

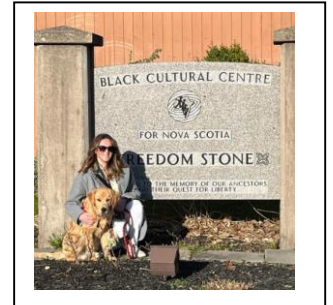
**Chief's Report**  
**Amherst Board of Police Commissioners**  
**June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

This report covers the month of April & May 2024



**TRAINING**

**ACE (African Canadian Experience) Training:** From April 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Chief Hunter and Cst Michelle Harrison attended the ACE Course in Halifax. The course was hosted by the Department of Justice and is designed for members who are in a position to make changes and be influential in repairing and building relationships with our African Nova Scotian community and understand both historical and current issues, utilizing a curriculum that includes local black history (a portion of the training takes place at the Black Cultural Centre), presentations on Human Rights Legislation, and open and frank discussions on topics such as equality, equity and white privilege. This is considered by those who have attended as one of the best courses and training experiences in their career. In January 2021, both Chief Pike and Sgt Aaron Graham attended and completed this training.



**Firearms/Carbine Training:** Firearms and Carbine Training/qualifications for the majority of APD members were completed in May. This includes both 9mm pistol and carbine. Our carbine operators are required to complete and pass the OPP Emergency Response Team qualifications which includes a variety of different distances, positions and timings. Firearms training also incorporates various live scenarios and exercises that mimic real-life incidents and reactions.

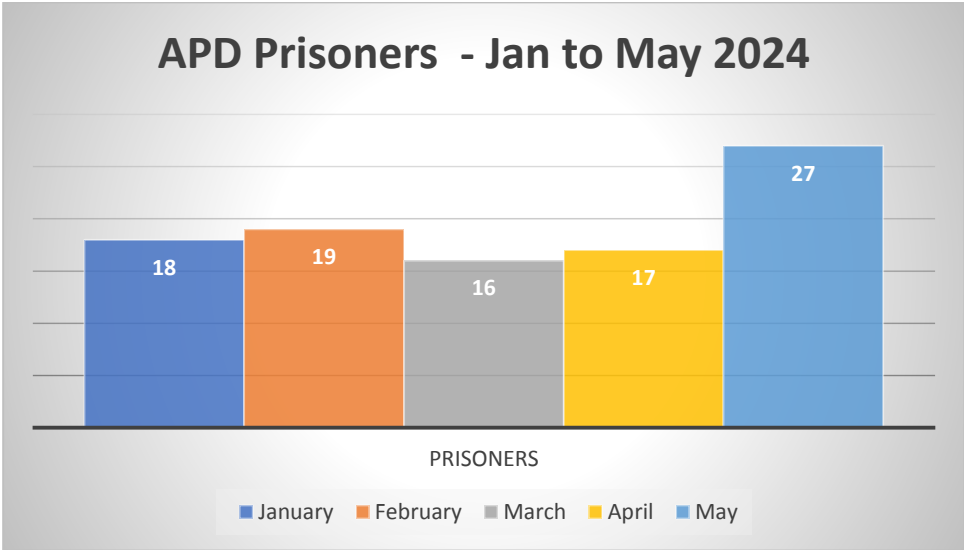
**CEW Training:** CEW/Taser training was completed for the members in May. Training combines classroom instruction covering TASER policy, case law, a functional overview of how the TASER works and human physiology. Live action scenarios are utilized to assess each officers' judgement and approach to a Use of Force incident. For each scenario, officers are required to articulate the actions they did or did not take in each scenario.

**THANS Board Governance Training Session:** Our Crime Prevention Coordinator, Melanie Siddall attended Board Governance Training in Dartmouth on May 29<sup>th</sup>. This session covered governing and managing, principals of complementary governance, operating under a complementary model, strategic planning, ethical standards, operational performance and other related topics. As our Crime Prevention Coordinator, Melanie is on several committees and on the Restorative Justice Board where such training is an asset.

