

CITY OF JERSEY CITY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Dec. 10, 2012

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Mayor Healy & Police Chief Comey to Announce Two Crime Fighting Initiatives

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy and Police Chief Tom Comey will announce two crime fighting initiatives, including **added foot patrols**, during an **11 a.m. press conference** tomorrow, **Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2012**, at the **HUB, 360 Martin Luther King Drive**.

The foot patrols, which are being made possible with the additional 22 officers who are set to be sworn in Friday, will be added in areas throughout the city where needed, the Police Department. In addition, the Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security will unveil a new piece of equipment that will add to crime deterrence capabilities.

“Public safety has always been mission number one for this administration,” said **Mayor Healy**. “One of our goals this year was acquiring grant funding to hire new officers and we have done that. We will continue to seek funding to hire more officers so thereby adding to our police presence throughout the city.”

In July, the **U.S. Department of Justice** awarded the City **\$1.85 million** through the COPS hiring program to hire 15 new officers. The additional seven officers in the new class are paid for through the municipal budget. Additionally in April, the City hired 13 officers through lateral transfers from other police departments.

With the 22 new recruits, the Police Department will have a total of 806 sworn personnel. When Mayor Healy took office in 2004, he quickly worked to hire new police officers as the Department was at an all-time low with only 789 officers. By 2008, under the leadership of Mayor Healy, ranks in the department had risen to 905 sworn officers, but that number has dropped with massive retirements taking place in recent years and due to the fiscal challenges that have faced municipalities across the state.

“We suffered a significant reduction in staff due to retirements over the past two to three years,” said **Police Chief Tom Comey**. “We have been working with the administration to identify funding, including federal grant funds, to hire additional officers to replenish our ranks. We are pleased to be able to add these officers in the areas where they will be needed.”

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The “Eye in the Sky” surveillance tower, which is a \$100,000 piece of police equipment, was acquired by the Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security through the state Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) program. Used by Police Departments around the nation, including the NYPD, this piece of technology allows law enforcement to rise above a second story roof line. It is used for crowd management, emergency response, port security, and is widely considered a successful crime deterrent apparatus.

“Having an ‘Eye in the Sky’ allows our Police Department to have a 360 degree vantage point for surveillance,” said Greg Kierce, Director of **OEM & Homeland Security**. “We know this is an effective deterrent and are pleased to be able to have this valuable tool as part of our crime fighting arsenal.”

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.////