

**SUMMARY MINUTES FOR THE
POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

February 9, 2016
Greenville, NC

Chairperson Diane Kulik called the Police Community Relations Committee meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at West Greenville Gym/Epps Recreation Center, (Multi-purpose room) 400 Nash Street, Greenville, NC 27834.

Chairperson Diane Kulik asked for a motion for approval of the February 9, 2016 agenda.

Motion: Mr. Tim Webster
Second: Mr. Jermaine McNair

The agenda was unanimously approved by the committee.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Chairperson Diane Kulik asked for a motion for approval of the January 12, 2016 minutes.

Motion: Mr. Tim Webster
Second: Mr. Jermaine McNair

The minutes were unanimously approved by the committee.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS / ROLL CALL:

Chairperson Diane Kulik asked each member and staff to introduce themselves and let everyone know which district they represented.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tim Webster, Vice Chair; District 5	Jennifer Betz; District 3
Jermaine McNair; Mayoral	Diane Kulik; Chairperson, At-Large
Mary Catherine Stokes; District 4	Lennard Naipaul; District 2
Gregory Barrett; District 1	

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None	
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CITY STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chief of Police, Mark Holtzman; Deputy Chief, Ted Sauls; Assistant City Attorney, Bill Little; Sylvia Horne, Secretary; Cpt. Kenneth Laws; Lt. David Anderson; Sgt. Donald Manley; Sgt. Dale Mills; Reserve Officer Paula Sauls; Officer Richard Williams; Officer Sylestine Smith; Officer Keith Garner; Officer Tina Knox; Officer Justin Wooten; Officer Gary Howard; Kristen Hunter; Devinder Culver.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Pro Tem Kandie Smith, District #1

Council Member Rose H. Glover, District #2

OTHERS:

State Representative Jean Farmer-Butterfield

Human Relations Council Staff – Cassandra Daniels, Francine Philpot Pena

Pitt Community College BLET students

Citizens

NEW BUSINESS – Community & Police Dialogue, Policing the Community

5:30 to 6:15 - Open Meet & Greet, 6:15 – Welcome by Jermaine McNair

6:30 - PCRC Meeting

Mr. McNair opened up the meeting by welcoming everyone and then introducing himself. He then gave a reference with his time spent in federal prison for three years for possession of a firearm by a felon. It was there in prison, Jermaine read a book called “The Count of Monte Christo” that helped him to understand sentencing. Mr. McNair began to reflect on the time that he spent ripping and running through the community of West Greenville. He began to equate “doing nothing” with being innocent. Because if you don’t know what you are doing, that allows you to claim innocence. Jermaine stated all those years he spent ripping and running with his friends, he did not realize what was going on around him was a very large community that was being battered by crime, violence, broken families, dilapidation, property values falling, what he called urban decay. Jermaine stated he was a role player in what was going on within his community. He then had a wakeup call, because whether he knew it or not, Jermaine was an active role player in a system that was tearing family and people down and having a negative impact on his community. He promised himself he would never be “innocent” again.

McNair addressed racism and mass incarceration being correlated to crime and violence in black communities, pointing to loss of income and broken families as root causes. Mr. McNair stated that young African male is at a higher risk of being a victim of violent crime than any person in the US. Mr. McNair stated that was interesting because we have this view of a victim. He stated that he had listened to a lot of dialogues about “how to collect/how to approach it” and he heard one dialogue where they spoke about the common view of a victim. In America people actually view a victim most commonly as a female. In our society we have it geared up that if a female is injured, most males are going to respond to make sure the female is okay, but we tend to not in America see minorities males as victims but tend to be the perpetrator of crimes. It is not so readily to return to their aid with help and services.

Mr. McNair stated that we account for in America somewhere between 50% of the world’s incarcerated population. That means that we have more of our citizens in prison than any dictatorship or any nation we call corrupted. We imprison more of our citizens than any other nation period. Mr. McNair stated that to him this was a call to humanity because what he had to learned about his innocence and in that pledge he would no longer walk around in his community and be aloof and be ignorant to the impact he had. He had to understand that he was a role player in a larger system. Mr. McNair stated

that what he wanted his community members and brothers and a sister in law-enforcement to understand that as he matured and become more and more of a man. He measured himself by the positive impact that he's able to have in that larger system. There is no way he could mature as a man and not also challenge his brothers and sisters to be aware and acknowledge that when his law enforcement brothers and sisters put on that suit they are wearing the suit of a system that is not you, but the system that has actually negatively impacted communities for years.

