

# Mexico Beach Police Department



# Beginnings of the Police Department

- September 11, 1967 - The Town of Mexico Beach incorporated.
- November 1967 - W.E. Murray led the first discussions and planning into the formation of the police department.
  - Assisted by Bay County Sheriff M.J. “Doc” Daffin.
- January 1968 – Ed Austin started the first police committee.

# Beginnings of the Police Department

- June 2, 1968 – James T. Long is hired as the first police officer in Mexico Beach.
  - Expenses for the first officer - \$85.00/Week.
  - Cost of a new police car from Cook Whitehead Ford - \$1,475.00.
- June 4, 1968 – The city approves the first ordinances for traffic enforcement.
- June 4, 1968 – James T. Long is sworn in as the Chief of Police.
  - Sworn in Bay and Gulf Counties as a Deputy Sheriff.
- A judge was appointed to hear traffic and ordinance violations.

# Beginnings of the Police Department

- Port St. Joe Police Department served as the dispatching service for the department.



A 1960's Era Police Radio

# The First Police Car

- The city could not afford the cost of a new police vehicle.
- Citizens of the city donated funds toward the purchase of a new vehicle.
- Mrs. Olen Hays, a local hotel owner, donated the remaining funds to purchase the vehicle in her name.
  - Mrs. Hays then granted the police department use of the vehicle.
- Local cigarette tax money was used to purchase the vehicle from Mrs. Hays.

# The First Police Car

- 1967 Ford Police Interceptor Sedan
- The Bay County Sheriff's Office donated a police radio for the vehicle.
- Panama City Police Department loaned the city a roof light.



A 1966 Ford Police Interceptor, similar to the first Mexico Beach Police car.

# The First Year

- July 2, 1968 – City votes to adopt Salt Water Conservation Board Laws.
- September 3, 1968 – First discussions of Police and Fire Department consolidation.
- September 24, 1968 – City approves funding recruit officer training mandated by state law.
  - Cost of \$75.00 per officer.
- October 1, 1968 – Budget for Police Department approved.
  - \$6,000.00 for the budget year.

# The First Year

- November 12, 1968 – The Police Committee approves a traffic light to be installed at the beach access.
- During the first year, Chief Long served as the primary law enforcement officer for the City of Mexico Beach, on-call 24 hours a day.
- Backup was provided by citizens sworn as Auxiliary Officers, as well as the Port St. Joe Police Department.

# The First Police Department Patch



# The Interim Years



2<sup>nd</sup> Mexico Beach Police  
Department Patch



1995 Chevrolet Caprice

# The Interim Years



AM General HMMWV, also known as a Humvee, purchased surplus from the US Military.



3<sup>rd</sup> Mexico Beach Police Department Patch

# The Department of Public Safety 1980's to 2014



4<sup>th</sup> Mexico Beach Police  
Department Patch



Patch of the combined Department  
of Public Safety

# Mexico Beach PD after the Department of Public Safety (2014 to Current)



# The Police Station



# Staffing



Sergeant Foster patrolling the pier

- 7 Full-Time Officers
- 3 Reserve (Part-Time) Officers
- 1 Full-Time Administrative Assistant

