



Safety & Security Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 29th, 2020 at 1:00 PM EST

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Overview
2. Chief of Operations, Clint Osborn of DC HSEMA
3. Assistant MPD Chief, Jeffrey Carroll
4. MPD Captain Caldwell (2D)
5. Questions and Answers

Welcome and Overview

Dupont Circle BID Executive Director, Colleen Hawkinson, (chawkinson@dupontcirclebid.org) and Dupont Circle BID Marketing & Events Associate, Kayla Brown (kbrown@dupontcirclebid.org).

DC HSEMA Chief of Operations, Clint Osborn

- November 3 preparations:
 - There is a possibility for isolated events, but no specific threats or incidents have been reported
 - DC Fire and EMS will be increasing staff
 - Clear coordination with public safety partners
 - Planning to keep increased services through to inauguration
 - Interpersonal confrontations based on political affiliation or personal interest is the most likely threat – they'll continue to analyze new trends
 - Constantly tracking threats and hazards to operations of businesses and governmental services across the District
- Things to keep in mind:
 - There are far more businesses and homeowners than government staff out on the field. Be sure to report any suspicious activity. Be aware of your surroundings and push that message to staff in and around your building.
- Related Resources:

- Businesses that are interested in signing up for the Business Emergency Management Operations Center (BEMOC) distribution list are encouraged to email dc.bemoc@dc.gov.
- If there is an emergency, please call 911. Otherwise, you can submit suspicious activity reports to the iWatch platform: iwatchdc.org.
- First Amendment Demonstration Resource Guide For Businesses by DMPED, HSEMA & input from other partner agencies: <https://ctycms.com/dc-dupont-circle/docs/election-resource-guide-businesses-20201021.pdf>
- View an interactive map of voting locations and ballot boxes at bit.ly/dcvotinglocations.

Assistant MPD Chief, Jeffrey Carroll

- Inaugural Preparations:
 - MPD has been preparing for presidential inauguration since March of 2020. MPD brings out outside agencies to assist + ensuring they have a structure plan in order to coordinate with all agencies
- Late May/Early June:
 - There were multiple businesses that were boarded up due to violent activity
 - They have since removed their boards since we moved through – and demonstrations have become mainly peaceful
 - In DC, first amendment demonstrations are not new – it's something MPD embraces and deals with on a daily basis. MPD respects all individuals' rights to have peaceful first amendment demonstrations, but they will not tolerate individuals destroying property or to assault community members, residents, and visitors in the District
- Halloween 2020 Preparations:
 - MPD will be fully activated – officers will be distributed across the city for the Halloween Festivities with COVID-19
 - MPD expects individuals to be in the community on Halloween, so they'll have officers to ensure that there is appropriate staffing in the District and for any type of demonstrations that may pop-up
- Election Day/Election Week:
 - They'll be taking additional administrative staff that normally work as detectives or other administration positions, and they'll be deployed out in the street to help supplement patrol operations – to ensure there are adequate resources
 - Information sharing with federal law partners (HSEMA) and other city agencies
 - Things are rapidly changing, MPD is receiving updates from federal partners about trends and what's happening not only in DC, but across the country and internationally
 - As we move through the Election cycle, MPD will ramp up fully after a President is elected – as we move towards December, MPD will have multiple briefings with community members because there will be areas affected with street closures (Downtown area) as well as preparations and restrictions in that area (will be discussed more in depth as we move closer to the inauguration)

MPD Captain Caldwell (2D)

- 2nd District Preparations:
 - 2D will be focused on the areas that have a higher possibility of demonstrations to occur near businesses – Dupont Circle area, Downtown, Center City, Georgetown, etc.
 - MPD will have additional officers and resources in those neighborhoods on the lookout, patrolling in addition to taking their regular calls for service
 - Increased staffing and ability to respond quickly to any demonstrations or incidents that may occur

- What the 2D asks you to look out for:
 - Look for suspicious vehicles, untagged vehicles, large groups, vandalism, etc. and call it in. It's likely that MPD is there anyway, but the quicker they're able to receive that call, the quicker they are able to respond and address the issue
 - Recommendation for businesses: Have a plan – if anything does happen, how will you report it? Who will report it if it involves multiple businesses? Have one person of contact to avoid duplicate reporting. Ensure your security cameras and resources are operational and functional

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS (Q&A)

1. Is the safety of encampments and people experiencing homelessness in Dupont during Election Day also a priority to MPD/Homeland Security?

Assistant MPD Chief, Jeffrey Carroll: It doesn't matter who you are (race, gender, status as far as housing) everyone has the same rights. Ensuring those individuals rights are protected is no different than anyone else.

Follow-Up to Question #1: An attendee mentioned: "Park police has had a history of clearing encampments "allegedly" by a business in July. The concern is that increased security may be intimidating to people living in encampments in Dupont."

MPD Captain Caldwell: While he cannot speak for park police, Captain Caldwell is aware that Officer Stoutamire and Officer Ali have been working to maintain and build relationships with homeless individuals in the area.

2. Do you recommend businesses in the Dupont area reinforce their storefronts?

Assistant MPD Chief, Jeffrey Carroll: Recommends that everyone reviews the [First Amendment Demonstration Resource Guide For Businesses](#) mentioned by Clint Osborn (HSEMA Chief of Operations) earlier in the meeting. The District is not recommending that businesses board up, however that is an individual decision. Now is the time to be reviewing your security procedures to ensure you have appropriate lighting, video footage cameras, etc. You should ensure you have a plan in place for how your employees are going to respond.

Now is a good time to take an internal security review of your practices and operations.

Clint Osborn (HSEMA Chief of Operations): Also recommends (especially for small businesses) that you have a good and solid handle on your insurance coverage and your insurance availability for all types of events. This recommendation is directed to residents as well. Sometimes businesses and residents are unsure what their insurance covered or how to use it. You should respond and secure your home no matter what causes the damage – so having a good thorough understanding of what your insurance covers and the pathway to activate it, is highly recommended.

3. We have hired an army guard for election night as added security. Do we need to notify police? Are there any rules/regulations around hiring additional security and/or officers?

A representative from MPD explained that as long as the guard has an **active** license through the [Security Officers Management Branch \(SOMB\)](#) – you should be good to go. It's important to double check this before hiring additional officers or guards, as they are representing your business.

4. Do you have any info on a protest upcoming Saturday evening at 7pm in Dupont circle? Particularly number of people expected.

There have been protests every Saturday for a couple weeks now. MPD doesn't know how many people will show up for that protest, as they don't for many protests. Many groups aren't filing permit applications, in the District of Columbia you aren't required to file a permit or assembly plan of a demonstration. But we do encourage it, as it allows MPD to have the appropriate amount of resources (vehicles to block traffic).

One important aspect is to keep vehicles away from demonstrators. There have been many past examples across the nation and internationally on how vehicles have either intentionally or unintentionally mixed with demonstrators – with deadly results. So, giving MPD notice of a demonstration allows them to block traffic and reroute, and it also gives time to let drivers know that certain areas may not be accessible during those timeframes.

5. Can you speak to the events of last night in Chinatown with H&M and Zara?

Captain Caldwell: MPD received a call from about 30 – 40 individuals breaking into a store. Units from the 2nd District responded to the call. They were able to make multiple arrests (5 total arrests). Events similar to these are sporadic, you don't know they're happening until they are happening. The officers were able to respond quickly and make some arrests, but it's still being investigated.

6. Question for Chief Carroll and Captain Caldwell: We've seen an increase of incidents in the Dupont Circle area with crimes against individuals (knife attack, verbal altercation which ended up with someone being assaulted). It's independent from the Election conversation, but in terms of general security, can you give us information about what else is happening?

Captain Caldwell: Some violent crime incidences over the past month (3 robberies, 2 resulted in arrests). Majority of incidents are random.

Crime Stats provided by Captain Caldwell are attached to this email.

7. Can you speak a little bit about coordination with the Park Service police, particularly in the Circle itself?

Captain Caldwell: Lt. Pongratz oversees the area, so he would be the best person to answer this question. He can have him follow back up with the BID. But MPD and Park Police do share information and work together often.

8. Are Houses of Worship eligible to be on the BEMOC list?

Rebekah Mena: That's a great question. The answer is yes, however, HSEMA also manages the District's Interfaith Preparedness and Advisory Group (IPAG). We strongly encourage Houses of Worship to sign up for this membership - we work closely with the Mayor's Office of Religious Affairs and MPD to push information out specifically to our faith-based organizations. You can do so by emailing HSEMA.IPAG@dc.gov.

9. Debating boarding up – but concerned about security of staff while its boarded up due to the lack of visibility. Any feedback from the agencies about that?

Assistant MPD Chief, Jeffrey Carroll: Businesses have boarded up – and you lose that visibility. If an individual does come inside and something happens, you won't have the passersby that can typically see what's going on. So, it's a security consideration. There are ways to address that depending on your security camera situation, but overall that visibility through the windows is something you should weigh when making your decision on whether or not to board up.

10. Can someone compare the level of crime this year to pre-COVID and pre-protests over the summer.

Captain Caldwell: Doesn't have the numbers right in front of him, but will send to Colleen. Needs to confirm, but we are "way down" in crime. Over 20% down. Down in Sector 3 overall. See Attachment for updated crime statistics.

Only thing up: Theft autos and stolen autos (increase in stealing of motor scooters and delivery drivers having vehicles taken)

11. Any advice on outdoor dining in the circle especially at Doyle Bar at the Dupont Circle Hotel? Is it recommended to close?

Captain Caldwell: There aren't any planned demonstrations – so it's up to you. Listen to alerts. Unless there are street closures that prevent people from walking down to your business, it's the businesses choice. However, MPD will be in the area.

12. General Safety Question: Is there any plan to stop scooters and bikes from running red lights and stop signs?

Traffic is a major priority for the 2nd District. For Halloween weekend they have a campaign dedicated to pedestrian safety. There are officers specially assigned to traffic in the 2nd District.

BID Director, Colleen Hawkinson: Wanted to mention that MPD had two officers doing speed work (underground tunnel on CT Ave, and caught people going extremely fast). We appreciate that!

GENERAL RESOURCES

Questions regarding boarding up: Dcra.abatement@dc.gov

The [First Amendment Demonstration Resource Guide For Businesses](#) by DMPED, HSEMA & input from other partner agencies.

Dupont Circle BID Outreach Services Card: https://ctycms.com/dc-dupont-circle/docs/outreach_services_dupont_bid_2020.pdf

Dupont Circle BID Board & Staff Page: <https://dupontcirclebid.org/about/board-and-staff>

Dupont Circle BID Safety & Security Committee page: <https://dupontcirclebid.org/safety-and-security-advisory-committee>

[Civil Unrest And The 2020 Election Season](#) by Building Owners and Managers Association International (BOMA)

DISCUSSION QUESTION: **WILL YOU BE BOARDING UP YOUR BUSINESS?**

- 11 Dupont: Not boarding up
- 1 Dupont: Thinking about boarding up
- 1875 and 1825 CT Ave: Will be boarding up due to attack in late May/early June
- Kimpton Hotel Palomar Washington DC: Thinking about boarding up
- Pizzeria Paradiso: Will probably put up paper as a deterrent
- Fairfax Embassy Row: Will be boarding up