Mr. McNair stated that "he loved being street, he loved being black. He loved the swagger and sense of style you pick up in the minority communities, but I also bear any of the shame for some of the actions of my brothers and sisters," McNair said. "When you step into that suit as a law enforcement officer, just like I don't want to be blamed and judged by the actions and misbehaviors of some of my brothers and sisters, I don't want you to be judged by some of the misbehaviors that have gone on in that system."

Jermaine McNair stated that the purpose of events like Tuesday night would be to discuss policing in communities of color and improve it by creating more options than incarcerations at a point of decision. That means when the police encounter a person, the police have some discretion and some options of whether or not to arrest, prosecute, or go for a felony. He did not want the police officers becoming social workers and coming up with their own ideas. He wants us as a community to be thinking, "what other options could there be, what are the alternatives can a law enforcement officer have." Jermaine stated that if we come together with our own programs. Then he gave a positive example of some police officers working with people in the communities. Mr. McNair stated that his call to action is "solutions." He encouraged those in attendance to take a positive stand.

Chairperson Diane Kulik then called the meeting to order. Afterwards Mr. Jermaine McNair introduced Chief Mark Holtzman.

"Community & Police Dialogue, Policing the Community" – Chief Mark Holtzman

Chief Holtzman introduced himself and thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting.

He stated the first step to lowering crime and strengthening relationships between the community and police begins with changing perceptions and the department wants to focus on reducing crime and gun violence and develop programs to meet community needs.

Chief Holtzman stated that his goals were to go through some items that he felt was important to everyone, such as crime reduction, reducing gun violence, and improving community relations.

Chief Holtzman stated in order to address the gun violence, he informed the citizens that the Police Department have received a "cops hiring grant" to hire four new officers. Those officers will be assigned to work just gun violence cases. Those officers will be working cases and completing follow-up and working with the task force officers to take the cases federally. He also stated that if the police department could reduce gun violence, it would save a host of other crimes. This will be one of the police department's main initiatives.

Chief Holtzman stated that the neighborhood revitalization program is something that the Police Department will be rolling out very soon. The department has already looked into a couple of neighborhoods already to start the program. Chief Holtzman stated that neighborhood revitalization is literally a community policing idea. This is where the police department goes out and works with the neighborhood to do just what it said. The Police Department will be bringing the community relations folks out of the city. So the police department won't be doing this alone; there will be other cities involved. Chief Holtzman stated that he was very impressed with some of the programs that the department has already done throughout the city. He stated that this is sort of a remake of an old program that was done in the city. It was a problem solving team approach where the officers are out in the community and now the department is going to be expanding the partnership the department will be bringing in. Chief Holtzman informed the citizens that he will be asking them to help the Police Department out with these problems.

Chief Holtzman talked about body worn cameras. He stated that the Police Department already had body worn cameras when he got here and the department has already ordered a second set and there will be a third and final order going out soon. There are approximately 80 body cameras worn by police officers. Chief Holtzman stated that the body camera works both ways. The body camera holds everybody accountable.

Chief Holtzman stated other improvements include adding 80 LED lights in west Greenville, which already has resulted in a drop in crime.

"It's natural surveillance," he said. "People can look out their window and see something that doesn't look right."

Chief Holtzman also encouraged community members to protect and own their neighborhoods. He stated that if you "Fix the environment, and it takes care of itself." He stated that he's seen reputation of neighborhoods change because of the lighting."

Chief Holtzman discussed a chart that listed data driven information from the:

previous six months	a year ago	last six months
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Chief Holtzman went over a few programs such as:

- West Zone Commander - David Anderson
- Internal Affairs – Police Dept
- Project Success – Devinder Culver
- Focus Deterrence – Sgt. Joe Friday
- Community Action Committee

Mr. Elmer Leary voiced his concerned about what he viewed as unfair treatment from law enforcement during his accident and other incidents. While most of the discussion centered on combating issues like racial profiling, law enforcement efforts to improve safety and strengthening ties in the community, issues like roadway and traffic safety also were addressed.