# In-Car and Body Camera Systems



Digital Ally DVM-800 In-Car Camera System

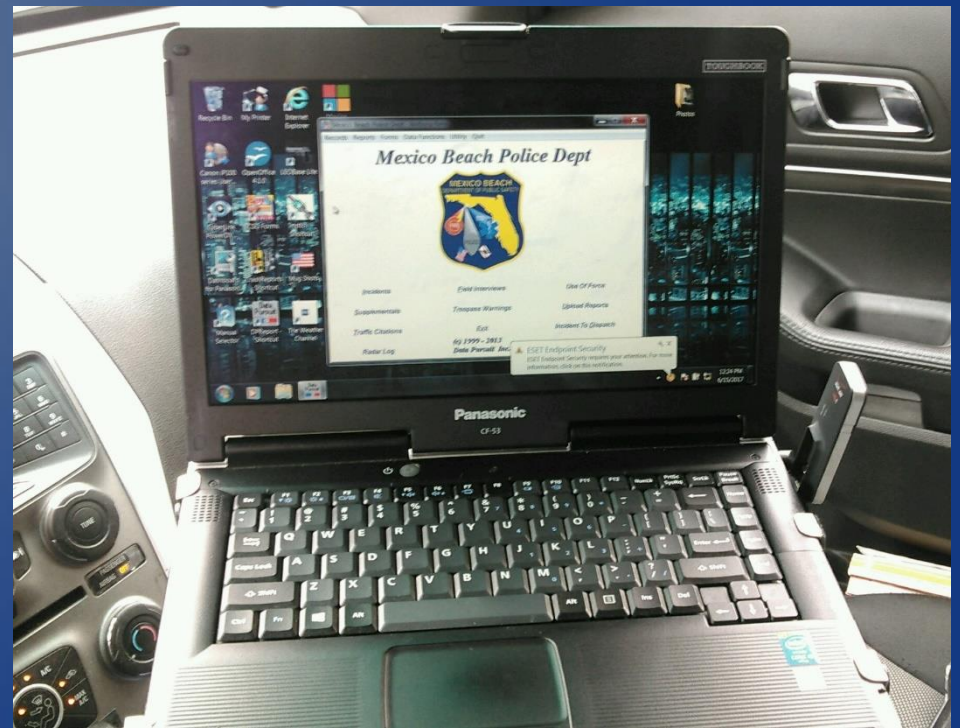


Digital Ally First Vu Body Worn Camera

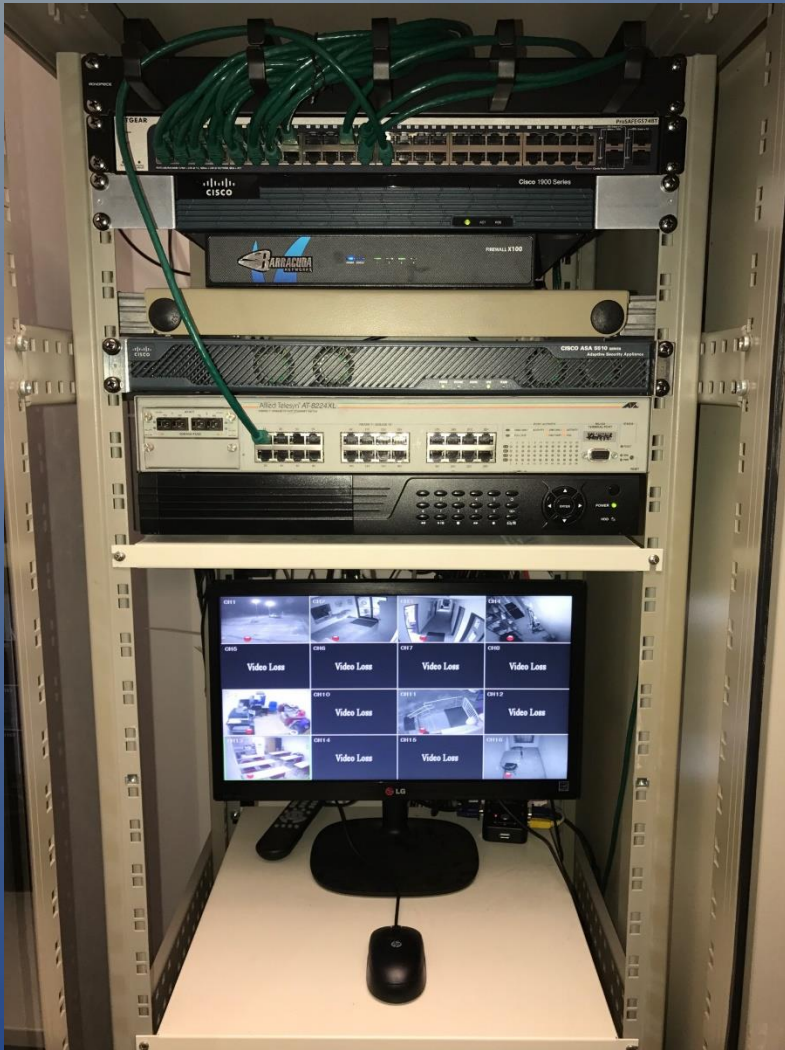
In April 2017, the Mexico Beach Police Department purchased in-car and body worn camera systems for all officers and vehicles.

