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MEET OPRY -- HINGHAM COMMUNITY TO BE COMFORTED BY CANINE

HINGHAM – Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz and Hingham Police Chief David P. Jones are proud to introduce Opry, a comfort dog to support the community.

The town of Hingham recently acquired Opry, a mixed breed, rescue pup hailing from Texas. A gentle and docile dog, Opry, who turns one on March 20, was bred for comfort dog work, and donated to Hingham Police by PAWS New England and funded through a grant from the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office.

Hingham Police School Resource Officer Thomas Ford is Opry's handler, and Opry lives with Officer Ford and his family. Opry will be used to reduce stress and promote wellness and healing for members of the community. In addition to her presence in Hingham, Opry will also make appearances at the nationally accredited Plymouth County Children's Advocacy Center. There, Opry will be made available to comfort child victims of abuse.

"Opry is the first ever comfort dog to serve with Hingham Police, and she is a great addition to the department and the Hingham community," DA Cruz said. "We know all too well the traumatic effect that stress can have on young people. Officer Ford and Opry have worked hard at training, and Opry has developed a comforting presence and commands smiles wherever she goes."

Opry has been in training for the past 9 months and has completed multiple courses in obedience through Donna Do Right's Professional Dog Training in Norwell. The pup has also completed countless hours of exposure training in various social settings, and recently received her AKC Canine Good Citizenship certification. Opry is currently completing a Therapy Dog Training workshop and certification with the Cohasset Working Dog Foundation.

Hingham Police Chief David P. Jones said, "I am extremely proud of the initiative that Officer Ford has taken and am excited to bring this resource to members of our community. Opry will make appearances as part of our community outreach at various locations such as the Senior Center, assisted living facilities, schools, and other sites throughout town. Opry will also be utilized for our community policing programs and will be available to respond to critical incidents. I am grateful for our continued partnership with District Attorney Tim Cruz and his staff on this beneficial program."