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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# City of Atlantic City Addresses Recent Uptick in Violent Crimes, Urges Community to Join Fight to Stop It

**Atlantic City, N.J. (January 10, 2024)** – Following a trend of decreased murders in Atlantic City in recent years, in the first week of 2024, there have been four homicides, two of them due to gun violence. City of Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small, Sr. called a Wednesday morning news conference to reassure the public the situation is under control, and to urge the Atlantic City community to join the fight against violence. Mayor Small was joined by Chief of the Atlantic City Police Department James Sarkos, members of the city’s One Neighborhood Evolution Anti-Violence program, and members of the city’s recently formed Reentry Services division.

“It’s unacceptable what happened so far, but we’re going to move forward to prevent anything further from happening,” said Mayor Small. “While four homicides in one week is concerning, we will not be pointing the finger at anyone in particular within the city. We are not the ones out there shooting guns. My job is to give Law Enforcement the necessary tools that are conducive to public safety. I stand by our police department 100-percent, as well as our Anti-Violence and Reentry Services programs.”

“The safety and well-being of our community remains of the utmost priority to our police department as we work to address the recent surge in violence in Atlantic City,” said Chief James Sarkos. “Our agency is working tirelessly with the Atlantic County Prosecutor’s Office on these investigations, and we will not rest until justice is served. This violence surge is unacceptable, and we are taking decisive action.”

The Police Department will be intensifying police presence in the neighborhoods affected by recent violence, while increasing minimum staffing levels and continuing collaboration with public safety partners in ongoing operations. To further aid public safety efforts, the installation of 1,000 state-of-the-art camera lenses in more than 200 locations throughout Atlantic City, with a focus on city neighborhoods, is currently happening. This project is expected to enhance public safety, reduce crime and increase police emergency response. The city was also recently awarded a \$3.75-million Community Oriented Policing Services (C.O.P.S.) Hiring Grant that will bring 30 additional officers on board this year.

In 2021, the city formed the One Neighborhood Evolution Anti-Violence program, under the leadership of Director Floyd Tally, to integrate themselves in the community and educate individuals, particularly youth, on violence prevention through personal experience as a proactive approach. One Neighborhood Evolution is calling for a community movement to ban all of Atlantic City together to reduce violence.

“We’re looking for everyone in the community to join us, and then stay a part of our efforts,” said Tally. “The tools are in place for us to succeed with our mission, we just need to work better and smarter together. We will continue to utilize our methods while urging everyone to join our fight.”

In 2023, the city formed the Atlantic City Reentry Services division, focused on creating plans for formerly incarcerated individual’s reentry into the community. Reentry Services have been working hand-in-hand in collaboration with One Neighborhood Evolution to reduce violence in Atlantic City. Both divisions are located in the Carnegie Library at 35 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd in Atlantic City and invite anyone in the community to come in to discuss further resolutions.

This Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, One Neighborhood Evolution is hosting a Peace Walk beginning at O’Donnell Park at 11:00am and ending at City Hall. This is open to anybody in the public.

In 2021, there were 13 murders in Atlantic City, seven due to gun violence. In 2022 and 2023, there were seven murders each of those years in Atlantic City, five each year due to gun violence. The City of Atlantic City offers our deepest condolences to those affected by the recent violence, and by all violence in Atlantic City.

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