

## **Charleston Citizen Police Advisory Council**

February 4, 2021

A meeting of the Charleston Citizen Police Advisory Council was held this date beginning at 5:30 p.m., virtually over Zoom.

Notice of the meetings were sent to all local news media.

### **PRESENT**

Thuane Fielding, Joe Lysaght, Frank Walsh, Jerome Harris, Ryan Davis, Paul Tamburrino, Melvin 'Hack' Ezell Jr., Max Milliken, Doris Grant, Emily Broome, George Palmer, Camden Norris Shields

**Also Present:** Chief Reynolds, Steve Ruemelin, Captain Bruder, Captain Thompson, Captain Chito Walker, Wendy Stiver, Bethany Whitaker

### **Call to Order/ Welcome**

Ms. Fielding thanked everyone for joining.

### **Approval of Minutes**

On a motion of Mr. Harris, seconded by Mr. Ezell, the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **Citizen Participation Period**

Ms. Fielding said that no citizens had signed up to speak or leave comments. She had forwarded an email to them regarding the Illumination Project Report, the one year audit report, and a summary of the Illumination Project. They needed to submit feedback to Ms. Stiver by March 26<sup>th</sup> and then Ms. Stiver would give a presentation at the next CPAC meeting. Mr. Harris asked if the report Ms. Stiver gave back would be a summary of the comments with the intention to give a CPAC statement in the future regarding the individual documents. Ms. Fielding said it wouldn't necessarily be a CPAC statement, but it was being sent to each member to review and provide comments based on their community involvement.

### **Subcommittee Reports**

- *Traffic Stop – Joe Lysaght*

Mr. Lysaght thanked Captain Thompson and Captain Bruder for providing a lot of good information for discussion at their meeting. Their input made the meeting very active. The information he had been seeking was to identify traffic problems and solutions, as well as statistical information being reported. They wanted to spend some time to Homeowner's Associations and other groups to start talking about the impact of traffic problems in the City and especially in certain areas. There had been some discussion about the ridealongs and when they could anticipate those starting again. It would most likely be the middle of the year or later. Another thing brought up was the coding. For some reason, there was still concern about why they couldn't get the coding for traffic information state-wide. He understood they had to change some code. That would still be looked at. He suggested to everyone that if they were

going to be presenting information regarding CPAC and the impact they had, they should spend a few moments talking with Captain Thompson and let him give them some points and details to talk about. They had looked at Week 52 reporting information and it was very detailed. Some of this information would be great for them to put into play and talk about when they visited youth groups. Mr. Davis said that it was very beneficial. He thought it was great and he was very impressed with the amount of data they received. Mr. Lysaght said he would break things down a little better at the April meeting.

Mr. Harris said they made reference to the subcommittee planning to meet with youth groups and other outreach. He said all the subcommittees may need to coordinate ideas about how they were approaching outreach. Ms. Fielding said to let Mr. Tamburrino report on Communications because he may be talking about that very topic.

Ms. Fielding said that looking at the minutes from December, Captain Cretella was going to make some additions to the report to Traffic Stop and asked if that had been done. Mr. Lysaght said he didn't know that. Captain Thompson said that he would follow-up on that. Ms. Fielding said that was the presentation that they were wanting to upload online, as well as share with the public and other civic organizations.

- *Communications – Paul Tamburrino*

Mr. Tamburrino said that they had a productive couple of months like they had promised. At the beginning of the year, he and Ms. Fielding were included in a meeting with community leaders following an officer-related shooting. It was a step in the right direction to be included in those types of communications and they wanted to build upon that. The bulk of their last meeting was to further the discussion to an executable stage of the recommendations they carved out from the audit report related to communications. They had sent around a presentation on a number of different initiatives they were recommending. They hadn't got the feedback they desired, but they took what they had received. The bulk of the last meeting was taking that feedback and coming up with executables they could give to CPAC for approval. They wanted to get started on the executables. Their list had seven recommendations.

Mr. Tamburrino made the motion for the report/recommendations from the subcommittee to come forward to CPAC. CPAC voted unanimously to approve the report/recommendations.

