

MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
GLYNN COUNTY POLICE ADVISORY PANEL
HISTORIC GLYNN COUNTY COURTHOUSE
701 "G" STREET, 2ND FLOOR, COMMISSIONERS' MEETING CHAMBERS
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2020, AT 5:00PM

PRESENT: Carl Alexander, Panel Chair
Dominic McClinton, Panel Vice-Chair
Teresa Hoyt, Panel Member
Rickey Walker, Panel Member- Virtual
Ralph Basham, Panel Member
David O'Quinn, County Commissioner and Panel Member
Alan Ours, County Manager and Panel Member- Virtual

ALSO PRESENT: Jay Wiggins, Police Chief GCPD
Stephen Sarnoski, Office of Professional Standards GCPD
Eugene Smith, Captain GCPD
Resden Talbert, Lieutenant GCPD
Colin Scogin, Recruiting Officer
Matthew Kent, Public Communications Manager
Anna Trapp, Public Information Officer
Dana Pontello, Assistant to the County Manager

NOT PRESENT: Charles Rinkevich, Panel Member

Meeting Began 5:03PM

1. Call to Order, Chairman Alexander
2. Minutes approved from September 9, 2020 meeting. Approved by all present, none opposed.
3. Internal Affairs presentation
 - a. Started by Lieutenant Talbert, with the IACP, Office of Professional Standards was created. One of their responsibilities is conducting serious administrative investigations. Starting with Personnel Complaints. They can be made internally by an officer/supervisor or by the public. For an informal complaint (example: inappropriate driving, lack of courtesy, untidiness) those can be handled informally by a supervisor. Chair Alexander asked the Lieutenant to back up a bit and explain the process of how someone in the public makes a complaint. Complaints can be made orally, in person or by telephone. In the lobby of the GCPD headquarters there is a GCPD complaint form. People can come in and fill one out, they can call and fill it out over the telephone or fill it out in person. Once the complaint gets made it is logged on a complaint log. If someone comes in and makes a complaint to a supervisor but does not fill out the complaint form, the supervisor will fill out the form and it goes on the log, which is issued a complaint number so it can be tracked. Once the complaint is filled, depending on the severity of the complaint determines if the Office of Professional Standards would investigate it or if it would be handled by the line supervisor. A supervisor

receives the complaint who then forwards it over to the watch commander who will then contact the Office of Professional Standards to determine who will have responsibility for the investigation. If someone comes in and files a complaint the GCPD will be in contact with that person who filed within three business days. That person will receive status updates throughout the investigation. In the event of a complaint of serious nature, the Chief of Police and Office of Professional Standards will be contacted immediately. Vice-Chair McClinton asked who determines if the complaint is serious? Lieutenant Talbert responded with supervisor/Watch Commander. Once the investigation is complete, they will go through the chain of demand for that officer to give supervisors and division commanders the opportunity to review the file and give suggestions for discipline. After recommendations are given, the IA file is turned over to the Chief of Police to review. He will review the recommendations and accompanying material, if he is not satisfied it will be returned to the division commander. Commissioner O'Quinn asked if there was a formal acknowledgement given to the person who made the complaint? Captain Smith came up to answer the question. There are three signature blocks on the complaint form, one for the person making the complaint if they choose to sign it, one for the person receiving the complaint (who is usually the records clerk), and one for the witness (who is a supervisor, usually Captain Smith). Then it is logged on to the log book and given a serial number. Now if they make it over the telephone, if the GCPD has contact information for that individual, they can get back to them. If they wish to get a copy of this form they can have one. They also receive a copy of the complaint number. If they email it to the GCPD they get a response email saying the complaint was received. Lieutenant Talbert comes back up and goes over possible outcomes of complaints. Chairman Alexander asks if there is a step which takes it back to the person who originally filed the complaint where they receive the outcome and can request additional investigations if not satisfied? Lieutenant Talbert says throughout the investigation they should be kept up to date and then notified by mail at the end of the investigation. If the complaint is of serious nature, the Chief of Police can put an officer on administrative leave until the end of the investigation. If it is not of a serious nature, they can continue to work until investigation is concluded. In the event there is a criminal allegation, the GCPD will continue to work their investigation and to contact an outside agency to conduct a criminal investigation. A criminal investigation and the internal investigation will run parallel to each other. Chairman Alexander asked what is the trigger point? Lieutenant Talbert responded that the Chief would make that decision. Chief Wiggins came up and said that if there is any act of criminal nature or even something of a conflict of interest, he would call the GBI and get them involved. Automatic, it is a transparency issue to him. Ralph Basham asked if IA would work with outside agency? Chief Wiggins said no, they would be kept separate. IA is looking straight at policy and procedure violations. Ralph Basham asked if final discipline shared with complainant? Chief Wiggins said yes, in their final letter. Teresa Hoyt asked to confirm when the outside agency be called in? Even if it was a misdemeanor matter? Chief Wiggins clarified anything with a criminal nature. Mrs. Hoyt, added a comment that if someone makes the complaint over the phone the policy should include being asked for contact information so the person filing the complaint can get a copy of it. She added perhaps sending a PDF version to someone who filed via email. Lieutenant Talbert came back up and continued going over the policy. The

