

Citizens Review Board

DISCUSSION WITH HOUSING, SAFETY & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
AUGUST 4, 2025 JOHN WATKINS - CHAIR

1

WHAT IS THE CITIZENS REVIEW BOARD?

- ▶ Independent board to hear citizen appeals challenging certain CMPD disciplinary decisions.
- ▶ CRB category of appeals: use of force, unbecoming conduct, arrest, search and seizure, arbitrary profiling, neglect of duty, discharge of weapon resulting in death or injury.
- ▶ Since inception: 113 appeals, high 13, low 0, Avg 4/yr

2

WHO ARE THE BOARD MEMBERS?

- ▶ Eleven Member board created in 1997
- ▶ Appointments by the Mayor (3), City Manager (3), City Council (5) for a 3-year term, max 2 terms
- ▶ Supported by City Clerk's Office and legal counsel selected by the City Attorney's Office
- ▶ A representative, cross-section of the Charlotte community
- ▶ Required to complete CMPD Citizens Training Academy (12wks-2hrs/session/wk) field and classroom, and complete 8 additional hours of training each year.

WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE?

- ▶ Dual Role:
 - Review Citizens Appeals:
 - Review complete **internal affairs case file** within 45 days (4-10 hrs) – BWC, recorded interviews, written transcripts and documents
 - Conduct in-person **initial hearing** (2-3 hrs) – Citizen and CMPD
 - If necessary, conduct **evidentiary hearing** within 45 days with witnesses and cross-examinations to determine if CMPD erred with their findings (5-8 hrs). – Courtroom procedures
 - Advisory Role: We make recommendations when our case reviews reveal trends or frequent recurring issues that may be addressed through potential policy modifications. These recommendations are made to the Chief immediately, and we advise the City Manager and City Council in our annual report.

EXAMPLES OF ADVISORY ROLE

- ▶ Research and advice on the Use of Force Continuum – when and how much force.
- ▶ De-escalation emphasis and training – time, distance and patience
- ▶ Enhancements to communications between officers and to Citizens.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

- ▶ Modify annual training from a requirement of 8 hours to 4 hours given that available training is largely repetitive.
- ▶ Allocate two scholarships for members of the board to attend the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) Annual Conference.
- ▶ Amend City Ordinance to give Chief and City Manager more time to review and respond to CRB recommendations. Currently 7 days.

Questions or Comments