

Community Police Review Board
July 11, 2019

CHAIR'S REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Appreciation. It's difficult for any new organization to apply its on-paper guidance and organization to a concrete plan of action. marked by difficult efforts to define and organizational purposes, In this, the first year of the CPEB, we have been blessed by excellent participation and support from the Board Members. We have received strong support from the Assistant City Manager, and the Police Department. I'd like to express the Chair's appreciation to Dianne Stoddard, and her staff, and, in particular, to Sergeants David Ernst and Amy Rhoads for their ongoing support and participation.

Perspective. The Annual Report of the CPEB must, perforce, discuss completed actions, not planned efforts or intentions, because the next year may bring unforeseen circumstances, and because the next year's Chair and Board may conclude that a different path of action is required.

Notwithstanding the above, at year's end, it is appropriate for the Chair to provide an overview of the year's activities, and recommendations for future consideration. To that end, the following is respectfully submitted.

Overview:

It is fortunate that Lawrence has an effective police force, and that the police force, as reflected in the lack of complaints of bias-based policing, enjoys the general support of the citizens of Lawrence. Conversely, consistent with the governing Ordinance and Bylaws, the Board should not be content to await complaint, but should continue to inquire into the state of police-community relations and to pursue potential avenues by which the relations may be improved. The recommendations below reflect this viewpoint.

1. The Police Department's Outreach Program should be further strengthened by identifying minority centers of influence, and proactively reaching out to these centers to:
 - a. Invite participation in Police-sponsored outreach activities;

- b. Provide minority centers of influence with routine opportunities and avenues to update police regarding their perspectives and concerns. In its role of fostering outreach and education, the Board may consider whether it would be appropriate to invite minority groups to appear at routine Board meetings to foster enhanced communication.
2. State open-carry and concealed-carry gun laws present police officers with considerable stress and concern for their own well-being.
 - a. The Police Department should consider how to make the public more aware of the threat felt by police officers and how citizens may best defuse tension during routine interactions with police officers.
 - b. City Council and the Police Department should investigate whether a Citizens Academy program should be instituted to train the CPRB and citizens regarding police functions and responsibilities, and citizen-police relations.
3. The following topics are recommended for future presentation to the CPRB:
 - a. Status of outfitting the Police Department with body cameras, and lessons learned from initial training and outfitting.
 - b. Potential lessons learned from the recent mass shooting on Massachusetts S.
 - c. Overview by the Chief of Police on police-minority relations