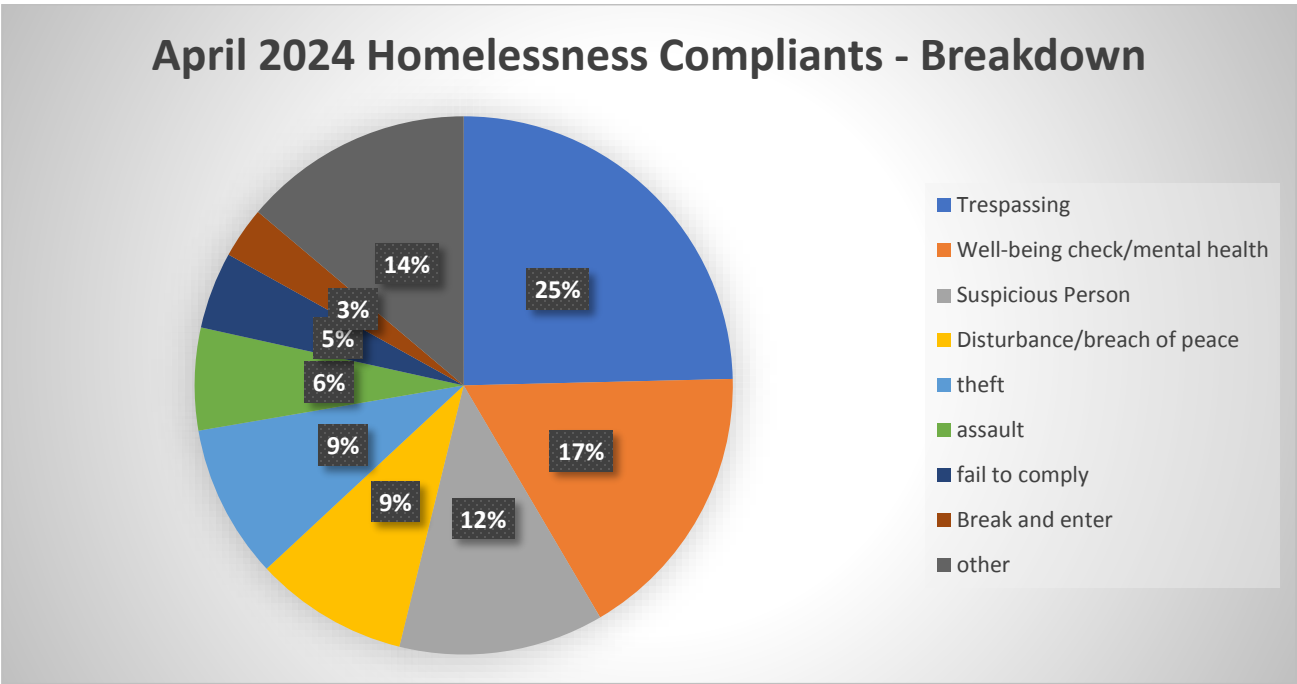
**GENERAL OPERATIONAL UPDATES:**

**Shoplifting Complaints:** In May, APD received 18 complaints of shoplifting. This is an increase over complaints in April (15) and March (6). When looking at all types of thefts, APD logged 59 complaints of theft in May as compared to 53 in April and 37 complaints in March.

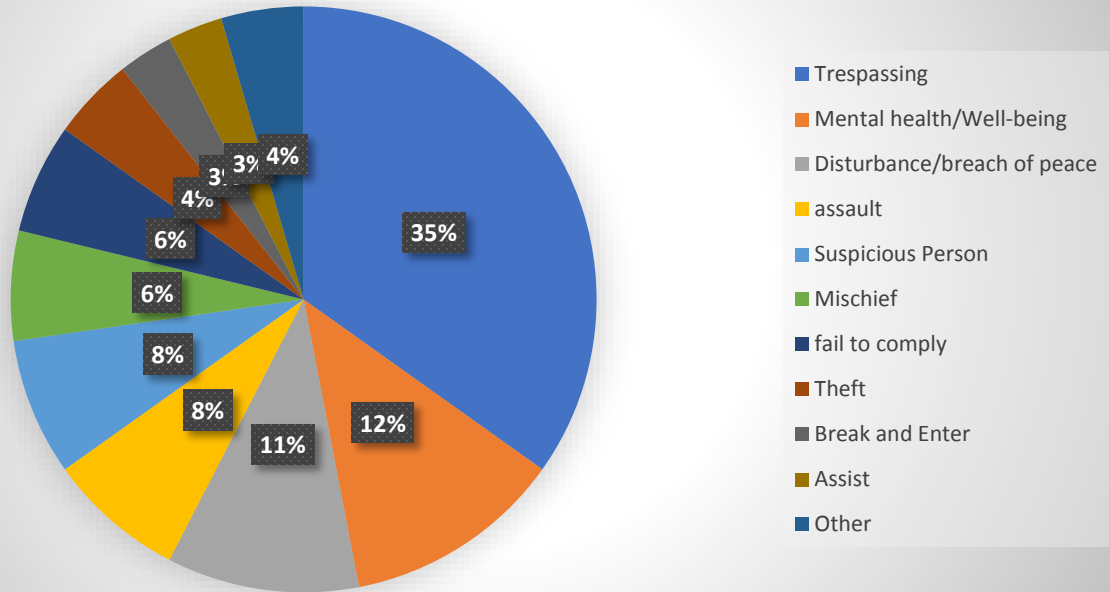
**Prisoners Held:** May saw a sharp increase in the number of prisoners held in APD cells. With our average numbers per month being between 17 -19, May's numbers jumped to 27. We are reviewing the occurrences to see what the reason may be for this increase.



