

Community Policing Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes

December 14, 2015

I. Call to order

Major Jerry Stokes called to order the regular meeting of the Community Policing Advisory Board at 4:30pm on December 14, 2015 at the GLTC Transfer Station.

II. Roll call

Major Jerry Stokes conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Chief Raul Diaz, Ramona Battle, Rhonnie Smith, Shaun Spencer-Hester, Major Todd Swisher, Dr. Kim McCabe, Synda Maynard, Gloria Witt, Captain Ryan Zuidema, Larry Taylor, Bonnie Svrcek, Nina Polley, Patricia Braxton, and Dr. Tim Chong

III. Announcements

- a) Welcome to Chief Raul Diaz

IV. Old Business

- a) Recruitment
 - a. Major Stokes noted the two key issues identified previously by the group
 - i. Shortening the hiring process
 - ii. Minimizing the negative impact of the Personal History Statement (PHS)
 - b. Major Stokes reviewed the current hiring process and suggestions for updating the process
 - i. Moving the PHS until after the written exam
 - ii. Using a recruiter to develop a personal relationship with candidates
 - c. The following comments/suggestions were made:
 - i. Chief Diaz – Wants to use a recruiter to seek out the best candidates and improve our recruitment of minority candidates.

He also noted that our officers do a lot of great things in the community that nobody ever hears about. He advised we need to do better selling our brand.

- ii. Ms. Battle asked if written tests could be offered elsewhere in the state (possibly outsourcing the exams). She also noted that the overall process should be easier/friendlier. Ms. Battle suggested that the cadet program might need to be reinstated.
- iii. Ms. Witt suggested offering the written exam online. She also noted that the PHS is a big barrier to getting minority candidates. She believed that moving it later in the process will increase the number of qualified candidates. Ms. Witt suggested the entire process should be about building relationships with the candidates. She also asked about youth connections (such as the Boys & Girls Club) and if we still had a DARE program. Ms. Witt also suggested exploring potential candidates at the Old Dominion Job Corps.
- iv. Mr. Smith noted the need for the recruiter to serve as a coach for the candidate. He also suggested that we look at best practices for hiring in the industry and attempt to meet the shortest hiring process timeline.
- v. Ms. Spencer-Hester suggested that recruiting programs are needed for those aged 16-21.
- vi. Ms. Maynard asked if we employ a full-time background investigator to assist with expediting the hiring process. She suggested we might consider doing this.
- vii. Ms. Polley noted that her generation does not want to wait six months to for a job. Anything done to speed up the hiring process would be beneficial.
- viii. The overall group thought the recruiter position was necessary and that the cadet program would be beneficial if reinstated. They also believed that the suggestion of a new You Tube recruiting video would assist with recruiting.

d. Success Measures

- i. Ms. Witt noted that we need to track and monitor how long it takes for a candidate to complete the hiring process
- ii. Mr. Smith noted that we need to track the increase in the number of minority candidates we are able to successfully hire.

V. New business

Discussion with the Chief

- a. Chief Diaz noted that the group's input is very important to our long-term success. He then inquired for member's opinions on how the process was working to date.
- b. The following comments/suggestions were made:
 - i. Dr. Chong stated that our gathering is a good atmosphere where members are cordial, civil and respectful.
 - ii. Ms. Maynard noted that the group is still new and is beginning to gel together
 - iii. Ms. Witt noted that the PD listens to members' comments and integrates them where they make sense. She believes that the current focus is to hire more diverse officers. Ms. Witt advised that the PD is very transparent in this process. She also noted that we must make sure we are measuring the right things as we move forward.
 - iv. Ms. Polley stated that this group is much more proactive than reactive. She believed that this will serve us well if problems arrive.
 - v. Mr. Taylor advised that we need to be advocates for each other and this is done through developing personal relationships.
 - vi. Mr. Smith noted that the meetings have been very constructive and much of the discussion has grown out of the original review of hiring statistics.
 - vii. Ms. Braxton thought the meetings have been very positive and allow all of us to talk intelligently to others about issues as they arise.

Major Stokes asked if there were any additional topics for future discussion

- a. The following comments/suggestions were made:
 - i. Ms. Polley asked if there was currently any program where officers spoke to the youth about penalties for certain crimes. She felt this could serve as a deterrent.
 - ii. Ms. Spencer-Hester advised that she encourages officers to continue to get out of their cars and speak with residents.
 - iii. Chief Diaz asked the group about their interest in attending an “Executive Citizen’s Academy.” Most present seemed interested.
 - iv. Major Stokes noted that future topics for discussion may include:
 - a. Patrol beat structure
 - b. Body Worn Camera policy

For the good of the order:

Larry Taylor advised of a monthly community meeting with officers that takes place at the Living Word Church – 825 Taylor St.

Next Meeting: 2nd Monday of the month – January 11 at 4:30pm. (may need to be rescheduled based on schedule conflict)

VI. Adjournment

Major Jerry Stokes adjourned the meeting at 5:45pm

Minutes submitted by: Ryan Zuidema

Minutes approved by: JP Stokes