

Legislation Text

File #: 15-5926, Version: 1

Revisions to the Citizens Review Board

Action:

Approve the Community Safety Committee's recommendation to revise Citizens Review Board membership requirements by amending Section 16-56 of Chapter 16 of the City Code.

Committee Chair:

Julie Eiselt, Community Safety

Staff Resource(s):

Ann Wall, City Manager's Office
Stephanie Kelly, City Clerk's Office
Bob Hagemann, City Attorney

Current Ordinance

- The Charlotte City Council established the Citizens Review Board in 1997 to review appeals challenging The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's (CMPD) disciplinary decisions.
- The Board reviews appeals filed by citizens concerning CMPD disciplinary decisions in five types of cases:
 - 1. Unbecoming conduct by an officer;
 - 2. Improper use of force by an officer;
 - 3. Unauthorized arrest, search, seizure by an officer;
 - 4. The discharge of a firearm by an officer that results in death or injury; and
 - 5. Arbitrary profiling (added in 2015).
- The Citizens Review Board has eleven members; three appointed by the Mayor, five appointed by the City Council, and three appointed by the City Manager.
- In order to qualify to serve, a person must be a registered voter and citizen of Mecklenburg County, have no conviction or nolo contendere plea to a felony or Class A misdemeanor or Class 1 or 2 misdemeanor within 3 years of nomination, execute a Confidentiality Agreement, and complete the CMPD Citizens' Academy.
- At the February 13, 2017 Dinner Briefing, staff provided a presentation to City Council reviewing the Citizens Review Board membership requirements and making recommendations for improvements including:
 - Review appointment process and requirements to ensure a diverse board,
 - Provide initial and annual training to board members,
 - Prepare easy to understand information on Citizens Review Board process and translate the information into other languages,
 - Direct complainants to resources to assist with filing complaint and participate in hearings,

and

- Publish data on officer complaints and disposition.

Proposed Changes

- The recommended ordinance revisions provide for the following:
 - Expressing focus on maintaining diversity on the board,
 - Providing for interviews of prospective board members prior to appointment,
 - Prohibiting appointment of current and former city employees and family members of current and former CMPD employees, and
 - Adding a requirement for eight hours of training which may include a Police ride along.

Committee Discussion

- On April 6, 2017; May 4, 2017; May 18, 2017; and June 1, 2017 the Community Safety Committee received presentations on improvements to the Citizens Review Board including revisions to the ordinance as well as administrative changes to expand recruitment efforts, expand community understanding of the board and its process and provide data on board use. The Community Safety Committee voted unanimously to recommend the adoption of the revised ordinance at their June 1, 2017 meeting.

Attachment(s)

Ordinance Amending Section 16-56 of Chapter 16 of the Charlotte City Code