

**TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD**

Minutes of Public Meeting
November 4, 2025

The meeting of the Talbot County Police Accountability Board ("PAB") was called to order at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, November 4, 2025. Present were Chairman Mitchell Ettinger as well as Members William Belding, John Gilbert, Brian Naranjo, Jo Ann Murray, Chris Rice, Connie Webster, and Board Secretary Victoria Bradley.

- I. **Call to Order** – Chairman Ettinger called the meeting to order and made welcoming remarks.
- II. **Minutes** – Upon motion made by Mr. Naranjo, seconded by Mr. Belding, the minutes of the Tuesday, August 12, 2025, PAB meeting were approved unanimously.
- III. **Old Business** – There was no old business to discuss.
- IV. **Discussion with Law Enforcement Agencies ("LEA")**

- a. *Submission of Quarterly Use of Force Reports* – Chairman Ettinger thanked the LEAs for their submissions of Use of Force Report summaries. The Chairman noted that the PAB wants to review the actual use of force reports, not summaries, and requested that they comply with this request going forward.
- b. *Criminal Activity Trends or Upticks* – Easton Police Department ("EPD") referenced an uptick in gift card scams that are targeting the elderly population. Oxford Police Department ("OPD") noted the increasing use of AI in fraudulent schemes (e.g., voice replication).

Lt. Orellana (EPD) reported on the difficulty of detecting the source of these fraudulent schemes and the need to educate the public as the best defense to preventing people from being deceived. In this regard, the Talbot County Sheriff's Office ("TCSO") representatives visited local senior centers and residences to alert the public to the perceived threats.

Chairman Ettinger inquired whether the government shut-down had resulted in an increase in theft related crimes. Although that is not a noted trend, the LEAs anticipate an uptick in shoplifting and related offenses as the holidays approach.

EPD stated they have seen an uptick in auto theft and/or things stolen from unlocked vehicles. In response to Mr. Gilbert's question, EPD noted that the thefts are taking place in residential areas. St. Michaels Police Department (“SMPD”) reported a recent vehicle theft that was recovered by the EPD. TCSO observed that teenagers are committing a majority of these crimes.

Mr. Naranjo asked the LEAs to address any perceived trends in drug overdoses in Talbot County. The LEAs responded that the number of reported overdoses is on the decline. TCSO suggested that this may be due to the fact that Talbot County has a large contingent of trained individuals in the use of Narcan, which certainly has reduced the number of fatalities.

- c. Community Relations Activities (Q4 2025 and Q1 2026) – Chairman Ettinger asked if there were any upcoming community relation events and whether there was a need or potential for PAB assistance.

The LEAs noted that they received significant local support (e.g., Rotary Clubs and churches) and other donors who make the holiday programming possible. Planned events include Shop with a Cop, coat drives and Nicole's Promise. Nicole's Promise is a program that directly supports children who have lost a parent to, struggling with or in recovery from addiction.

Mr. Belding thanked the TCSO for its assistance with Oxford's Constitution Day event. More than 150 people participated, and TCSO provided added security on short notice.

- d. Status of Pending Investigations within ACC Purview – TCSO currently has two complaints under investigation, while EPD currently has three complaints under investigation.

- e. Recent Incidents:

- i. Assault on TCSO Deputy Arrest (September 1, 2025) – TCSO stated that a Deputy responded to a late-night call, and the person at the scene became disorderly. The incident was described as relatively minor, but required officers to use force to gain compliance of the assailant.
- ii. Recent Cyclist Death – EPD stated the incident is still under investigation and was not able to give many details at this time. EPD noted that the scene

of the accident is poorly lit and the road is heavily traveled. They will consider ways to make the area safer for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.

- iii. St. Michaels Middle High School – TCSO reported that a former teacher from St. Michaels Middle High School was apparently experiencing mental health issues, resulting in heightened security at the school. No actual safety issues arose from this incident.

f. LEA Topics of Interest/Concern:

- i. Migrant Community Response to ICE actions and effect on LEAs – In response to Mr. Naranjo's inquiry, EPD's Lt. Orellana notable considerable community outreach to assure the citizens that they should not be wary of seeking help from the police for fear of being deported. For example, EPD was working with the Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center (ChesMRC) and connecting with the youth to foster improved communications and trust. For example, the EPD participated in a ChesMRC-organized hybrid meeting; though few attended in-person, over 500 people participated via teleconference platform. No other LEA commented on this matter.
- ii. Take Aways from PAB Pre-Summit Meeting – Ms. Webster noted that a few counties proactively publicize the existence and purpose of the PAB; for example, by attending public events and providing handouts. Commissioner Gilbert looked forward to interacting with the other PAB members and exchanging ideas and experiences.
- iii. Revisit Mental Health Guest Speaker (Schedule for Q1 2026) – Chairman Ettinger asked whether LEAs had a possible speaker for the next PAB meeting to address the mental health challenges in Talbot County. TCSO suggested a speaker from For All Seasons. Ms. Murray offered to reach out to that organization to see if somebody would be interested in addressing the next PAB meeting.

V. **Old Business and Administrative Discussion** – The Board discussed the assignments for the Annual Report and set a tentative date for the next meeting to discuss and finalize the Draft Annual Report.

VI. **Next PAB Meeting** – The Board set a tentative date for the next PAB meeting for December 15, 2025, at 9:00 am.

VII. **Adjournment** – There being no further business, a motion was made by Ms. Murray and seconded by Ms. Webster to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:35 am.