**Homelessness:** During the month of May, APD responded to 70 complaints that were associated to homelessness. This is a slight increase over the 65 complaints in April and the 40 in March. A shift was noted towards more complaints concerning trespassing and disturbances. As in past months, the files are heavily concentrated around a smaller group of people who drive the occurrence numbers up. Of the complaints this in May, 16 of them occurred at or near the homeless shelter. In April, of the 65 complaints received, 19 of them occurred at or near the homeless shelter.



## Homelessness Complainants May 2024- Breakdown



**Changes in Occurrences/Charges:** Our occurrences in May remain on the higher end of the scale with 624 for the month. This is an increase of 82 complaints that were received in April (542) and 155 more than in March (478). Overall, for the year to date, our occurrences remain quite high when compared to recent years. Our criminal charges dropped again slightly to 61, down from 85 in April and 108 in March. To date, our criminal charges for the year is still high when compared to other years and our occurrence numbers for the first 5 months continue to be higher in recent years:

Year	2022	2023	2024
Occurrences to Date	2174	2612	2544



**McHappy Day – May 8<sup>th</sup>:** Cst Harrison, Crime Prevention Coordinator Melanie Siddal, Dispatcher Ian Smith, along with Rocky K9 attended this years McHappy Day. We are always excited to show up and support this amazing event in support of Ronald McDonald Children's Charity!

**Police Week - May 17<sup>th</sup>:** Our Police Week Celebration was a huge success and was very well attended by both the public and our community safety partners. With representation coming from police agencies that included municipal agencies in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, we also had various other agencies and partners represented including the fire department, search and rescue, Sheriff's Department and GardaWorld. It was an exciting day that ended with a 'parade of lights' through town.



**Strategic Planning:** Strategic planning sessions continued in May with the latest session being held on May 30<sup>th</sup> at the Amherst Firehall. This last session was well-attended and pulled together our community stakeholders to have robust discussions on the dynamics of policing including how policing and our community has changed, expectations and roles of the police and barriers that police often face.



## **OPERATIONAL**

**Arrest – Break and Enter/Bicycle Specialist:** On March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, 2 E-Bikes were stolen during a break and enter at the Bicycle Specialist on Church Street. The incident was captured on video which was distributed widely on social media. On March 30<sup>th</sup> a warrant was issued for Michael Richard, aged 29 in relation to the incident. In early April, the bikes were located in Moncton with the assistance of the Codiac RCMP and were returned to the owners. On April 24<sup>th</sup>, Richard was arrested by APD members and remanded into custody on the warrant. He is facing several charges that include Break and Enter, Possession of Stolen Property, Mischief under \$5000 and Theft under \$5000 x 2. Richard was later released by the courts and is due back for plea in July 2024.



**Fraud Charges:** The Amherst Police Department Major Crime Unit has arrested and charged 35-year-old Matthew Lepper in relation to an ongoing investigation involving 3 separate rental properties, which includes properties in Amherst and in Springhill. Lepper, as property manager, is alleged to have misappropriated rents and damage deposits from several tenants and has been charged with 3 counts of fraud over \$5000 and 1 count of fraud under \$5,000. The matter is currently before the courts.

