



## **Greensboro Criminal Justice Advisory Commission**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**September 20, 2018**

The Greensboro Criminal Justice Advisory Commission (GCJAC) and the Police Community Review Board (PCRB) convened for its first monthly meeting at 6:00 p.m. on the above date in the Cultural Arts Center in room 203. Chair David Sevier presided over the meeting.

**Commissioners Present:** Sevier, Nazim, Friedland, Phillips, Webb, Jalloh, Gethers-Clark, Allen

**Commissioners Absent:** Black, Crippen, Grier, O'Brien

**Legal Department Staff:** Rosetta Davidson Davis

**Council Liaison:** Councilperson Michelle Kennedy

**Visitors:** Barbara Harris-Assistant City Manager, Wayne Scott-Chief of Police; Brian James- Deputy Chief of Police, Captain Tess Biffle - Greensboro Police Department (GPD)

#### **I. Call to Order**

Chair Sevier called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

#### **II. Moment of Silence**

Chair Sevier called for a moment of silence for the victims impacted by Hurricane Florence.

#### **III. Introduction of Commissioners and Visitors**

Chair Sevier welcomed commissioners and invited them to introduce themselves and provide a brief background / why they're interested in criminal justice in Greensboro.

Sevier completed the Greensboro Citizens Academy in 2016 and was appointed to the city Human Relations Commission (HRC).

Commissioner Tom Phillips is a former City Councilman, and HRC/PCRB member and serves on the GCJAC Executive Committee with Sevier and Allen.

Commissioner Steven Friedland is Professor of Law and has been with Elon since inception, and was also a former Assistant US Attorney.

Commissioner Franca Jalloh is founder and Executive Director of a non-profit organization that serves the immigrant and refugee population.

Commissioner Suzanne Nazim is a graduate of GPD's Citizens Academy and is the current president of their Alumni Group. She serves on other Boards in the community.

Commissioner Jaye Webb is Assistant Director of the Guilford Family Success Center and has served with Step- Up Ministries and other organizations.

Commissioner Michelle Gethers-Clark is President/CEO of United Way of Greater Greensboro.

Commissioner Irving Allen served as co-chair of the HRC Ad Hoc Study Committee which recommended forming the GCJAC. He ran in 2017 for City Council and is currently working toward voter engagement throughout the country.

Sevier welcomed Councilperson Michelle Kennedy, liaison to the Commission.

Also present were Assistant City Manager Barbara Harris, GPD Chief Wayne Scott, Assistant City Attorney Rosetta Davidson Davis, Assistant Police Chief Brian James, and GPD Captain Tess Biffle. Additionally, a reporter for Rhino Times was present.

Sevier thanked everyone for attending and asked Phillips to provide a brief overview of the Commission and the sub-committee of the PCRB.

#### **IV. Background, Roles and Responsibilities of the Commission and PCRB**

Phillips stated that in addition to the nine (9)-member board, the PCRB has three (3) members which is augmented by four (4) members from the GCJAC. He noted selection factors and appointments of members needed to balance age, race, gender and council districts.

Bylaws and upcoming training sessions are planned for both the Commission and PCRB. Phillips reiterated the importance of leaving preconceived views at the door when reviewing cases, and the need for confidentiality by the Commission/PCRB because decisions would ultimately affect lives in the community.

Councilperson Kennedy added that the Commission was created with a focus on diversity and was intended to offer good decisions collectively. She also noted the importance of independent thinking while being a part of a team.

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Chair Sevier asked how a citizen can issue a complaint.

Capt. Biffle explained complaints can be filed in person at 100 Police Plaza, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00p.m., Monday-Friday. Online complaints are filed at greensboro-nc.gov and are received and vetted by GPD Professional Standards Division (PSD). ACM Harris indicated that complaints processed through Human Relations are forwarded to the PSD, copy to her. That

process will remain in place until permanent Commission staff is hired, upon which GCJAC staff will take complaints and forward to PSD for investigation process.

Attorney Davis reviewed her legal role with the Commission/PCRB and described how she intends to provide assistance throughout.

Commissioner Allen identified the need to build confidence in the GCJAC while communicating clearly across the City, Police Department, and the community.

Councilperson Kennedy reviewed how PCRB meetings were conducted in the past, including details of how decisions were reached.

Commissioner Gethers-Clark requested to understand output of the PCRB, including clarification of the role of the advisory commission. Phillips noted PCRB response is “we agree or disagree” with findings of the police department. If the complainant is still unsatisfied, they have the option to take it to the City Manager. Kennedy added the process currently is not as personable as it should be as it is a merely a form letter with findings.

Commissioner Friedland added the process looks like a legal review process, but is not actually that. He noted the bottom line is to provide a different perspective that allows the police to have an outside opinion. Friedland added the Commission should articulate what the practices are in the form of a review. He suggested the need for a checklist and noted that citizens need straight talk regarding internal police processes when they have a complaint. Chair Sevier indicated that was part of why PCRB needed to be revisited with the formation of the Commission.

ACM Harris reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Criminal Justice Commission –

- a. Monitor/review/evaluate Criminal Justice across City
  - i. Review Criminal Justice issues in Greensboro and work with GPD to identify concerns, trends, and opportunities
  - ii. Provide input to GPD in the development of options to address issues
  - iii. Work with City / GPD on recommendations and community follow-up
- b. Serve as primary community education and outreach resource on GCJAC work
- c. Prepare and provide Council with semi-annual updates and annual report of performance of work
- d. PCRB sub-unit to facilitate citizen review of police complaints

Commissioner Friedland suggested the commission should be in the community providing outreach and educating our youth and young men how to deal with authority.

Phillips also stressed the importance of interaction in our community and the police department and the need for programs, police participation, and public forums. Commissioner Jalloh stressed the importance of beginning the assignments of education and trust building and the need to bridge the gap between the community and the police.

Chief Scott added that citizens should know their rights and stressed the importance of remaining proactive in the community. The Chief also mentioned this is uncharted territory for everyone involved but wanted to reiterate he and his staff fully support the initiative. Chief Scott offered to

provide additional training on what the Police do and asked if he and his staff could sit in on the Commission's training as well. Chair Sevier indicated that was a priority for them.

Commissioner Friedland shared that the commission should be accessible and open to input from others dealing with the same issues facing our community.

Commissioner Webb added how vital continued training and education outreach will be for the Commission. Chair Sevier reminded everyone the Commission is brand new and asked all to stay focused on improving the environment in the city for the individuals and police.

#### **V. Confidentiality Requirements**

Chair Sevier noted the confidentiality agreement that each member will have to sign does not apply to all the issues. It would apply only when it is related to City personnel matters. Attorney Davis confirmed the role of the agreement and the applicability of the work of the PCRB.

#### **VI. Future Activities/NACOLE**

Chair Sevier mentioned the upcoming NACOLE annual conference and that he and several others will attend. The City joined NACOLE last year, which allowed members to attend the annual conference September 30 – October 4. Sevier offered everyone the opportunity to attend the conference at some point in their term.

Commissioner Friedland will provide a city outreach session on Street Law for Commissioners, as well as others to help understand more about rights, duties and obligations.

Commissioner Allen related his commitment to organized training with the community and with national movements involved in similar issues to the Commission.

ACM Harris reminded the Commission that not everyone who lives in the city is a citizen and encouraged Commissioners to refer to people as "resident."

#### **VII. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn.

Moved by: Commissioner Phillips

Seconded By: Commissioner Friedland

The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.