



**York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office**  
**Citizen Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
January 9, 2021  
0900 a.m.  
301 Goodwin Neck Road  
Yorktown, VA 23690



**PRESENT:** Melanie O Bond-Artis; Robert Carpenter; Penelope Carroll; Lauren Dunbar; Janine Espinal; Andre Gaines; Debra Goff; David Gorwitz; Beth Hoer; Linda Hutchinson; Eileen O'Brien; Krysten Reid; Steven Roane

**ABSENT:** LeRoyce Bratsveen; Latonia Chavis; Jennifer Joyner; Willie Rose; D'Shawn Wright; Jason Yarema

**STAFF:** Major Ron Montgomery, Chief Deputy

**AGENDA TOPICS**

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Penelope Carroll called the meeting to order on at 0900 a.m. via virtual Zoom meeting. Roll call was taken.

**2. Opening remarks: Ms. Penelope Carroll/Major Ron Montgomery**

Major Montgomery stated that the Sheriff's Office has received funds for construction of a new building located on Goodwin Neck Road. The plan was presented to the Board of Supervisors and the building will be a 50,000 square foot facility. Future construction plans is to clear the lot in the July timeframe. He stated that he would keep the group posted on the progress of the construction of the building.

Major Montgomery also informed Ms. Carroll to please collect the shirt sizes from the committee members. This would be a great marketing tool to get the word out on the committee. Ms. Carroll stated that she would get the information from the participants.

Major Montgomery also stated that Mr. Roane has recently been elected to the Board of Supervisors for the 4<sup>th</sup> District in the County and he stated that Mr. Roane will be a great advocate for the Citizen Advisory Committee.

**3. Learning the law/top five stressors for officers: Major Montgomery**

Major Montgomery reviewed the top five stressors for police officers which are: generational stressors, building a working relationship with the community, COVID pandemic/childcare stressors, retiring police staff, and the need for additional staffing of law enforcement officers.

Major Montgomery emphasized that the top stressor for the police force are generational stressors. These stressors have been bought on by COVID-19 due to challenges with finding childcare and increased online learning. It is also challenging for young law enforcement officers because they are starting out and have to build a good working relationship with the community. Some of the senior police officers on the force are retiring and this means that the Sheriff's



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Office loses corporate knowledge to train and mentor the younger police force. Major Montgomery stated that there were two Captain retirements recently. Major Montgomery has been on a police officer for forty-six years.

He also stated that the Sheriff's Office also needs additional law enforcement officers because York-Poquoson County is growing. One of the big stressors is the negative impact across the community due to a shortage of staffing and this has caused a negative impact across the community. Ms. Linda Hutchinson asked about the mentorship programs when it comes to training new police officers and the way that they might react to the community. Major Montgomery stated that the younger deputies have a warrior mentality and that the Sheriff's Office aims to continue to revise the training at the academy level. Mr. Steve Roane asked about opportunities to gather to have this conversation amongst the subject matter experts. His question was: how do you shape the academy for future generations to come? Mr. Roane pointed out that it is important to have digital communication and talk to people.

Mr. Andre Gaines asked about the police academy and its militarized way of thinking. He asked Major Montgomery if he thought that might be an issue when it comes to policing and interacting with citizens. Major Montgomery stated that the police force is a paramilitary organization and discipline is an aspect that is a required facet of training in the academy. Mr. Gaines stated that the human aspect is very important when interacting with the public as there can be a continued misperception of the way the police force treats certain sectors of the community. Ms. Carroll stated that is why open lines of communication are critical to change this perspective within the wider community. Ms. Beth Hoer inquired about police graduates and the ongoing training requirements. Major Montgomery stated that there is a yearly forty hour training refresher on topics of interest for the police force and that they hire expert instructors.

In regards to the staffing shortage within the police force, Major Montgomery stated that the average staffing of police officers is approximately two police officers (1.8) for every 8,000-9,000 people within the community. There are staffing standards across the county. York-Poquoson County receives approximately 60,000 service calls a year but last year the Sheriff's Office received 90,000 service calls. These increased service calls across the community signals that the community has continued to grow and there is a need to expand the police staff. Increased service calls with a staffing shortage will translate into a lower standard of service, due to police officers having an increased caseload, and the Sheriff's Office wants to ensure that staffing is adequate to ensure that there is adequate service across the community.



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**4. Concerns for community: Ms. Penelope Carroll**

Major Montgomery also stated that December was one of the most violent months for York-Poquoson County due to an increase in homicides. Major Montgomery mentioned an incident in within the county and Ms. Penelope Carroll stated that she had a recent incident of homicide occur in her family. Major Montgomery thanked both Ms. Penelope Carroll and Mr. D'Shawn Wright for continuing to bring awareness to the community. He also emphasized how important the Citizen Advisory Committee will be once the group starts engaging with the community.

**5. Developing the mission statement and goals: Ms. Janine Espinal (facilitator) and Ms. Lauren Dunbar (scribe)**

Ms. Janine Espinal assisted in facilitating the group to develop the mission statement. The group brainstormed at length in regards to providing different ideas and amongst the group. After much discussion, the draft mission statement was developed, listed below.

The mission of the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) is to provide a forum for constructive dialog to enhance open lines of communication, collaboration and facilitation within the York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office. The focus of the CAC is to build honesty, truth, trust, mutual respect and transparency within the Sheriff's Office. The goal is to empower the community to build partnerships, foster education, activism/outreach/advocacy and understanding among the CAC, communities and the Sheriff's Office.

The group will continue to refine the above mission statement in the next meeting.

**6. Update on the budget: Major Montgomery**

Major Montgomery updated the group that he is currently working on getting a budget approved for the committee. He will provide further updates once it has been finalized.

**7. Due Outs for Next Meeting**

Ms. Penelope Carroll concluded the meeting with the below updates for the next meeting scheduled on 13Feb2021.

A. Finalize the mission statement in the next session

B. Ms. Penelope Carroll will get shirt sizes from the group to Major Montgomery

**8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 1100 a.m.