

**TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD**

Minutes of Public Meeting
November 12, 2024

The meeting of the Talbot County Police Accountability Board ("PAB") was called to order at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, November 12, 2024. Present were Chairman Mitchell Ettinger, Members William Belding, John Gilbert, 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 Ms. Murray, seconded by Mr. Gilbert, the minutes of the Tuesday, September 17, 2024, PAB meeting were unanimously approved without modification.

III. Discussion with Law Enforcement Agencies ("LEA")

- a. *Submission of Quarterly Use of Force Reports* – The Sheriff stated they had two Use of Force Reports for the quarter, both were minor injuries. Easton PD stated they also had two Use of Force Reports. Both incidents involved juveniles, one was a minor issue and the other the individual was injured as well as the officer.
- b. *Current Arrest Data for 2024* – The Sheriff and Easton PD stated their offices have made a few arrests in older cases. St. Michaels and Oxford have not had any arrest but have had some calls for service.
- c. *Criminal Activity Trends or Upticks* – The LEAs all reported scams are on the rise and are severely affecting the senior citizen community. Many of the scams involve coin star machines and scammers are posing as local law enforcement stating they need to pay, or they will be arrested. The LEAs have been working with the community to make them aware of the scams.

The LEAs continue to warn and educate the public about these scams, and they are informing the public to stop and verify before doing anything. The LEAs also warn that banks and credit card companies are unable to help in cases where people remove cash for these scams.

The Sheriff stated they have had an uptick in the number of homeless sex offenders that are required to report to their office.

Easton PD stated they saw an uptick in shootings this quarter, luckily no injuries and in each incident, they have made an arrest.

- d. Community Relations Activities in Q3 and Planned Events for Q4 – The Chairman stated that the community relation reports look great from the LEAs, there are many events coming up this quarter. The Sheriff stated they have many community events surrounding the holidays that the LEAs all work on including Nicoles Promise, Golden Ticket Program, Coat Drives and Shop-With-A-Cop.
- e. Report on Ride-Along Participation by PAB/ACC members – The PAB members did not complete any ride-alongs this quarter. The Charman asked that member sign up for one because they are very informative. The Chairman further stated that he is aware Mr. Wilson with the ACC has completed a ride along and had high praise for the officers.
- f. Status of Teen Court Participation – Easton PD stated he has not been able to move forward with the teen court this quarter. Easton PD stated they see the benefits from Teen Court and is planning to send some of their more reluctant officers to sit in on a Teen Court case.
- g. Status of Requested Trial Board – Easton PD stated the Trial Board is no longer required, the officer in question resigned. Easton PD stated they have found that once an officer is found guilty of misconduct, they are no longer eligible to request a trial board.
- h. Revisit Discussion Regarding Disclosure of Pending investigations within ACC Purview – The Chairman requested that the LEAs send notice to Secretary Bradley as the complaints come in so the ACC can keep track and prepare for what complaints will come through. The Chairman further asked that the LEAs send information even for complaints that do not fall under the ACC jurisdiction. The ACC only want to see the LEA Investigation number and the nature of the complaint. The Chairman asked the LEAs to submit this information for the past year by December 15, 2024, so that it can be included in the PAB Annual Report.
- i. PAB/ACC Training – The Chairman discussed the training that the ACC members went to in October. During this training they found that one ACC complaint that they reviewed involving a citizen complaint about an officer speeding. This type of

complaint would not fall under the ACC jurisdiction because it did not directly involve a citizen.

The Chairman asked the LEAs to inform the PAB and ACC members if there are any trainings that they are able to attend. The Chairman stated that the PAB and ACC would benefit from any training in order to have a better understanding of what the LEAs do.

- j. LEA Topics of Interest/Concern – The Chairman asked the LEAs if they have any recruit and retentions issues. Oxford PD stated they have one, possibly two open positions they are currently waiting to hear from the town commissioners. Oxford PD further stated their biggest recruit and retention issue is their retirement plan is below the standard compared to the other LEAs in the County.

Easton PD stated they have five vacancies not including the three they have at the police academy. St. Michaels PD stated they have one vacancy and one that is in training. The Sheriff stated their office should be fully staffed by February. The Sheriff further stated that recruitment and retention is a statewide problem, there are people who want to serve however they are not applying for law enforcement.

- k. Recommendations for PAB Annual Report – The LEAs stated they would like to have a position for an officer to handle these complaints because they take up many man hours. Oxford PD stated they are looking into the benefits of their department having electric vehicles and that they are looking to request this for their department.

IV. Old Business and Administrative Discussion – The PAB discussed the preparation of the PAB Annual Report and assigned the sections of the report to each member.

V. Next PAB Meeting – The Board set December 17, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. in for the last PAB meeting this calendar year to finalize the annual report.

VI. Adjournment – There being no further business, a motion was made by Ms. Webster and seconded by Ms. Murray to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:53 am.