



Pathfinder

*"We always try to learn from these things. We look for lessons learned on how we do it better."
– Greg Shaffer, former FBI Agent and Hostage Rescue Team Member*

Teamwork Matters

A message from
the City Manager



JASON STILWELL

The mass shooting at municipal buildings, in Virginia Beach, on May 31st is on our minds. It is the nation's worst mass shooting this year. It is the deadliest since November, when a gunman opened fire at a bar and grill in Thousand Oaks, killing 12 before fatally shooting himself.

A city employee who had worked for the City of Virginia Beach for about 15 years, notified his superiors the morning of Friday, May 31st that he intended to quit. He submitted a short and courteous resignation letter. Hours later, around 4:00 p.m., he embarked on a rampage, opening fire with a .45-caliber semiautomatic handgun on three floors, killing 11 of his co-workers and one contractor. The Police Department was 300 yards away and officers scrambled to the scene. The mayhem lasted nearly 36 minutes, from the time the gunman started shooting until police took him down.

It is particularly jarring as it involves employees who work for a city. It is natural to struggle with emotions following such events and normal to experience shock, fear, anger, and bouts of feeling helpless. On the next page is contact information for our confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP) if you or your family need support. The program is available 24/7.

A critical component of workplace and community safety is having employees look out for one another. If you see or hear of any threat or have concerns regarding the safety in our community, or at work, I

urge you to immediately notify your supervisor or local law enforcement without hesitation. If you "See Something, Say Something." Use your instincts and gut if something or someone does not seem right.

Security is an ongoing focus of discussion. City offices and security were discussed at our Department Director Meeting on Monday, June 10th. Some of our public buildings have key cards for employees, and door combination locks, and some have added interior walls at the public counters.

But in the case of Virginia Beach, the shooter was an employee who had access to get in. Further, police were exasperated as they tried unsuccessfully to get into locked areas. Doors were locked and they needed access keys.

Asked how secure the building was, the Virginia Beach Police Chief said that government buildings must balance access with security. "It's an open government building," he said "Citizens have the right to access open government buildings. Employees have a right to access their work site."

To all of our Santa Maria employees, please know that we care very much about you. Events like this are horrifying. Recall that we provide the Employee Assistance Program. Also, we have provided Active Killer training, to prepare for an event that we hope will never happen. But it is better to be prepared.

A tragedy such as this can serve to bring us together and offer valuable lessons and unite us around our shared humanity and care for each other. Please be in touch should you need anything from your City.

Jason