

EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD (ECCAB)

Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center
3300 Briggs Chaney Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904
Tel # (240) 777-8414

Wednesday, February 5, 2020

MEETING SUMMARY

Members Present: Christopher Bolton, William Bentley, Samantha Blizzard, Sharon Brown, Donald Hague, Subramanyan Chebium, Roberta Goldberg, Wendy Johnson, Len Newman, Kimberly Price-Evans, Pamela Ruiz, Jerold Samet, Tamar Ruth, Fisseha Adugna, Rachael Evans, Pam Ruiz

Members Absent: Ed Weiler, Dan Wilhelm, Lt. Bruce Cole, Vivian Aguayo, Andre' Vainqueur, Rob Richardson, Margie Goergen-Rood, Mensah Adjogah, Craig Wilson, Mark Pharaoh, Willie Parker-Lord, Luise Jackson, Tarcila Burkhardt, Margaret Poore, Bernie Karnes, Kim Persand

Staff Present: Jewru Bandeh, Linda Cooper

Welcome: The meeting was called to order at 7:07p.m.

Approval of January 8, 2020 Meeting Summary: Approved unanimously.

Presentation by Guest Speaker: Marcus Jones, Chief, Montgomery County Police

Department. Topics of Discussion included: An update on crime/public safety in general, Montgomery County Police Department's 2020 priorities and reorganization, 3rd/4th Districts staffing, 3rd/4thD Community Services/Engagement teams, the department's opportunities and challenges in addressing crime and other public safety related concerns in East County

The Police Chief's comments also included:

- Thanked everyone for their support of his new Police Chief position
- Shared the unprecedented changes in the department including replacing 4 assistant chiefs and introductions of new Commander Darren Francke
- He gave summary of his vision:
 - Reorganizing within the department (proposal to move from 6 police districts to 7 to help with work load, and to begin as a hybrid with adequate personal. This would include police boundary district line changes.
 - The department's 3rd District leads the county in number of calls. Even though, there are less officers there now. Officers in 3rd district therefore get lots of experience/knowledge and then often move on and up
 - Other possible changes to the School Resource Officers to be potentially placed under the community engagement division

- Central traffic division plans to support Commanders who have control of complaints from constituents (transportation, speeding, intersection lighting, Vision Zero, pedestrian safety and enforcement. Recently the police department posted placards to remind people to walk safely in English and Spanish in Wheaton to promote pedestrian safety and reduce accident rates. There were 33 traffic collisions (14 were pedestrian related)
- Crime is relatively stable (burglaries same-19 homicides in 2019, which is relatively low compared to other jurisdictions, Grand Theft Autos are still high. The department is working on prevention and promoting smart choices.)
 - Officers are getting training with de-escalation strategies to help avoid problems
 - Police Athletic League (PAL) potentially may come back as a positive relationship building skills for youth
 - Positive support services and educational opportunities are available
 - Citizens Police Academy for community members
 - Explorers Program for youth and Cadet Program for high school students has been reinstated
 - Blue lights of police cars are for high visibility to avoid “we never see the police” perception and to also deter crime
 - Apps (Next Door/Ring) for information is another way to share public service announcements. Data Montgomery (which has a lot of data/almost too much) and the police department reports all crimes (PRA will tell your specific area)
 - School Resource Officers/Community engagement office are available to share trainings, school assemblies (example, when pulled over at night, turn on your interior light and show hands)
 - ENS worker shared that the de-escalation strategies are working better to preserve life and help minimize people’s fear of police/of being shot
 - Police Department stress (call dispatches of horrific events, police suicides is increasing as they witness hundreds of traumatic experiences; psychological services are available, but police department staff may have concerns about reporting their issues for fear of it impacting their job security).
 - A community member urged the department to give more information about handgun safety, and to reinstitute sending out the crime stats for the 3rd/4th district in a more user friendly visible way (by beat/neighborhood)
 - Encouraged community to keep up to date with website and phone apps
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/pol/>

Adjournment: A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 pm. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.