Ms. Fielding asked if Mr. Tamburrino could read the items from the list. Mr. Tamburrino stated that the first recommendation was to create an official email address for each of the CPAC members. The second recommendation was CPAC involvement in upcoming community meetings related to the Strategic Plan. The third recommendation was that CPAC members would report to their individual appointing authority on a bi-monthly basis. The fourth recommendation was to work with CPD Communications team and media resources to create a series of public service announcements related to common interaction with the police. The fifth recommendation was for CPAC to appoint a media spokesperson who would be provided as a source of information to media for commentary when needed. The sixth recommendation was to maintain a CPAC Facebook page according to the City's Social Media guidelines to supplement the CPAC's page on the City's website. The final recommendation was that CPAC chair

would be invited to City Council meetings to add commentary or answer questions coming from the Public Safety Committee report.

Mr. Harris said that one of the recommendations related to the strategic plan and he would be curious from the Chief what the timing was on that plan.

- *Policies and Procedures – Max Milliken*

Ms. Fielding said that this report would happen at the April meeting.

### **Updates:**

- *Policing 101 (1st or 2nd quarter of 2021)*

Captain Thompson stated the outline he sent out was what they planned but it could be a rough draft for what they would do with CPAC. The outline was what they had been doing for the Citizen's Academy. They felt good about what they had gotten rid of and what they had added. It would be the same format for CPAC, as well as the youth academy they hoped to do. They had gone all virtual with the Citizen's Academy. For the last two dates, they hoped the City was out of Phase II by then and those would be in person. The Citizen's Academy would be limited to 10, in the hopes they could get those last two classes in person. The whole class would be about ten hours. Part of the feedback they were looking for was how they would want it rolled out, whether they designated two months of a few hours each and what day of week to do it. They also wanted to do the youth academy this year and were reaching out to schools to identify 10 youth to participate. As that grew, they would do more of them. He would leave it up to the group to decide when they wanted to do their own academy/class. He just wanted to show the outline of what it would take. Mr. Harris asked if they could participate in the Citizen's Academy. Captain Thompson said that if they wanted to do that, to reach out to him. Mr. Tamburrino asked if they would be taking the place of a normal citizen if they decided to join the regular citizen's academy. Captain Thompson said to wait to see how many were interested in doing the 6-week academy. If they only had two from CPAC, that would be manageable.

- *Data Collection (Captain Bruder?)*

Captain Bruder said they had mentioned they were going to roll out a new FCC compliance measure and in early 2021. He wanted to talk about how important and how big of a step that was. When the numbers were pulled in the audit, they really uncovered that they weren't focused on having a way to determine if the tickets and warnings were being written. They didn't have anything saying it wasn't being done, but they didn't have a way to show the proof of what they were doing. They had been trying to figure out the best way to do it. Effective January 1<sup>st</sup>, they began requiring a field contact card. That had to be completed on every proactive stop an officer did. Before January 1, depending on the type of stop, there was different paperwork and it got overcomplicated. They decided to do one form of paperwork for everything. They had to get that information out to all officers and explain that and why it was important to account for all of the paperwork and stops. The officers understood the different systems. They spent most of January refining the process. They had to work through some things with

Dispatch too because they found out that different calls were getting put in as five or six different types in CAD. The graph for January showed that 80% of the situations based on the CAD calls had an FCC completed. There wasn't an FCC to go with 20%. The missing 20 percent could have been the wrong call type put in. The goal was that they had accountability now for all of their proactive work and they would try to strive for a goal between 95-98% of FCC's completed. Before this, they could give a good estimate of how many tickets were written, but couldn't give a good number of how many stops it broke down into in a reliable way. They now had data in RMS that they could make decisions based off of moving forward. They would start to merge other systems, as well.

Mr. Harris said this was great work. For the Policy Subcommittee, one of the first things they were looking at was complaints and asked if they would be able to take this data and compare to see if there was a complaint generated from a stop. Captain Bruder said that couldn't happen yet. That would be the top of the mountain when all the systems were coordinated and talking. Ms. Fielding thanked them for taking this on. It was huge and they had to start somewhere. Ms. Fielding said that complaints came in a different area and asked if that area would have a separate record method. Captain Bruder said it depended on what they wanted to look at. If they wanted to see how many stops they had where proactive stops resulted in a complaint would be different than total number of complaints.

