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Posted on February 14, 2012 at 12:45 PM

Updated Tuesday, Feb 14 at 3:35 PM

PORTLAND - The fatal shooting of a man threatening "suicide by cop" last month has prompted another review of how Portland police handle suicide calls.

Mayor Sam Adams, police Chief Michael Reese and other city officials presented a draft report Tuesday to the public safety action committee.

Background: Man shot by police in parking garage

The number of suicide calls has nearly doubled since 2001. The review also showed that the use of force by police has declined over the last four years.

On January 25th police responded to a call of a suicidal man in downtown Portland. The call ended in the death of Brad Lee Morgan who was armed with a replica handgun.

Reese said every officer on the street goes through crisis intervention training and the bureau has a mobile crisis unit that can respond to suicide calls. He said the review also found that the use of force by police has declined over the last four years.

Jason Renaud, with the Mental Health Association of Portland, issued a statement to the media following the police press conference Tuesday. He said the state's mental health crisis has developed as a result of "decades of financial cuts" and lack of state, city and county support.

"Mental illness is a public health issue - not a public safety issue. The police want to be part of the solution, but they are not suited to be an entire response to the problem," Renaud said. "What's missing are robust, welcoming and engaging community mental health and addiction services."

Renaud also encouraged friends and family members of people with mental illnesses to prepare for crisis and develop their own plans for recovery that don't involve police unless a person is dangerous to others.

"Our comment for the general public is if you want this to change, demand it from your political leadership," he said.

News Video



News

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