

CITY OF FORT PIERCE
POLICE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES

Regular Meeting - Thursday, July 10, 2025 - 4:30 P.M.

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

Present: Melvin Jones, Sr.; Betty Bradwell; Bob Burdge; Scott Marcum; Quincy Barr

Staff Present: Acting Chief of Police Robert Ridle
Acting Deputy Chief Caleb Gillette
Deputy City Clerk Lisa Gittens

Attendees: Pastor Pinkey

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 PM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

4. 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.

None

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. None

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. Department Update

Bob Ridle, Acting Police Chief, shared that the previous Chief resigned and a new Chief selection is underway. His temporary role includes keeping operations steady and preparing for leadership transition.

A recent study conducted by CPSM outlined 84 recommendations for departmental improvement; staff are currently working on these and preparing a report for the city.

ACP Ridle introduced Dep. Chief Caleb Gillette who shared on his 24-year history in the department. The chief emphasized the importance of community support in policing and the need for police to evolve with public expectations.

b. Upcoming Events

The “Unity in the Community” event is scheduled for Wednesday 16th July 2025 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the Fort Pierce Community Center. It’s a family-friendly celebration with food, local entertainment, bounce houses, K-9 demonstrations, and participation from city officials and police personnel.

This event is meant to strengthen community-police relationships.

7. STAFF COMMENTS

APC Ridle stated that the department is currently in the budget planning process. He emphasized the need for honest community feedback, encouraging issues to be reported through the appropriate chain of command.

Members introduced themselves, highlighting extensive law enforcement, military, and community service experience. The group struggled to identify volunteers for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair.

Several members declined due to personal obligations. It was agreed to table the leadership vote until the next meeting to allow time for review of the committee’s responsibilities and resolution documents.

A request was made to distribute the resolution via email and hard copy to all members.

Members discussed confusion about media outreach, with some having been contacted by the press regarding past events. Clarification was provided that the city has a designated spokesperson (Communications Manager) and that there’s no obligation for board members to speak to the media.

8. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Members shared positive experiences with the Fort Pierce Police Department and emphasized the importance of community-police partnerships. Key highlights included:

- Regular monthly meetings with Fort Pierce Police and an assigned deputy from the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office, helping share community concerns and updates.
- Collaborative efforts, such as a gun violence reduction grant proposal.
- Active involvement in the Survivors of Murdered Victims support group.
- Discussion of the Memorial Wall for gun violence victims.

Other topics discussed:

- Succession planning concerns, with many officers nearing retirement and others leaving for better-paying departments like Port St. Lucie PD.
- Interest from HOA's in renewing patrol agreements; officers reiterated their willingness to support with patrols and crime prevention efforts.
- Police visibility is seen as a major deterrent to crime and a way to build trust.
- The relationship between the community and police has improved, with the committee playing a vital role.
- Public housing policing remains a concern, likely affected by administrative or jurisdictional changes.
- SeeClickFix, a popular anonymous issue-reporting tool, is effective but may be replaced by a new platform.

Overall, the session highlighted ongoing community engagement, challenges with staffing and resources, and efforts to maintain and improve safety and trust.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:37 P.M.