- *Police Foundation*

Mr. Tamburrino said they had briefly discussed this at the last meeting. He could give everyone an update. This was the police support fund that would be separate from CPAC. It was its own 501c3. Since the last discussion, the paperwork had gone through and he thought they were waiting on the IRS finalization. Jimmy Bailey, their representative, would be a co-lead with himself with putting together recommendations and putting together a board. They would talk to some folks in D.C. that had put these together. They wanted to make sure that in the beginning stages they had diversity at the table from the start. It wouldn't be a Blue Lives Matter fund or political in any sense. They needed to be mindful that as they were supporting law enforcement, they were also using it as a tool to broaden their community involvement. The funds should be used to strengthen that relationship. They also had to be mindful about how the community may feel about a fund benefitting law enforcement. They hadn't made any decisions yet, because they wanted to form the group first. If they had any recommendations, they should pass it along.

- *Strategic Plan*

Ms. Stiver said that they had the Chief make a video with the entire plan in it which was very detailed and lengthy. It went through an editing process. The goal was to use that video in community meetings so they could roll it out without the Chief being present at every meeting. After editing, the sound was difficult, so the Chief would be redoing the video. When they got the video fixed, she would pass it off to Captain Thompson and they would set the meetings up. Ms. Fielding asked if there was a schedule yet. Captain Thompson said he would provide it when it was in place. They were trying to be in line with the Racial Bias Audit. They didn't want silos of who was providing community outreach. They would push

this out to individual commanders and they would provide the video at their individual community meetings. It would be available on social media as well, with a link to the website.

Ms. Fielding asked that she didn't want to impede the process and asked if the CPAC members could just respond to Captain Thompson when he sent that schedule out with feedback. Mr. Harris asked if Captain Thompson could look at the membership and identify the districts they were in to try to line up the meetings with each member's schedule.

On the motion of Mr. Lysaght, seconded by Mr. Davis, CPAC voted unanimously that when Captain Thompson sent the schedule of community meetings, they would respond directly to him with feedback.

### **Chief's Updates**

- *After Action Report from May 30/31*

Chief Reynolds said that he hoped they could meet in person later in the year. COVID had been a challenging time. He was hopeful that they could get started on ridealongs again soon. They were being very careful about masking and sanitization. For those that felt comfortable, he hoped they could get those going. He didn't want to miss the clarification that they did have data on complaints and things they could talk about.

They had extended the date for submissions for feedback and complaints. Captain Thompson was the recipient of all of those. It would go to the Public Safety Committee in the next few weeks and then to final Council. The draft version was posted. Captain Thompson said the group was made up of himself, Captain Bruder, Captain Cretella and Heather Mulloy. They took the recommendations from the Public Safety Committee and they had gotten 28 responses from the community. They also took feedback from the citizens who participated in the Public Safety Committee. They hoped to have it out in about a month. There would be section talking about complaints and also property damage. Captain Bruder said that this report had shown them they had to be critical of themselves and put that feedback loop in place to constantly learn. They had done that with every event since. They developed plans and took pieces from the report to put in place. They weren't waiting for the report to be finalized. Deputy Chief Walker reminded the Chief constantly to have different people at the table and to look at the bigger picture. Andre Jenkins was also a part of these discussions. Deputy Chief Walker said it was all about growth and progression. It was a team collaborative effort. Chief Reynolds said they were working hard to bring unity to the communities. That was easier said than done. Their country had been very divided and they found themselves in the middle during 2020. The word he was focusing on was 'together' because together they could solve these issues.

