



**York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office
Citizens' Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2024**



CAC Community Forum - Minutes Approval by Chair/Committee: Approved

Present: Amy Brown, Toni Chavis, Shana Gist, Beth Hoer, Linda Hutchinson, Jenny Joyner, Kristen Nelson, Eileen O'Brien, Krystyn Reid, Stephen Roane, Annette Robinson, Candi Skinner, D'Shawn Wright

CHAIR: D'Shawn Wright

YPSO: Sheriff Ron Montgomery, Maj. Thomas West, Sgt. Mike Russell

Secretary: Linda Hutchinson

Bylaws & Membership: David Gorwitz

AGENDA TOPICS:

1. **Call to Order** – Chair D'Shawn Wright called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. **Member Introductions:** Sheriff Montgomery introduced YC office holders, Kristen Nelson, Krystyn Reid and Stephen Roane, and YPSO Maj. Tommy West. Chairman Wright introduced the other CAC members in attendance.
3. **Forum Introduction: Chairman Wright**
The chair welcomed citizens, announcing that CAC Community Forums will be held quarterly. He asked the audience how many years they had lived in York County and what they appreciated about YC. Answers included the Sheriff, the school system, the river and the rural atmosphere. Prior to moving to YC, D'Shawn was warned he would not be welcomed because of his race; however, he quickly learned the opposite was true. In YC "We know each other and we care for each other". At that point he introduced Sheriff Ron Montgomery.
4. **Forum Discussions: Sheriff Montgomery**
The Sheriff discussed that the CAC was initiated by Hard Talks held by D'Shawn Wright at BBD and by Penelope Carroll in upper YC following the George Floyd incident. The two groups were combined to form the CAC to learn about the community from each other. He encouraged attendees to submit applications for openings in December as members cycle off.

The new YPSO building is the most technologically advanced law enforcement building in the area, other than the building in Virginia Beach. Citizens are encouraged to request tours of the building. From the inception of the building the Community Room was designed for welcome citizen meetings.

Crimes and Scams: In the largest drop in crime in 22 years, car thefts were reduced in the past year by 60% due to a robust ad campaign. A gun safety course is offered at the YPSO. York County residents lost over 1 million dollars last year due to phone scams. Those scams usually center on a family member in trouble, a computer virus, and other matters of urgency.

No federal agent or law enforcement officer will call a citizen about an emergency or supposed law enforcement problem. If a phone call is received, Sheriff Ron advised citizens to call the YPSO immediately. The YPSO is working with local banks to be alert to citizens who might be experiencing scams requiring them to withdraw large sums of money. A new scam is called “Porch Pirates” in which people get phone calls saying a recently delivered cell phone is defective and will immediately be picked up by a shipping truck. Since the scammers know the order tracking number and the buyer’s phone number, the YPSO is working with the cell phone company to track the scammer who could be an employee.

Recently Coastal Church email was compromised resulting in a large amount of money being siphoned out of the church account. The YPSO arrested the scammer and money was restored. In response to a question about squatters, Sheriff Ron referred to a Virginia law that required residents to live in a home for 15 years and to make substantial improvements in order for ownership and residence to be legal. Sheriff Ron and Maj. West addressed the concern about overcharging by some towing companies. An advisory committee works through the YC Board of Supervisors to insure towing charges do not exceed those specified by state statute. A discussion of other scams and suggestions for handling those threats ensued. Discussions included the legality and regulation of trackers on cars and on children and warnings about expired home warranties. Clerk of Courts Kristen Nelson assured citizens that the court system would never send a notice of an expired home warranty.

Sheriff Montgomery introduced Sgt. Mike Russel, who has spearheaded the York County DARE Program for seven years, as well as other YPSO community programs. Sgt. Russell provided literature with information about crime prevention, Project Life Saver, RAD class and the YPSO Citizens’ Academy. Project Life Saver assists with tracking individuals with disabilities who may become lost. Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) classes teach women techniques to overcome assault. Citizens’ Academies are very popular programs that involve the participants in virtual simulations, CSI visits, and ride-alongs. The Sheriff and forum attendees thanked Sgt. Russell for his excellent leadership as he prepares to retire in September.

5. Final Comments: Chairman Wright

The Chair commended the valuable School Resource Officer Program in YC as well as those deputies who visit the schools regularly. He thanked the Sheriff and the deputies for their trust in the community and in the CAC.

Chairman Wright described his and CAC involvement in roadside and community trash pick-ups, anti-bullying programs in schools, and in Back-to-School events. He discussed the alarming number of homeless children in the county, saying, “If one struggles, we all struggle.” Candi Skinner, YCSD Chief Academic Officer, emphasized the school district’s support for these children, including working closely with school social workers. Jenny Joyner urged citizens to donate shoes, toiletries, clothing, etc. to Care Closets housed in most schools. Her non-profit Honey Jam accepts donations to provide needed items for these Care closets. She thanked Coastal Church for being a strong partner working with the community.

The Chair also welcomed residents to submit applications for CAC membership.

6. Adjournment – Chairman Wright adjourned the meeting at 7:38 pm.