



## **Community Policing Advisory Board**

### **Minutes**

**Thursday, January 5, 2023**

**Meeting was held at the Rockville City Police Station – 2 W. Montgomery Avenue**

**Members Present:** Donna Barnes, Jaime Espinosa, Lori Horkan, Chiara Jaffe, Matthew Perkins, Robin Prather, Rici Rutkoff, and Michael Scott were present. Michael Donahue and David Smith were absent.

**Staff Present:** City Manager Robert DiSpirito, Chief of Police Victor V. Brito and Police Executive Assistant Andrea Escher.

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

Chairman Perkins conducted roll call and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### **II. Motion to Approve Board Meeting Agenda**

**Motion:** to approve the November meeting agenda.

Moved by Board member Horkan, seconded by Board member Prather, unanimously approved.

#### **III. Motion to Approve Meeting Minutes**

**Motion:** to approve the November 3, 2023 meeting minutes.

Moved by Board member Espinosa seconded by Board member Barnes, unanimously approved.

#### **IV. Guest Introductions & Statements**

Rockville resident Steven VanGrack addressed with Board with his suggestion to increase the police department funding for RCPD in FY24, a housing stipend for officers to live in Rockville, more support for the police, as well the use of additional speed cameras, etc.

**Motion:** to extend Mr. VanGrack's speaking time past three minutes.

Moved by Board member Espinosa seconded by Board member Barnes, unanimously approved.

#### **V. RCPD Updates**

Chief Brito provided an update on the recent Hiring Happy Hour that was held on January 5, 2023. RCPD is down to 6 vacancies, and we continue to recruit in a very competitive police hiring market.

#### **VI. NAMI of Montgomery County**

Representatives, Nicole Lucas and Claire Pennington, from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) attended the meeting to discuss their program and potential collaboration with RCPD. NAMI hosts free, no cost, support groups, classes, and programs for a period of six to eight weeks for people suffering from mental and emotional issues, as well as providing support services to families and caregivers. NAMI has a resource help line, which is not a crisis line, which is staffed Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Lt. Bill Nieberding gave an overview on the status of the RCPD Mental Health Specialist position, which is still in the process of recruitment. He also discussed how the officers handle calls for mental health crisis to include assisting the Montgomery County Crisis Center and the Mobile Crisis Team.

Board member Barnes stated that she hopes there will be some future collaboration with RCPD and NAMI with additional discussions to be had in the future.

#### **VII. Meet RCPD**

The Board was introduced to Lieutenant Bill Nieberding, the current Commander of the Special Operations Unit. He provided an overview of his background, his duties and RCPD and answered questions.

#### **VIII. CPAB Advocacy/Letter Writing**

Board Chairman Perkins suggested in the future, the CPAB write their own letters on behalf of the group when issues of concern are brought up – examples raised were the marijuana legislation and Seven Locks Restoration Center. He also raised the question as to if the Board would like to make formal recommendations to the Mayor and Council. It was agreed there is much discussion to be had regarding the legalization of marijuana and what is to come.

**IX. New Business**

The Board would like to discuss suggestions for the police budget at the next meeting.

Board member Scott noted he would like to have a further discussion regarding noise pollution due to loud vehicle engines and exhausts.

**X. Next Meeting Date & Adjournment**

The next meeting of the CPAB will be held on Thursday, February 2, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in person at the Rockville City Police Station – 2 West Montgomery Avenue.

**Motion:** to adjourn.

Moved by Board member Espinosa, motion seconded by Prather unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.