

Albemarle County Police Department

Community Advisory Committee

Tuesday, November 14, 2023

09:00 am

Committee Members Present:

Richard Hewitt
John Springett
Brian Williams
Maureene Deane

Others Present:

Diantha McKeel -BOS
Col. Sean Reeves-Chief of Police

The meeting was called to order at 09:02 am; the Committee welcomed the Board of Supervisors Member Diantha McKeel.

Matters before the Public:

We 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 askACPD@albemarle.org, which is located on the Citizens Advisory Committee website and the Police Department's website at www.albemarle.org. Additionally, they can call directly to the Albemarle County Police Department, and they will be directed to the Administrative Assistant (Danielle Burch) who can further assist them.

Trunk or Treat and Battle of the Badges

Col. Reeves-Our staff works with our Foundation on these events. We partnered with the Albemarle County Sheriff's Office, Albemarle Fire and Rescue, and the Foundation to set up two Trunk or Treat events this year with a focus on pedestrian safety.

-On 10/26/2023 we set up in Crozet at Claudius Park counting approximately 700 attendees.

-On 10/30/2023 we set up at Darden Towe Park counting approximately 1000 attendees.

-In conjunction with the Darden Towe Park we had our Battle of Badges Championship Softball Game. The Chief's Assistants for Charlottesville and Albemarle PD threw and caught the first pitch.

-Battle of Badges is an annual softball tournament of local Police Departments, Sheriff's Offices, and Fire/Rescue departments. This year teams were made up of the following departments: Albemarle County Fire and Rescue, Albemarle Police Department, Albemarle Sheriff's Office, Charlottesville Police Department, Charlottesville Fire and Rescue, Greene County Sheriff's

Office, and Greene County Sheriff's Office. The tournament began at 1000 on 10/30 with Albemarle County Police Department bringing home the trophy.

Community events are very important to make relationships with the community. It is an opportunity for conversations to break down barriers between agencies and citizens, keeping a positive perception and letting them know we are here for our community not just crime.

Col. Reeves continued; I am proud of officers taking the initiative to reach out to our community.

Sin Barreras /Without Barriers- The Foundation recently held a lunch at the Charlottesville office during Hispanic Heritage Month. This allowed our command staff, officers, and staff to know the location of Sin Barreras and to get a better understanding of all they do for the community.

In the second week of December, the Hispanic community comes together for the Our Lady of Guadalupe Pilgrimage. All participants gather around 1 am to begin the pilgrimage at Southwood Mobile Home Park and end at the church of Incarnation. Through the years our officers have escorted the walk and now some of our staff have joined our community completing the pilgrimage beside them.

John Springett congratulated Col. Reeves on getting our officers involved in the events and with the community. Have these events helped increase the recruitment and hiring of our certified officers?

Col. Reeves- Marketing and events help with morale. We have bright and good certified officers. We save on hiring sworn officers since we don't need to send them to the academy, their FTO training lasts 4-6 weeks and then they will be released to work their shifts.

Diantha McKeel- Spoke of her appreciation for the police department and the officers going out into the community instead of making the community come to us.

John Springett asked Col. Reeves if we still have our officers complete Spartan Training.

Col. Reeves- We have reclassified Spartan Training into our post-academy training which the University Police Department still participates in. The previous Charlottesville Police Chief withdrew from the program, but we have conversations with Chief Kochis about coming back.

We have 6 officers graduating from the academy on Thursday and we are sending 6 recruits in January. Det. Phile Giles retires officially on December 1 and Major Miller Stoddard officially retires on January 31, 2024.

On January 1, we will have 155 sworn officers on staff with 6 available sworn positions to be filled.

On December 11th we will host a Town Hall where I will introduce my focus for 2024- Trinity.

Trinity will be the focus of our staff's mental health, physical health, and training. This is an opportunity for all staff to live a longer happier and healthier life while employed at ACPD and during their retirement years.

Mental Health

We have brought on Dr. Scheer, LPC - He provides services for all employees and their family members.

LightHouse App

-24/7 Confidential Assistance that serves law enforcement officers and their families with support from trained, retired, vetted officers who deal with everything from "a bad" day to a significant mental health crisis.

