

Public Safety Advisory Commission – Columbus, GA
Monthly Meeting Minutes

Date: August 19, 2021
Location: Milton Lockett Community Room – Public Safety Bldg
Start time: 4:00 PM
Adjournment time: 5:20 PM
Next meeting: September 16, 2021 at 4:00 PM
Meeting Recorder: Annalisa Shelling

Members Present:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Rohwedder, Chair | <input type="checkbox"/> Donald Watkins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pete Temesgen, Vice-Chair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stan Swiney |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Byron Hickey | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lisa Branchcomb |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Taft | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Belvin Minter | <input type="checkbox"/> Alexander King |

Minutes

Mr. David Rohwedder welcomed everyone and opened the August 2021 meeting.

Use of Force: David Rohwedder received two closed Use of Force Incident reports from Chief Blackmon. He will share these reports with the members of the commission.

Shoot Don't Shoot Training: David met with Chuck Williams from WRBL and they discussed the Columbus Police Department's "Shoot Don't Shoot Simulation Training" that is conducted by the Training Division. Mr. Williams is interested in possibly participating in the training, and also running a story on this training.

Town Hall Meeting – No update on when this will be held at this time.

SPLOST Information – David will send SPLOST information to the commission members.

Columbus Police Department Vacancies: Byron Hickey stated that he feels that the Columbus Police Department is at a critical rate of vacancies. He stated that CPD is at 158 vacancies, and he feels that this is the biggest concern for CPD at this time. He also stated that crime happens everywhere and will move to all areas of the city. He asked what the commission could do to assist the Chief and the Command Staff with morale at the police department.

Stanley Swiney stated that he doesn't think that money alone will increase the number of police officers. He feels if CPD raises their pay, other agencies will then raise their pay as well. He stated that officers are leaving CPD to go to lower paying jobs. He mentioned the morale of the department, and also that the qualifications / standards have been lowered.

Anonymous Survey: The suggestion was made to do an anonymous survey from the Public Safety Advisory Commission to all police officers at CPD. The survey would be strictly anonymous. The results would go to Chief Blackmon and the rest of the CPD Command Staff.

Stanley Swiney suggested asking "What will it take for you to stay at the Columbus Police Department?" Byron Hickey again stated that the main concern is the number of vacancies, and that it is important to find out why the number of vacancies are so high.

Stanley Swiney will call CSU's Criminal Justice Department to see if they can assist with the surveys. David Rohwedder will email the commission for assistance.

Minutes: The minutes from the July 2021 Meeting were approved.

David Rohwedder thanked everyone for attending the August 2021 Meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM.