

DRAFT

CITY OF FORT PIERCE

POLICE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Regular Meeting - Thursday, November 14, 2019 - 4:30 p.m.

Fort Pierce City Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 100 N US Highway 1, Fort Pierce, FL

Present: Melvin Jones, Sr.; Charles Hayek; James Edwards; Dr. Pinkie Hendley

Absent: Henry Duhart

Staff Present: Chief of Police Diane Hobleby-Burney
Sergeant Jason Braun

1. CALL TO ORDER

5:03 pm

2. OPENING PRAYER

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

4. ROLL CALL

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Approval of the Meeting Minutes from the October 17, 2019 meeting.

Motion was made by Melvin Jones, Sr., seconded by Dr. Pinkie Hendley to approve minutes

AYE: Charles Hayek, Melvin Jones, Sr., Dr. Pinkie Hendley

Passed

6. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Any person who wishes to comment on any subject on this Agenda may be heard at this time. Please sign the sign-up sheet in order to speak. Please limit your comments to no more than three (3) minutes, as this section of the Agenda is limited to thirty minutes. The Police Community Advisory Board will not be able to take any official action under “Comments from the Public” section.

No comments.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- A. None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Review of the Department's monthly report.

Staff Braun presented Members with the Department’s crime stats and trends and a zone map, he also noted there were approximately three thousand (3,000) citizen generated calls for service since October 14th (2019)- and an additional three thousand two hundred were Officer generated. Members were apprised of the Department’s staffing, that there have been thirteen (13) sworn and five (5) civilian hires year to date, but the Department is still eleven (11) sworn and six (6) civilian positions short. That new Officers are generally newer recruits coming out of the academy, not Officers coming from other agencies. Staff Hoble-Burney added that the Department does sponsor some candidates through the academy, and that a message can be sent out to the community regarding what the criteria is for becoming an Officer, because there are interested candidates whose background prevents them from joining the force, and also that there are other positions within the Police Department outside of law enforcement. Also suggested interested parties do a ride-a-long with an Officer.

- B. Overview of the Police Department’s budget for FY20 and the impact on the Department.

Salaries across agencies were discussed. Fort Pierce’s starting salary is comparative to surrounding agencies, within five hundred (\$500) to one thousand (\$1,000) dollars. Fort Pierce however does not have a step plan that matches or competes with surrounding agencies, and although the Officers will sometimes get a three percent (3%) increase, it doesn’t equal the salary of Officers in surrounding agencies past the three (3) year mark. The more years that past, the wider the salary gap between surrounding agencies and Fort Pierce Police Department, by tens of thousands of dollars, and Officers can change agencies without having to move. Other agencies require a smaller employee contribution to the pension, and also provide retirees with medical

benefits, which Fort Pierce does not offer. The City doesn't want to raise money to increase Officer salaries, and the Department continues to lose Officers. The Department continues to get new Officers and spend time and money training them to get them to an optimally functioning level and then lose them to other agencies. This is a discredit to the Department and the City. Officers that have left this Department and now have a higher salary with another agency are now the recruiters for our Officers, because now they are comparing checks.

Officer concerns and requests were discussed. Officers have stated their top concerns were their salaries, their benefits and their equipment, consistently. The Commission spoke of a millage rate increase so there would be funds to increase the budget, there was no increase. There was no success with the salary increase. There was no increase in the budget to cover the increase in costs for new devices issued to Officers. There was no increase in the budget to cover the increase in fees for the crime lab. The City said there was funds to purchase vehicles, they did not clarify that those funds would be taken out of the Department's budget, for vehicle maintenance, vehicle parts, radio maintenance, and gas and oil. Officers spoke of financial challenges that were being faced at a Commission meeting, Commissioners stated they were unaware that the Department's budget had not been increased. Officers feel that the Commission and should have their backs, like the Officers have the City's back. Members spoke of addressing the Commission when the next budget is being discussed.

C. Discussion on programs offered by Community Partners of South Florida.

Staff Hopley-Burney spoke of conference she attended that offered information of how to model programs for success, offered Members handouts from conference.

D. Rivew and discussion of NAACP complaint.

Tabled due to time limitation.

9. **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

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None.

10. **STAFF COMMENTS**

Staff Hobley-Burney expressed appreciation for the committee members' efforts and that their value to the community will become more apparent.

11. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

a. Member Hendley inquired about the schedule for upcoming events, Staff Hobley-Burney offered to send her a calendar of events.

b. Member Jones inquired about the community visitations discussed in a previous meeting- dates, times and locations will be discussed at a future meeting.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Melvin Jones, Sr., seconded by James Edwards to adjourn at 5:46 pm

AYE: Charles Hayek, James Edwards, Melvin Jones, Sr., Dr. Pinkie Hendley
Passed