-Self Assessments

-Peer Support Team contacts

-Provides resources for numerous topics

Physical Wellness

-We have put a team together of four of our officers to revamp a more efficient wellness program for all employees.

-Working on contracting a licensed fitness instructor/dietitian available to all employees.

-Life scan physicals will be available to all staff. A more in-depth physical that fire and rescue employees have participated in and provided early detection of cancer and other major health issues.

The long-term plan is for all sworn officers to complete a mandatory physical fitness test annually.

Year 1-Lifescan physicals/physical fitness instructor and dietitian

Year 2- Physical training

Year 3- Mandatory physical training test

*This all starts with the Chief and down

Training

Through the past years, training has become limited. We had a different command, COVID, and limited staff.

-Staff will be limited to 40 hours of instructor time at the Police Academy.

-Phase Training will be implemented

-Supervisors will work with staff to allow them to attend beneficial classes for the employee and the department

Maureene Deane- This shows the department cares about our people and will help with retention. The mental health component ties in with physical health, and we want to help and support this.

Diantha McKeel- This would be a good model for our bus drivers.

Maureene Deane- thinks this is great.

Brian Williams -Spoke with students and the ride-along program with our officers. They were impressed by the students' experiences during the different shifts. The officers had an opportunity to explain and demonstrate the different approaches taken at each call and to help build relationships. Mr. Williams thanked the department for all we do.

Upcoming Events for ACPD and meetings

TOY Lift- Sgt. Loya headed up the collection of toys and money donations at ACPD. A convoy of police vehicles driven by ACPD Command Staff, officers, and employees deliver donations to the Fashion Square Mall Toy Lift location. (Toy Lift is a private business)

Due to the concern for our citizens during the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war Col Reeves, Officer George, and Jeff Richardson took the opportunity to meet with the leaders of the Congregation Beth Israel Synagogue and the Islamic Society of Central Virginia. This was low-key with no media notification and no politics. We are one community, and we are here to safeguard all our citizens. Antisemitism and external parties that come into the community to cause issues will not be tolerated.

Richard Hewitt- Universities have students with various concerns about safety and being treated fairly.

John Springett- has this caused any issues on the call status?

Col. Reeves-life lessons, key world views. The jurisdiction officers are not aware of any antisemitism.

School Resource Officers

School Board funds- 1 SRO for Albemarle High School Campus – 4 schools

We used to have 2 SROs at the Albemarle Campus

School Board will fund any additional SRO positions while we fund the equipment.

Richard Hewitt -70 % of students want the SROs back, kids need protection.

Col. Reeves- Believes SROs should be back in the middle and high schools. Unfortunately, when the school board asked for the removal of SROs the positions were reallocated to the mental health unit.

Maureene Deane- Is there any new training required for the SRO positions?

Col. Reeves- There is a mandatory course through the DCJS that needs to be completed for them to be certified.

Brian Williams- 2023 Central Virginia Listening & Learning Exchange

Last Friday -was the opening reception at the Colonnade Club

Saturday-Tweens and Teens was held with a participation of 200 kids, ages 12-18, and some younger attending with chaperones.

Kids go through a lot, and these are sessions where kids and staff act out real hypothetical situations. This gives the kids the opportunity to be heard and to feel with no fears.

Phase one imagination- pause/rewind/fast forward on topics like domestic violence, drugs, etc.

When one child was asked if you could fast forward to next year, would you want? They replied they wanted to eat popcorn with their parents while watching cartoons.

Sunday- Community Worship Service & Brunch

Monday- Batten Hour: A Campus-Community-Nation Dialogue on Healing

Brian Williams speaks about his co-worker, Kyle Dobson. He's a new colleague of mine in UVA's Batten School. Kyle's research focuses primarily on occupations where employees sacrifice their well-being in service to others. As a result, he works with police departments across the US, including some college towns.

In late February there will be a four-day Tweens and Teens with an officer. Suggest that Kyle Dobson speak at the CAC meeting on January 9, 2024.

Richard Hewitt- What Brian and his co-workers are doing is wonderful.

John Springett made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Briam Williams 2nd the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:02 am.