

**TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND  
POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD**

Minutes of Public Meeting  
May 9, 2023

The meeting of the Talbot County Police Accountability Board ("PAB") was called to order at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, May 9, 2023. Present were Chairman Mitchell Ettinger, Members Michael Bibb, John Gilbert, Jo Ann Murray, Chris Rice, Connie Webster, Gugy Irving, Assistant County Attorney Rebecca Guay, and Board Secretary Victoria Bradley.

- I. **Call to Order** – Chairman Ettinger called the meeting to order and gave opening statements.
- II. **Minutes** – Upon motion made by Mr. Bibb, seconded by Mr. Gilbert, the minutes of the Tuesday, February 14, 2023 PAB meeting were unanimously approved with corrections.
- III. **Discussion with Law Enforcement Agencies ("LEA")**

*Use of Force Reports* – The LEAs explained that, pursuant to policy, Use of Force is defined as the application of force or a physical compliance technique necessary to render a non-cooperative person compliant. The Chairman asked the LEAs to provide Use of Force Reports on a quarterly basis to enable the PAB to discern if there are any trends to note. The LEAs agreed to provide the requested reports on a quarterly basis.

*Scope of Complaints submitted pursuant to MD.CODE ANN. PUB. SAFETY ARTICLE § 3-104(d) ("PSA")* – The LEAs confirmed the PAB understanding that all instances of alleged police misconduct, irrespective of whether a citizen complaint was lodged, must be submitted to the Administrative Charging Committee ("ACC") for disposition.

*Suggested contents of investigative reports submitted to the ACC* – The Chairman noted that the investigative files submitted to the ACC by the Talbot County Sheriff's Office were complete, well written and exemplary. The LEAs were encouraged to submit all relevant information with the investigative report, including all video and audio recordings, witness statements, interviews, relevant policy and procedures and any disciplinary records of the officer(s) involved or indicate if there is no disciplinary record. The LEAs also were encouraged to submit their recommendation as to disposition. The ACC would like to see the LEAs recommendations of disposition. Upon request, the LEAs will have the investigating officer available by phone or in person on the date the ACC meets to resolve any pending complaints.

*Status of Investigations of Alleged Misconduct within the purview of PSA 3-104(d)*

Easton Police Department indicated that it has three (3) complaints under review.

The Sheriff's Office has submitted two investigative files and intends to submit a third in the near term.

St. Michaels and Oxford Police Departments have no complaints at this time.

Mediation process for citizen complaints – The LEAs agreed to report on the use of the mediation process contemplated by PSA § 3-208.06(A)(1), but expressed concern regarding the cost associated with that process. None of the LEAs have yet to establish a procedure or protocol for mediation.

Trial Board Procedures – The LEAs have received the training and guidance on Trial Board procedures and are currently working on training their officers. The LEAs and PAB agree the trial board policy and procedure should be the same for all LEAs in the County.

Field Training Officer Daily Reports – The Chairman inquired of the value and effort required to submit FTO reports. The PAB would use those reports to try to discern whether there are any systemic training deficiencies. After discussion, it was agreed that the LEAs would make a FTO officer from each agency available to the PAB to discuss trends and any perceived deficiencies.

Issues Raised by LEAs – The LEAs discussed the challenge to hire and retain officers, especially with the different retirement systems. Easton PD noted its desire to hire additional Spanish speaking officers. One recruiting tool that could prove beneficial would be a pathway to citizenship for public service akin to military service. The LEAs also noted that the new marijuana law may affect hiring and retention.

**IV. Discussion regarding Trial Board member appointed by PAB** – A motion was made by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Ms. Webster for the Board to move into closed session to discuss the Board's appointments to the Trial Board. The motion was passed unanimously.

**V. Summary of Closed Session**

The closed session, which was held in the Bradley Room, began at approximately 10:05 am and concluded at approximately 10:15 a.m. The appropriate form was completed by the Chairman justifying the closed session. During the closed session, the PAB discussed the appointment of individuals to serve as Trial Board Members.

By unanimous vote, the following PAB members were selected to serve as Trial Board Members: Michael Bibb, John Gilbert and Jo Ann Murray.

Mr. Bibb moved, seconded by Ms. Murray, to reconvene in open session. The motion was passed unanimously and the Board reconvened in open session at 10:17 a.m.

- VI. Next PAB Meeting** – The Board tentatively set a date for the third quarter meeting for August 8, 2023.
- VII. Adjournment** - There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Webster and seconded by Mr. Rice to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 10:29 a.m.