

**TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND
POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD**

Minutes of Public Meeting
February 13, 2024

The meeting of the Talbot County Police Accountability Board ("PAB") was called to order at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, February 13, 2024. Present were Chairman Mitchell Ettinger, Members Michael Bibb, John Gilbert, 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. Bibb, seconded by Ms. Webster, the minutes of the Tuesday, December 19, 2023, PAB meeting were unanimously approved without modification.
- III. **Discussion with Law Enforcement Agencies ("LEA")**

2023 PAB Annual Report Feedback – The LEAs gave their feedback on the Annual Report. Easton PD Chief wanted to state that they do not intend to be adversarial and want to work with the PAB. Chairman Ettinger stated the PAB appreciates and encourages the feedback from the LEAs. The LEAs expressed their appreciation for the work the PAB and ACC have done and will do. The PAB and LEAs want to find better ways this process can better serve the citizens of Talbot County.

PAB/ACC related legislation from the 446th session of the General Assembly – The Chairman asked for the LEAs opinion on House Bill 533 that would give the PAB investigatory powers for complaints. The Sheriff stated there are currently over 250 Law Enforcement related Bills submitted this session. The Sheriff stated he does not believe this House Bill has enough support to pass, The LEAs for Talbot County all agreed they did not support House Bill 533. The PAB agreed this would not be something they would support; concurrent investigations could cause more issues than benefits. Chairman Ettinger further stated that the ACC has subpoena power, and this would harm the dialog the PAB has with the LEAs.

Chairman Ettinger stated he would like to invite local legislatures to come to a PAB meeting and has already reached out to one for after the current legislative session.

Submission of Quarterly Use of Force Reports – Chairman Ettinger stated that the LEAs can submit their quarterly reports to Secretary Bradley as they finish them. The LEAs asked if there was a certain format or style the PAB would prefer. Chairman Ettinger stated he found the tracking trends spreadsheet is very helpful.

Arrest data for Q4 2023 – The LEAs presented their arrest data with their reports. Mr. Rice stated it was very informative to be able to compare the trends and statistics between each LEAs. Mr. Rice asked for clarification with the statistics for ‘calls for service’. The Sheriff explained that calls of service are not always arrest, calls for service are more often things such as wellness checks and patrol calls.

Criminal Activity Trends or Upticks – Easton PD Chief spoke about the uptick in homelessness related issues going down and that they have been able to assist with getting people placed in shelters. Easton PD Chief stated there has been an uptick in shoplifting and burglaries in department stores and vape stores. He further stated that this trend seems to be with juveniles.

The Sheriff stated that they had a small uptick in car theft, this trend was also with juveniles. Mr. Gilbert asked about the juvenile issues that they discussed at the last meeting and if this was connected. The Sheriff stated that this seems to have calmed down since their last meeting, fighting is still an issue within the schools but the laws currently in place have affected the school’s ability to refer the juveniles under 13 to other programs such as Teen Court that have been very beneficial in the past. The Sheriff further stated that there are no services for the juveniles that are under 13 other than to call their parents.

Community Relations Activities Planned for 2024 – St Michaels Chief explained some of their community activities such as their weather spotter training, the DART program, and community events and activities. All of the LEAs try to have a presence at community events. The Sheriff stated his department has been working on teaching fraud alerts, scam calls and social media hacking to the senior centers.

Ride-along for PAB 2024 Focus – The LEAs believe the ride-along process will help the PAB get a better picture of what the LEAs do. The PAB members will contact and plan a time to do a ride-along with one of the LEAs.

Recommendations for PAB 2024 Focus – Chairman Ettinger asked the Sheriff if it is possible for the PAB members to sit in and see how the Teen Court works. The Sheriff stated he will arrange for any PAB members that would like to observe Teen Court to be able to do so. Chairman Ettinger asked if there was anything the LEAs thought the PAB should focus on this year. Easton PD Chief stated that he believes the PAB and LEAs are starting to work well together and he wants to have a combined effort for the LEAs to work together.

The Sherrif stated he wants to work on doing more press releases and getting the word out about the good they do in the community, any help the PAB can provide in this is appreciated.

LEA Topics of Interest/Concern – All of the LEAs expressed the need for more resources and more manpower, the work for the PAB and ACC has taken significant manpower and resources for each department.

Chairman Ettinger asked what the status of the Trial Board is. The Sheriff stated they are in the final review process and will speak to the County Attorney and ask him to look at what they have. The LEAs stated this final process of review and signing agreements should not take long to complete. Chairman Ettinger stated if there was any way for the PAB to assist they will.

IV. A motion was made by Mr. Gilbert and seconded by Mr. Bibb for the Board to move into closed session to discuss the Board’s possible reappointment of Administrative Charging Committee member.

V. **Summary of Closed Session Held on February 13, 2024:**

1. Statement of the time, place, and purpose of the closed session:

Time of closed Session: 9:56 a.m. to 10:02 a.m.

Place of closed session: Bradley Meeting Room

Purpose of the closed session: To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matters that affects one or more specific individuals.

2. Record of the Vote of each member as to closing the session:

Names of members voting aye: Ettinger, Bibb, Gilbert, Rice, Webster

Members opposed: None

Abstaining: None

Absent: None

3. Statutory authority to close and listing of each topic actually discussed, persons present, and each action taken in the session:

Topic Description	Statutory Authority	Reason for Closed Session Discussion	Persons Present	Action Taken
To discuss possible reappointment of ACC member	GP § 3-305(b)(1)(i)	Public discussion would discourage individuals from volunteering to serve	Mitchell Ettinger, Michael Bibb, John Gilbert, Chris Rice, Connie Webster, Victoria Bradley	No action

VI. A motion was made by Mr. Bibb and seconded by Mr. Rice to reconvened in open session at 10:02 a.m.

VI. **Next PAB Meeting** – The Board set a date for the next PAB meeting with the Local Law Enforcement Agencies for May 14, 2024, at 8:30 am.

VII. **Adjournment** – There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Bibb and seconded by Ms. Webster to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 10:04am.