- *December 29, 2020 Incident Update*

They had two officer involved shootings in the last month. Violent crime for 2020 was up significantly. Homicides were doubled from 2019 to 2020. There had been eight in 2019 and 16 in 2020. Aggravated assaults were up 30% city-wide. Overdoses and deaths from opioids were also up significantly. When they thought about shootings, they thought about gangs and retaliation and drugs. Most of their

shootings were connected to one or all of those things. One of their core responsibilities was to keep the community safe. This trend was important to note that it wasn't unique to Charleston. It was nationwide and occurring everywhere. It was significant. There wasn't a lot of science about why these things were happening but there were commonalities including that it was a small number of repeat offenders armed with guns and creating violence. They were looking at things like the gang issue in the area. He had met with his counterparts in the area and the FBI had a violent crimes taskforce. They worked closely with many other entities to try to investigate these crimes. They had also had innocent victims. He had just gotten off a call with an investigator where they had victims shot in one of their communities by stray gunfire in the Bayside Apartments Bridgeview community where they had their first officer-involved shooting. It was still under investigation and could only talk generally about. He wanted to talk about the protocol and how the investigations worked, as well as what they had done to communicate on these cases and how they would continue to communicate.

One of the shootings was in the Bridgeview Apartments. Their officers responded to a domestic violence incident. A woman called for help and in that incident there was a report of weapons involved by the party that had called. The woman said she was scared and needed help and that a person was trying to get into her apartment with weapons. The officer arrived and it appeared as though they were immediately fired upon and their officers returned gunfire against the suspect. Generally, in these cases the offenders had a violent criminal history. They weren't allowed to carry weapons and shouldn't be in the community creating havoc. They would hear more about this from the solicitor. In every one of these cases, the solicitor has created a protocol. In the past, there were deficiencies in how these cases were done and a lot of agencies did them themselves. In the last 5-10 years, agencies have realized they shouldn't be investigating their own officers and own shootings. They agreed they would have an independent organization investigate and this time it was SLED. The protocol outlined things like officer statements. The protocol was public. The solicitor wanted to make sure they had done the right thing and that they had an independent element. In most cases, SLED responded very quickly and provided their own crime-scene people. If they weren't available, there were secondary agencies to provide their people.

Another incident had occurred two weeks ago. There was a suspect who committed a murder in Georgetown allegedly. It was a violent murder and the suspect was on the run. Within a week, he also did other crimes and one was an armed carjacking at the Mount Pleasant Whole Foods. The next day, he put a gun to someone's head in Charleston and took that person's vehicle. Their officers got behind the vehicle and there was an exchange of gunfire. The suspect was struck by the gunfire and this case was still being investigated. The FBI would be adopting the case. The person was still in the hospital.

Following the events, they immediately made a statement of the basic facts of what they knew at the time and being consistent with transparency and getting the facts out. The investigations took time and it was important to let it take the time needed. Within that same day, they had people they invited from the community to have a discussion about how the process worked and then they did a press conference to talk about the violent crime issue and the process. Soon, the solicitor, after reviewing the investigation from SLED, would make a decision and issue a letter and they would talk about what actually happened. They had released the officer's name and there had been FOIA's related to that.

They met the day before with some of the partnering agencies and they continued to talk about and work together to make sure these small number of violent offenders were paid attention to. There was a lot they were doing with mentoring and building bridges.

Mr. Harris wanted to make an observation commending the Chief for how he handled the release of information and decision to release the names of the officers involved and report of discipline. Many agencies didn't do that and for many parts of the community, that was a positive. Chief Reynolds thanked Mr. Harris. They would continue to do that. No matter what they did, they wouldn't make everyone happy. One of the cornerstones of trust was transparency. One of the key areas was the complaint process and they all agreed they should get more complaints and act on them and document them.

### **Topics for Next Agenda**

Ms. Fielding said that based on what they had discussed, at the next meeting they would talk about the Illumination Update, Policing 101 Schedule, Strategic Plan Video Meetings, Community Engagement and Mentoring, Complaint Process, Hiring Process, Subcommittee Reports, and the Chief's Update.

Ms. Fielding asked if June 3<sup>rd</sup> was okay for their June meeting. The Chief said they would make that date work if it worked for the members. Ms. Fielding asked if August 5<sup>th</sup> would work for the August meeting. Everyone agreed those dates were fine.

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Bethany Whitaker

Council Secretary