Chief Holtzman commented on Mr. Leary's concern. He stated that if a person have a traffic accident and the officer is trying to figure out what is going on and did the officer come out with a preconceived notion about what happened. Often times people think the officer made the decision based on the color of the people driving the cars. Chief Holtzman stated that one thing the Police Department talked about is fair and impartial policing. The Police Department did training on fair and impartial policing and currently is in the mist of training the officers and command staff. It reminds the officers how important it is to walk up and not have that preconceived notion in their minds. The training reminded the officers not to jump to conclusions but to let both parties of the accident to have a voice then make a decision.

Chief Holtzman also reiterated on using body camera at an accident or traffic stop. He asked the question: how far is too far at a traffic stop, what is the officer trying to do. Chief Holtzman stated that his perspective of that as a cop is totally different than a citizen. As a citizen a police officer's questions can become annoying by asking the same questions over and over again. If the citizen decides to complain on the officer, the first thing the supervisor will do is pull the camera. The goal is to look for safety things that the officer is doing, look to see if an officer is violating the policy, checking to see if the officer made traffic stop in a positive way. Chief Holtzman stated that sometimes the camera recordings are shown in the roll call room to show the other officers the right and wrong way of conducting a traffic stop or other incidents from the body camera.

An open discussion was held on the west Greenville area, where Gregory Tucker said he has lived for five years and seen positive change.

Mr. Tucker stated it was a lot rougher when he moved to Greenville five years ago than what it is now. When they brought in Chief (Hassan) Aden, he did a lot of good in the community. Mr. Tucker stated that he was from New Jersey and stated that when you hear, 'Pop, pop, pop' that means drop and roll, and hit the ground. He stated that when he first moved to Greenville, he was hearing gunshots almost every other night, now it goes months before he ever hears a gunshot."

Mr. Tucker urged community members to be more proactive and accountable.

Mr. Tucker stated that he would like to see a lot more of the people that live in the community come out to meetings like this and meet the officers that they have to deal with on a daily basis. He said don't wait and sit in the house and as soon as you hear the police has shot somebody, then citizens come out organizing a protest calling Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton to come down to Greenville. Come out and learn what's going on in your community. See how you can help the law enforcement officers of your community solve the problem.

Mr. RJ Hemby, a member of the Pitt County Improvement Association, expressed a concern about roadway safety and pedestrians trying to cross on 10th Street near Riverbluff. He said traffic was higher on roads near poor communities where he sees children struggling to cross the street.

Mr. Hemby stated traffic was not going through Brook Valley at 50 or 60 mph.

Gregory Barrett, a community relations member, said he joined the committee to build a bridge between police and local residents. Mr. Barrett said he hopes to expand events like National Night Out into more consistent occurrences.

Mr. Christopher Taylor made a comment and a concern regarding Kristain Drive –
Note: He was standing so far back his voice was too low for the recorder to pick up.

State representative Jean Farmer-Butterfield made a comment and concern regarding the police body camera - Note: she was standing so far back for her voice was too be audible for the recorder to pick up.

Dr. Savage spoke as an advocate for the safety of all people. She spoke on the concern where an officer came into a family setting. She stated that what officer don't know is what can sometimes causes a volatile situation. She gave a scenario of her son coming home and being tased and arrested by the police. Dr. Savage stated that the police did not find anything such as drugs nor a gun. Her son ended up spending the night in jail. But she ends up getting her son out of jail just in time for him to make it to his son's funeral. Her son also had to face a six months charge for resisting an arrest. Dr. Savage asked the question: "where were the cameras then?"

Chief Holtzman stated that he wanted to learn more about this case. And offered Dr. Savage the police internal affairs department telephone number and his phone number as well. Chief Holtzman stated that that scenario goes back to the training that the police officers are going through now, reminding the officers how important it is to handle a call for service. Chief Holtzman informed all the citizens that he would be around after the meeting and that he would be glad to answer any questions and concerns they had for him. He also thanked all the citizens, the Police Community Relations Committee, the Council members, Mrs. Butterfield, and the Pitt Community College students for coming out to the meeting.

Chairperson Diane Kulik asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Mr. Tim Webster

Second: Mr. Jermaine McNair next meeting is on March 8, 2016. Meeting place will be announced at a later date.

ADJOURN – 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia Horne
Administration Bureau Secretary
Greenville Police Department
Document (#1021756)