**Protest – Carbon Gas Tax:** On April 1<sup>st</sup> traffic on the highway was disrupted as a result of a protest at the Provincial Border. As a result of traffic concerns, RCMP diverted westbound traffic on the 104 into town at Exit #3. This resulted in a considerable amount of congestion within town limits as traffic inevitably tried to access the highway via Laplanche Street. Later in the day, the congestion was resolved when the protest was moved off the highway and resumed at the Nova Scotia Welcome Centre in Fort Lawrence where they continued to protest the Carbon Tax. During the week of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, it appears that the protestor had vacated the Visitor Centre grounds.

**Drug Charges/Arrests – April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024:** As a result of a vehicle stop conducted by the APD Street Crime Unit/Major Crime Unit, with the assistance of the APD Patrol Section, 2 adults are facing drug trafficking charges. Amand Louise Quigley, aged 45 and Kenneth Brian Gilbert, aged 75 have both been charged with possession of Cocaine for the purpose of trafficking and possession of Methamphetamine for the purposes of trafficking. A search of the vehicle they were travelling resulted in the seizure of a quantity of crystal meth and cocaine. Both are were remanded into custody and later released by the courts. They are scheduled to appear in court at a later date for appearance/plea.

**Stolen Vehicle – Arrest – May 17<sup>th</sup>:** A 30-year-old Amherst woman has been arrested and remanded into custody in relation to a vehicle theft that occurred during the early morning hours of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Shortly before 6:00am, the owner of a GMC Terrian reported that his vehicle was stolen from their residence on Mission Street in Amherst. The vehicle was later tracked to an address in Springhill and was observed by Cumberland RCMP and fled from police. Shortly afterwards, the vehicle was located in Amherst and the accused was arrested nearby. During the investigation, a second set of keys for a Dodge Ram was located and police learned that these keys had been stolen a few days earlier in the same area. An APD member canvassed the area with the keys in attempts to locate the vehicle that the keys belonged to. The vehicle and the owners were located and the keys were returned. Jessica Dawn SCOTT, aged 30 of Amherst is facing numerous charges that include committing an indicatable offense with face covered, theft of a motor

vehicle, possession of break-in tools, possession of stolen property over \$5000, Fleeing Police and operating a motor vehicle in a manner dangerous to the public. Scott was remanded into custody and appeared in court on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 and was released from custody on conditions.

**PERSONNEL:**

**Retirement of Cst David Hirtle:** Constable David Hirtle, who has been with the Amherst Police Department for 15 ½ years has retired effective April 19, 2024. A graduate of the Atlantic Police Academy in 2004, Cst Hirtle was hired by the Miramichi Police Force in early 2005 until he came to the Amherst Police Department in September of 2008. Constable Hirtle was a Department Drug Recognition Expert and for quite some time, took responsibility for department audits and quality control regarding impaired driving investigations and was one of our primary field trainers for Police Cadets and newly hired police officers. Prior to his retirement, Cst Hirtle was nominated for his 15-year Nova Scotia Police Long Service Award, for his 15 years of Policing in the Province of Nova Scotia. We wish Dave all the best in his future endeavors!



**Staff Sergeant Brian Gairns – Milestone:** Staff Sergeant Brian Gairns celebrated 35 years of service with the Amherst Police Department on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. Brian was hired in May of 1989 and has worked with APD for his entire career after he graduated from the Atlantic Police Academy. In his earlier years he worked in the drug position before resuming patrol duties and working his way up the ladder to Staff Sergeant in July of 2019.



**OPERATIONAL STATS – APRIL 2024**

Occurrences:	542	Criminal Code Charges:	85
Impaired by Alcohol:	2	CDSA:	1
Impaired by Drug:	1	CBCA:	0
Traffic Tickets:	48	PPA:	4
Traffic Written Warnings:	6	Vehicle Checks:	167
LCA:	0	Foot Patrol Hours:	49 hrs, 26 min
Bike Patrol Hours:	-	Parking Tickets:	1
Parking Warnings:	0		

**OPERATIONAL STATS – May 2024**

Occurrences:	624	Criminal Code Charges:	61
Impaired by Alcohol:	2	CDSA:	4
Impaired by Drug:	0	CBCA:	0
Traffic Tickets:	22	PPA:	1
Traffic Written Warnings:	1	Vehicle Checks:	127
LCA:	1	Foot Patrol Hours:	61hrs, 49 min
Parking Tickets:	3	Parking Warnings:	0

