosting a youth camp.

“I think it’s good that we have charity from the city,” he said, adding that the commissioners should not be afraid to offend people who dislike where the city’s non-profit money is spent. “Sometimes a need exists, and you have to do what’s right.”

Snow argued that, if the city wants to fund the food pantry, the money should flow through a secular organization — for example, Clatsop Community Action, a nonprofit that helps low-income residents meet housing, food and other basic living needs. This compromise would help the city “(avoid) the taint” of inappropriate spending, he said.

After the meeting, Mayor Mark Kujala said the business association, by recommending grants for the three churches, had acted in good faith and sought to fulfill its mission to better the community and promote livability in Warrenton.

“We certainly don’t want to stifle the great progress and hard work that they have done,” he said. However, “I think (it) was clear at the end of the discussion that we have to be very mindful about being legal, following the state of Oregon laws and statutes.”

“There’s no bad guys associated with this,” Fritsch said. “We just want to make sure it’s appropriate expenditures of city government funding.”



Mark Kujala



Kurt Fritsch

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To register, please contact Education Program Coordinator, Christine Fleming at: fleming@crmm.org or 503 – 325 – 2323