

Public Safety Advisory Commission – Columbus, GA
Monthly Meeting Minutes

Date: January 21, 2021
Location: Virtual Meeting
Start time: 4:00 PM
Adjournment time: 5:20 PM
Next meeting: February 18, 2021 at 4:00 PM
Meeting Recorder: Annalisa Shelling

Members Present:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Rohwedder, Chair	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Friar Noel Danielewicz	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Taft
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Belvin Millner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alexander King

Others Present/Visitors:

Chief F.D. Blackmon, Columbus Police Department

Minutes

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

Agenda Item: 21st Century Policing

Presenter: Chief F. D. Blackmon, Columbus Police Department

Discussion: Chief Blackmon discussed 21st Century Policing. The six pillars for law enforcement to focus on are: Building trust; policy and oversight; technology and social media; community policing and crime reduction; training and education; and officer and wellness safety. The Columbus Police Department is accredited by CALEA (Commission on Accreditation from Law Enforcement Agencies). CPD is nationally and state certified and ensures to follow all practices under these certifications.

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Discussion:

Chief Blackmon spoke about CPD's social media platforms. CPD currently has Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and will soon have an updated website.

There were several questions, and a lengthy discussion took place. Some of the topics discussed were the different beats in the city, the shortage of officers / vacancies, policies on use of force reports, and CPD now has two Assistant Chiefs. Assistant Chief of Administration and Assistant Chief of Operations.

Chief Blackmon would like everyone to know that police officers and the command staff are approachable. The Chief appreciates the invite to speak with the Public Safety Advisory Commission and looks forward to working with the citizens of Columbus, Georgia.

Agenda Item: Friar Noel Danielewicz

Discussion: Vote to remove Friar Danielewicz from Commission due to missing 3 Meetings.

Conclusions: Motion to remove Friar Danielewicz made. Donald Watkins and Lisa Branchcomb agreed, and Friar Danielewicz has been removed from the Commission.

Agenda Item: Pay Study for Public Safety

Discussion: David Rohwedder stated that he has talked to Councilor Garrett, and he has also reached out to Senator Randy Robertson about ideas for a pay study for Law Enforcement. It was mentioned that previously the Carl Vinson Institute with UGA conducted a pay study for the Columbus Consolidated Government employees. These offices are currently closed due to Covid and many of their employees are working from home. Byron Hickey – made the proposal to increase the pay plan by a percentage each year. This was done in the past as “pay for performance” at the time of an employee’s evaluation. This would depend on the City’s Budget. Stanley Swiney – stated that he would be in contact with the Peace Officers Association.

Conclusions: Pay compression is an issue.

Misc. Topics:

- It was mentioned that the Public Safety Advisory Commission have a Facebook page. This platform would be used to help keep citizens informed.
- The suggestion was mentioned to possibly allow citizens to join via video link. Concerns were brought up about how you would control the crowd. It was suggested to have the questions sent in before the actual meeting, and to mute all users until it was time for a specific individual to speak.
- Alexander King mentioned that he works well with graphic design and social media.

David Rohwedder thanked everyone for attending the January 2021 Meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM.