

# Squad 99 Police Blotter

Duluth Police Department

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## Panhandling

*Now that the ordinance has been repealed...*

This article will largely be a revisit of the panhandling subject from a prior newsletter that I am sure you have all read!! I have been hearing concerns from community members now that the City Ordinance prohibiting panhandling has been repealed. The story made the news for a few days and received a lot of attention.

The truth is... nothing has changed. Yes, the City Ordinance has been repealed, but we have known for approximately 2 years that the Ordinance was not constitutional. During that time the Police Department was not enforcing that specific Ordinance. So, the fact that the ordinance has been repealed doesn't change anything as far as enforcement actions.

As a Police Department we can no longer take enforcement action against someone simply asking another for money. We can however address other behaviors such as going into traffic lanes, obstructing traffic, obstructing sidewalks, harassing or disorderly conduct as well as others!

Below is an article from last year to give you some of the history regarding the subject!!

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A U.S. Supreme Court decision allowing an Arizona pastor put up signs directing people to church services has become the basis for many lower courts across the nation to allow broader First Amendment protections, overturning anti-begging ordinances on the grounds that the government generally can't outlaw speech on particular subjects.

So what does this mean for our community? These decisions have essentially determined the act of holding a sign and asking another for money is free speech and therefore protected by the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment.

## Fun Facts from July



Miles Walked – 99

Miles Biked- 39

Business Contacts - 130

Parking Enforcement  
Contacts - 10

Meetings (hours) – 27

Self-Initiated Field Activity  
and Community  
Engagement Events - 19

Citations – 15

Arrests- 2

With that being said, we are unable to enforce our current City Ordinance which addresses begging in public.

While panhandling, or asking people for money, is protected by the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment, there are things that one cannot do while panhandling. People are not allowed to violate other City Ordinances and State Laws while asking for money. Soliciting in the roadway is not legal for obvious safety reasons and is prohibited by State Law. Furthermore, obstructing traffic, blocking sidewalks and creating disturbances and/or being aggressive and alarming others are actions that are not legal either.

As a Police Department we need to balance the rights of all citizens of our city, businesses, tourists and panhandlers alike. This creates a situation that can be difficult to navigate at times. Obviously enforcement action is part of what we do, but we also balance enforcement with education and connecting those in need with resources. The end goal is to hopefully resolve issues on a long term basis. There are meetings scheduled in the near future to discuss this subject with Community Leaders, Business Leaders and City Staff to seek a solution that is beneficial for all.

As a Police Department our mission is to provide a safe Duluth for all by strengthening relationships and serving in a respectful, caring and selfless manner. With that being said, if you find yourself wanting to help a panhandler, we ask that you make that donation to the CHUM, Duluth Gospel Mission or another organization that helps those in need. Donations to these organizations will ensure that donated money is providing much needed shelter, food and personal care items.

## **Kids, Cops and Cars!!!!**

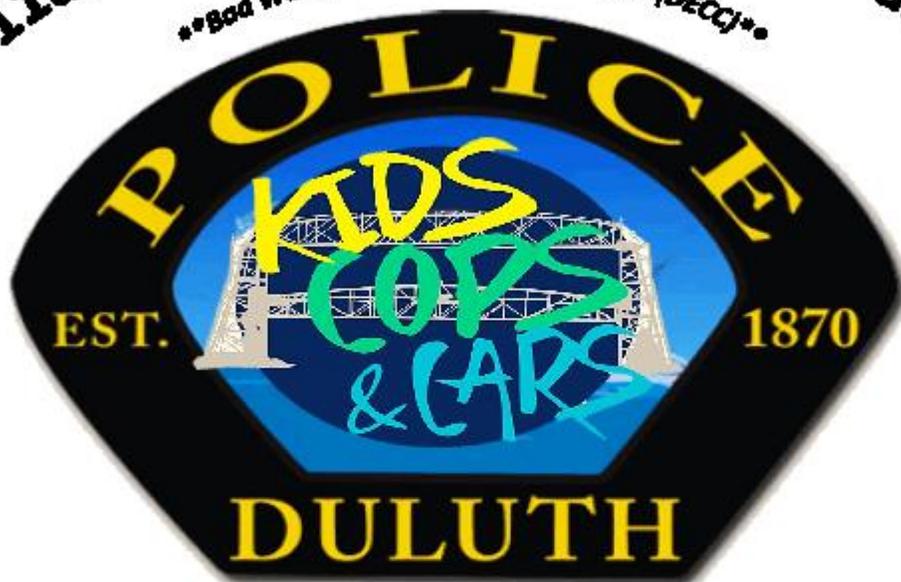
*A great event for all...including those who are still kids at heart!*

It is that time of year again and we are hosting our Annual "Kids, Cops and Cars" event at Bayfront Park!! The event is scheduled for next Wednesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> from 11:00am- 2:00pm. This event is part of our continued effort to build and maintain relationships with the community we serve, more importantly youth.

The event will allow kids the opportunity to see many different kinds of Police vehicles that we use at the Duluth Police Department as well as vehicles from the Duluth Fire Department, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Enforcement Division, United States Border Patrol, Gold Cross Ambulance, United States Coast Guard and even a helicopter from the Minnesota State Patrol!

In addition to being able to tour the vehicles we will have Canine demonstrations, games and a tug of war competitions against the Police Officers. Most importantly, we will be providing lunch FREE of charge! Your local Police Officers will be grilling hamburgers, brats and hotdogs for every guest! Also being provided is chips, baked beans, cookies and ice cream!!!

**Wednesday, August 15th, 2018**  
**11am-2pm at Bayfront Festival Park**  
*\*\*Bad Weather location - Pioneer Hall (DECC)\*\**



**11:30 Tug of War | 12:00 K-9 Demo | 12:30 Tug of War | 1:00 K-9 Demo | 1:30 Tug of War**  
**Command Post • Crime Scene Van • Tactical Response Team Vehicle • Specialty Squads**  
**Coast Guard Boat • Helicopter • Gold Cross Ambulance • DFD Fire Truck • Border Patrol • State Patrol • DNR**



*Free hot dogs and burgers served by your local Police Officers!*

*Sponsored by Clyde Iron Works.*

