

## Hucker to community: We need more police in East County

Following several recent high-profile crimes in East County, County Councilmember Tom Hucker assured residents that the Council is doing what it takes to ensure safer neighborhoods.

“The 3rd District is the busiest of the county’s six police districts, so my goal is to make sure that we get the largest allocation of new officers from the next recruit class,” Hucker said at a community meeting that he organized March 13 at the Praisner Library in Burtonsville along with Del. Eric Luedtke and the District 14 Delegation.

“If that means increasing the size of the recruit class, then that’s something we will have to propose during the upcoming operating budget discussion,” Hucker said at the meeting, which was also attended by Councilmember Marc Elrich, who is chairman of the council’s Public Safety Committee, Police Chief Tom Manger and 3rd District Cmdr. Marcus Jones.

Hucker said he is working with Jones to fill the 14 vacant positions in the 3rd District.



“My goal is to make sure that we get the largest allocation of new officers from the next recruit class,” Councilmember Tom Hucker told residents at a community meeting at Praisner Library in Burtonsville.

Hucker also mentioned the recent funding that the council passed to [double gang suppression efforts](#) and for [grant funding for Catholic Charities](#) to work with at-risk youth and families.



Third District Cmdr. Marcus Jones updates residents on recent crimes in East County.

Jones updated the community on three recent crimes: a double homicide in February on Aldorra Circle; the body of a [deceased woman](#) that was found in a stormwater pond in January; and the non-fatal shooting of a student near Paint Branch High School a few weeks ago. Of those cases, only the one from January remains under investigation, because police are waiting for toxicology and other results from the Chief Medical Examiner's Office.

[Gregory Tyrell Jones](#), the suspect in the double homicide on Aldorra Circle, was recently arrested when the gun used in the crime was traced back to another crime committed in Berkeley County, W.Va. While Gregory Jones and his cousin Tyshon Jones did not live in Burtonsville, it appears they had ties to the area, police said. According to Cmdr. Jones, Gregory Jones and his cousin were meeting with the victims to settle an old drug debt at the time of the shootings.

In the shooting near Paint Branch High School, Cmdr. Jones announced that a suspect, [Damien Fox Jr.](#), had been arrested after several weeks of searching by police. He explained that part of the difficulty in identifying and finding Fox is that the victim had shared inconsistent stories with police after the shooting.

Jones, Huckler and Luedtke also heard many concerns from community members, including the following:

- The need for parking enforcement on Ballinger Drive;
- Faster police response times and follow-up with residents;
- The need for more after-school programs for teenagers; and
- More frequent Park Police patrols at the Edgewood Neighborhood Park and nearby wooded areas.

Jones agreed to prioritize parking enforcement, faster response times and better communication with the community.

Huckler also said he is looking into re-establishing the [RecZone](#) program at Paint Branch High School and will work with Park Police to improve patrols in East County.