# Communications

- The Mexico Beach Police Department is dispatched by 800 MHz radio and Computer.
- Dispatch services are provided by the Bay County Sheriff's Office.



# Information Technology



- Upgrades were recently made to the police department's technology infrastructure.
- Future upgrades will be needed in the coming months and years due to compliance requirements.

# Relationships with Other Agencies



- Works closely with Mexico Beach Fire Rescue/ESU, the Bay County Sheriff's Office, and other agencies.

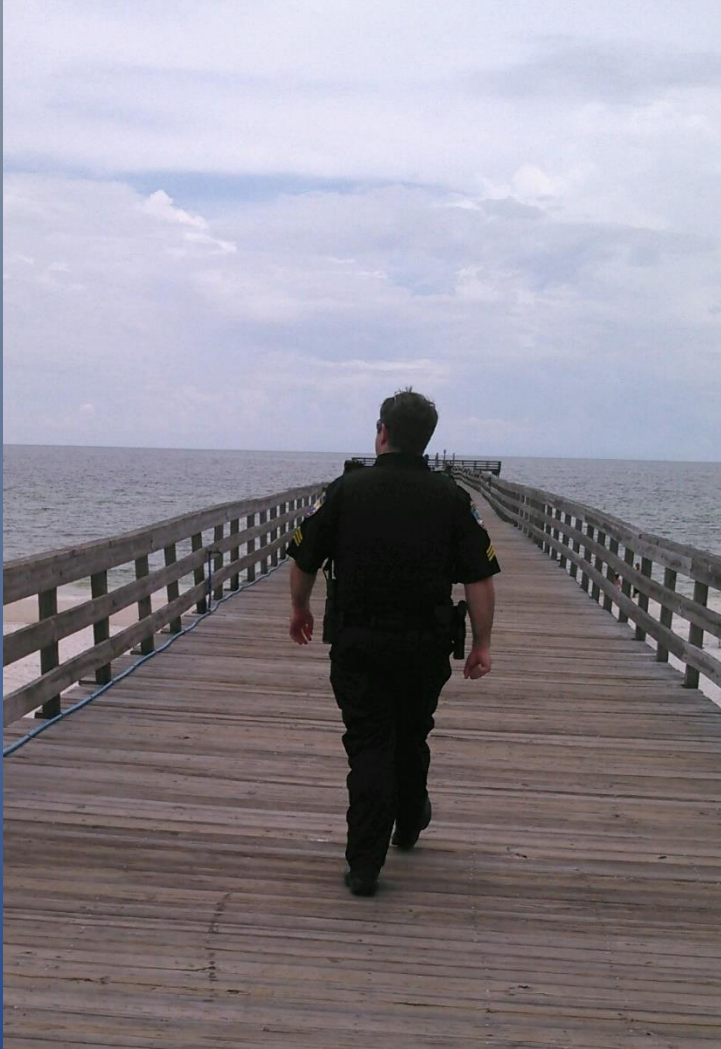
# Relationships with the Community

- Officers are encouraged to interact with the community during their patrols.



Sergeant Foster interacts with a child on the Mexico Beach Pier

# Policing in Paradise





Prepared By:  
Sergeant Alex Foster, MBPD

Significant Research By:  
Engineer Nathaniel Yarusso, MBVFD