

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

February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Carol Ann Bass called the Police Community Relations Committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., at the Greenville Police Department. Since the meeting was held virtually, Sgt. Staffelbach and Carol Ann Bass were the only attendees present in. All other attendees were participating virtually.

## **INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Carol Ann asked for roll call of the committee members.

### Committee members present:

Carol Ann Bass, District #5  
Betsy Ray, Mayoral  
Carol Ann Naipaul, District #2  
Robert Cherry, District #4  
Robert King, District #3

### City Staff Members present:

Sgt. Michael Staffelbach  
Billie Jo Viverette  
Donald K. Phillips  
Camillia Smith, City Clerk's office

### Absent

Louis Warren, At-large

Carol Ann Bass asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Betsy Ray made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion.

Carol Ann Bass asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting, and of the February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting. Betsy Ray made the motion; Robert Cherry seconded the motion. Donald explained that since this meeting is virtual the vote needs to be taken by roll call procedure. Donald asked each member to give their vote verbally, on approving the minutes.

Carol Ann Bass – Yes  
Carol Ann Naipaul – Yes  
Robert Cherry – Yes

Betsy Ray – Yes  
Robert King – Yes

Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

Carol Ann Bass read the Police Committee Relations Committee Mission Statement.

Carol Ann Bass then introduced Keith Hamm, guest speaker, and stated he will be discussing Mental Health Awareness.

Keith Hamm discussed the partnership with the Greenville Police Department and the Mobile Crisis Unit, regarding calls for assistance related to mental health crisis. He discussed how law enforcement agencies have been overburdened with dealing with calls asking for helping with citizens going through mental health issues. He explained that now a mental health crisis worker will be working with the Police Department to assist on those calls. There is now an office set up in the Police Department for the worker, whose title is the Law Enforcement Crisis Liaison.

Betsy Ray asked if the liaison arrives and weapons are involved, what procedure will be followed then. Keith stated that if there are weapons involved the officers will stay on the scene until it is deemed safe for the liaison. He stated that the goal of the Mobile Crisis Unit is to assess the situation and then handle the crisis from there, allowing the officers to be cleared for other calls. He stated that there may be times where telemedicine procedures would serve better. Betsy stated that she was very interested in this program. Keith responded that the program has already seen success.

Robert Cherry thanked Keith for giving the presentation. Robert asked how many liaisons are there; and are there plans for more in the future. Keith stated that there is an agreement to have one now, and to bring on another one soon. He stated that when the liaison is not available due to being on one call, that Mobile Crisis will be called to assist other situations.

Sgt. Staffelbach discussed how 10 or 12 years ago he was told that law enforcement officers would be dealing with more mental health situations. He stated that they were correct and that he is excited about this program. He stated that mental health crisis is more of a medical issue and that this program will assist citizens to get the help they need. He stated that he applauded Chief Holtzman, Keith Hamm, and the Mobile Crisis Unit for starting up this partnership and new program.

Keith stated that he appreciated that and all law enforcement. He stated that in the past officers would take people to the Emergency Room for mental health issues; however they were not equipped to handle those situations either. When the Mobile Crisis Unit is involved, over 70 percent of citizens that are assisted are not admitted to hospitals. He stated that there isn't any charge for our service.

Carol Ann Bass thanked Keith Hamm for his time and giving the presentation. She then asked if there were any comments or other questions.

Betsy Ray asked if the Police Department has been responding to covid-19 gatherings for enforcement; and what is the procedure. Sgt. Staffelbach stated that when a call is made about a large gathering, a supervisor makes contact with the owners of the business or residence. He stated that the supervisor makes contact by phone and tries to educate them on safety guidelines. He stated that he does not have a number of how many calls have been made.

Betsy Ray then asked if the Cops and Barbers program could be the topic for March. Sgt. Staffelbach stated that he has already been thinking about that. He stated that he would be making contact with Sgt. Ritchie Williams and that it would be done virtually like tonight. Carol Ann Bass stated that it would be a good idea to get barbers involved. Sgt. Staffelbach stated that when we are able to meet in person again that we could go to one of the barbershops for a discussion meeting with the community.

Robert Cherry stated that he had three points that he would like to discuss. He said first he wanted to know if there was any information that could be shared about rumored incidents at the mall. Sgt. Staffelbach stated that he heard about the rumors but that the mall is private property. He stated that extra security is the responsibility of the owners of the mall, but that there have been increased patrols by officers in that area.

Robert Cherry then asked if there has been an increase of breaking and entering in vehicles in any particular area. Sgt. Staffelbach said that there has been a slight increase, but that the Police Department is trying to educate more about locking doors and not leaving property in vehicles. He stated that property crimes detectives are working with a specialized unit to catch the suspects; and that some arrests have been made.

Robert thanked Sgt. Staffelbach for that information. He stated he final concern is that the news stated that vehicle collisions are decreasing; however recent incidents show that there still is a need for increased traffic patrols. Sgt. Staffelbach stated that there has been increased traffic patrols recently. He stated however that drivers now are more distracted because of cell phones and other technology. He stated that the sergeant of the traffic unit does send officers in that unit to high problem areas.

Carol Ann Bass stated that the idea of getting involved in training at the Police Department is on hold right now due to covid-19. Sgt. Staffelbach stated that they're trying to plan to hold active shooter training either in April or May. He stated that anyone would be welcome to come and observe, be roll players, or experience to some degree what officers have to go through. He stated that when a final decision is made he will let everyone know.

Betsy Ray expressed her concern over the fact that Dr. Warren has not attended a few meetings. She stated that she is concerned and asked about his absences. Billie Jo Viverette, secretary to PCRC stated that she would make contact with Valerie P. Shiuwegar, City Clerk concerning his attendance. Sgt. Staffelbach stated that he and Carol Ann Bass will reach out to him to determine if he wants to continue to be involved.

Donald asked if there is no more discussion, is there a motion to adjourn. Carol Ann Bass made the motion; Carol Ann Naipaul seconded the motion. He explained due to the meeting being

held virtually that he needs to take roll call and everyone needs to state if they agree to adjourn the meeting.

Carol Ann Naipaul – Yes

Robert King – Yes

Robert Cherry – Yes

Carol Ann Bass – Yes

Betsy Ray – Yes

The meeting was adjourned.