



City of Gainesville

Office of the City Auditor

Memorandum

To: Tony Jones, GPD Police Chief

Cc: Lonnie Scott, Sr., GPD Assistant Police Chief
Jamie Kurnick, GPD Captain
Joy Robinson, GPD Lieutenant
Ginger Bigbie, City Auditor

From: Vincent Iovino, IT Audit Manager

Date: December 17, 2020

Re: Observation of the Gainesville Police Department Evidence Inventory Count of Multijurisdictional Narcotics

Background

The Gainesville Police Department (GPD) Special Investigations Division conducts and coordinates narcotics and organized crime investigations and is part of the Drug Task Force that is a collaborative effort between the Gainesville Police Department, the Alachua County Sheriff's Office, the University of Florida Police Department, and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. The Drug Task Force also has detectives assigned to state and federal drug task forces.

In January 2021, a new Alachua County Sheriff will be sworn in; therefore, the Sheriff's Office requested GPD provide an inventory count of the multijurisdictional Drug Task Force property and evidence (evidence) during December 2020. GPD leadership requested the City Auditor's Office provide independent observation, a non-audit service, of the inventory evidence count conducted by GPD. The Sheriff's Office and the UF Police Department also provided staff to act as independent observers during the first four inventory observations but were not present for the final two inventory observation sessions.

Objective

The City Auditor's Office agreed to provide an independent observation of the inventory evidence counts based on inventory lists of evidence provided by GPD, through inquiry of GPD personnel, examination of evidence inventory lists, and independent observation of the evidence counts. Any evidence items included in the inventory lists but not located during the inventory counts are identified below in the Results section.

The City Auditor's Office was not engaged to conduct an audit of inventory processes; therefore, we do not provide an opinion on the accuracy or completeness of the property and evidence or systems inventory lists,



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and do not provide an opinion on the related internal control environment. Any potential process improvements noted by City Auditor staff during the inventory counts were shared verbally with GPD staff.

Methodology

Our procedures included performing a walk-through of the two evidence storage facilities, observing the inventory count sessions, and determining whether all listed items were physically observed or identified with an appropriate disposition code (i.e. destroyed, transferred to other agency, etc.) in the computer system.

With GPD and Sheriff's staff, we observed the inventory counts during six separate sessions over a number of days. GPD provided several inventory spreadsheets that contained affected evidence items located within three vaults at two separate locations. The property and evidence when collected are placed in plastic or paper bags, tagged, and stored in bins. Evidence tags include the bin number, case ID, unique number, and item description. During the inventory counts, GPD staff methodically progressed through the storage areas, presenting each individual item for visual observation and verbally calling out the item's unique number. Once the inventory item was presented, a member from law enforcement and from the City Auditor's Office marked off their spreadsheets accordingly.

Periodically, the independent observers reconciled their count sheets to agree on which items in the lists were observed and which items had not been located. The items not located were researched in the GPD computer system by the GPD Evidence Specialist while City Auditor staff observed. Many of these items were listed as checked out to court, federal law enforcement, or returned. We categorized this type of item as "accounted for". Items not observed and not accounted for were categorized as "not found". In addition, some items were observed that were not in any of the inventory lists. These items were included in our total items "observed" counts and their item numbers were provided to GPD for further research.

Results

Of 8,457 total items included in the GPD multijurisdictional Drug Task Force narcotics property and evidence inventory count, 7,886 items were observed (including 134 items observed but not listed in the inventory listing spreadsheets), 567 items were not observed but accounted for, and 4 items were not found. See the Table 1 below. Items not found included a cellphone, cocaine press, forensic copy hard drive, and a photo line-up. In total, 99.95% of total evidence items included in the inventory count were either observed or accounted for.

Table 1 – Summary of Multijurisdictional Narcotics Property and Evidence Inventory Counts

	Observed	Accounted for	Not found	Total
GPD Evidence Inventory Items	7,886	567	4	8,457