

POLICE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

August 10, 2021

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present: John Springett, Richard Hewitt, Brian Williams, Olga Boucher

Others Present: Ron Lantz, Greg Jenkins, Sean Reeves, Diantha McKeel, Donna Price

Meeting called to order at 9:01am

John Springett made a motion to approve the June 8, 2021, meeting minutes and Brian Williams 2nd the motion all were in favor. The June 8, 2021, meeting minutes were approved.

Matters from the Public:

There were no matters from the public from the last CAC meeting, but there have been several compliments from citizens regarding the professionalism of the Albemarle County Police Officers.

The Department would like to remind everyone that the best way for public comment or to reach the Chief of Police, is to use the following email address askthechief@albemarle.org, which is located on the Citizens Advisory Committee website and the Police Department's website at www.albemarle.org.

New Business:

Major Greg Jenkins discussed the Community Policing Act of 2020, please refer to the power point slide. In July 2017 the Board of Supervisors pass an ordinance allowing the courts to assess an additional \$5.00 fee for all convictions in our courts for the purpose of funding a program called DigiTicket. The Albemarle County Police Department has fully transitioned to a digital summons process for issuing citations through the DigiTicket program. This has improved accuracy, is more efficient and is a lot safer. When the Community Policing Act was passed by the General Assembly in 2020, the DigiTicket program was utilized to capture the required information. This information consisted of race, ethnicity, age, and gender of the person stopped along with the reason they were stopped, location of the stop, whether a warning, written citation or summons was issued or whether any person was arrested, if a warning, written citation, or summons was issued or an arrest was made, the warning provided, violation charged, or crime charged; and whether the vehicle or any person was searched.

In 2018 the Albemarle County Police Department was one of few agencies to voluntarily participate in the collection of use of force data through the FBI. Chief Lantz was asked by the Virginia State Police and the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) and volunteered the Albemarle County Police department to collect data on resident's status whether the person lives in the City, County or out of state. This information is reviewed monthly during CompStat meetings and a comprehensive report is sent to the Virginia State Police each month for auditing purposes.

The Information is being shared not only by the Virginia State Police and the Albemarle County Police, but it is also shared with DCJS and Police Chiefs and Sheriffs across the state. The data being collected goes into a database and is not tied to any one person; it is just general information that is shared across the board. Ms. Price stated that it is a wonderful tool for the police department and that it can also show problem areas if they exist.

Major Jenkins reviewed some of the traffic stop data that has been collected over the past six months, since January 2021. Out of the 2,108 traffic stops the primary stops were for traffic violations and secondary stops were for calls for service. The top 5 violations are speeding, miscellaneous, registration, motor vehicle safety and reckless driving. It was asked if this information could be share on the Albemarle County Police's website or social media. The perception in the media is certainly different than what the numbers are showing. This may also be a great presentation for the NAACP and the Board of Supervisors. All were pleased with the presentation.

Chief Lantz's Updates:

Staffing and Morale: The department is currently down 3 positions with 6 to 7 retirements coming up in September and October. There are currently 9 officers on light duty and 8 in field training. The County sent out the Employee Engagement Survey and this year was not a good year for the department. Some of the common themes were lack of communication, not feeling valued (lack of recognition), and pay not being competitive (before 5% increase, thank you to the Board of Supervisors) with other localities. Chief Lantz met with his Deputy Chiefs and an action plan has been developed to help raise morale in the department.

The 1st Sergeant and Sergeant's Promotional Process will be taking place sometime between September and October, so more about that will be forthcoming.

National Night Out took place on August 3rd, it was the first one in two years, since Covid. It was held at the Fashion Square Mall and there was a great showing by the community. The Chief also wanted to thank the media for the great coverage the night of the event.

The Chief gave an update on the body camera project. The cameras have been ordered and should be in around the 1st week of September. The department used the IACP best practices to draft up the policy and it is currently in the County Attorney's office for review. Before the body cameras are deployed, every officer will need to be trained on the use of the camera, the policy and the citizens of Albemarle County will be made aware of the policy and will know that our officers are doing it right, that's why we are taking our time.

Ms. McKeel asked that at our October meeting maybe we can get an update on the mental health issues. She also talked about the affordable housing issue and missing the middle housing.

Ms. Price is concerned with the number of traffic accidents in the County.

John Springett made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Brian Williams 2nd the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.