accused employee has the opportunity to present a written or oral response to the Chief of Police after having the opportunity to review the investigative file. They can request further investigation on something they felt was not investigated fully before the file is completed. Disciplinary action gone over, both minor and major. Chairman Alexander asked if IA was involved in the hiring process? Lieutenant Talbert says no sir. Stephen Sarnoski comes up to elaborate on the next section. Disciplinary factors to be considered. Ties into the concept of disciplinary matrix. Douglas factors are designed to cover all of the facets of an incident that are relevant to whether or not an individual should be punished and to what degree. Very comprehensive list, weighted different based on past performance and past disciplinary actions, if any, nature of incident, severity of incident, etc. Vice Chair McClinton asked who has the responsibility of initially drafting these Douglas factors or addressing the Douglas factors and then who has the responsibility of reviewing them after they've been addressed initially? Mr. Sarnoski responds that generally speaking it is the responsibility of the investigating officer, who knows the case best, because they were hands-on doing it from start to finish, disciplinary issues (past issues as well if any), and that builds the judgement of what needs to be done. It is the responsibility of the investigating officer to make recommendations about what needs to be done, and then those recommendations are reviewed through the command structure, the ultimate decision coming from the Chief. Ralph Basham asked what Mr. Sarnoski thinks about the discussion of creating a national database for Police discipline, popular discussion. Mr. Sarnoski thinks it is a good idea to help with the fairness factors. Lieutenant Talbert comes back up to finish going over the policy. Chairman Alexander asked if all IA's are sent to POST of what qualifies for a POST action in the world today? Lieutenant Talbert responded with terminations have to be reported to POST, resignation in lieu of termination is also reported to POST. POST then opens up their own investigation. Officer Scogin comes up, resigned within investigation gets reported to POST and any discipline where there is a punishment of a suspension of more than 30 days, gets reported to POST. Mrs. Hoyt asked how long the probationary period for newly hired officers was? Lieutenant Talbert answered, one year. Annually there is an audit of a complaint log, and it is tracked. Vice-Chair asked Lieutenant Talbert to confirm that officers' have the right to appeal a disciplinary action? Lieutenant Talbert responded with yes sir. Vice chair asked even if it is considered a minor disciplinary action? Lieutenant Talbert responded that with a minor disciplinary action the appeals process goes through the Chief. If it is a major disciplinary action, it would go through HR. Anything over two weeks will go through HR. Teresa Hoyt asked if Glynn County had a policy in regard to hiring officers formally employed by other departments and subjected to disciplinary actions? Officer Scogin answered that they are in good standing with POST or if they are in probation status with POST they're able to be hired and trained. All applicants are looked at individually by the hiring panel and hired on a case by case bases. Vice Chair asked Officer Scogin about the resigning under investigation does POST automatically alter or remove someone's certification? Officer Scogin says that is a POST investigation, and they might've resigned from the agency but POST continues with their investigation. No additional questions.

4. Next meeting Chairman Alexander wants to look at the use of force policy

5. Policies are based on National standards, they will soon be available online so citizens can access them.
6. Officer Scogin begins update on hiring process, as of September 21st Officer Scogin delivered 15 applications to HR which were all vetted, done with background investigations and given to HR to make arrangements for psych exam, urine analysis, and the physical exam. One officer of those 14 backed out of his offer of employment. That 14 added put GCPD at 121 positions, 8 short. Those 8 from the Cops Grant. Typically takes 2.5 weeks to 3.5 weeks once HR has the applicant. Once that final offer of employment is made there is typically two weeks of notice given at their current job. 121 officers on the street in the second week of October. They go through two weeks onboarding with admin and by end of October they will be in field training. In addition, Officer Scogin has ten applicants that have either turned in applications or is actively recruiting. One is already interviewed, others in various spaces. Those ten put us at 131 certified officers; 133 is fully staffed with four over (which Mr. Ours has approved). Additionally, this month GCPD is going to Kennesaw, GA to Georgia Police Job recruitment fair. Officer Scogin has talked to the director of Georgia Police Jobs and they are going to try and coordinate a reciprocal event here in our community two to three months from now. No relocation packages are currently offered in Glynn County or signing bonuses. Chairman Alexander asked if there was any positive feedback on the Take Home Car policy? Officer Scogin said yes. Chairman Alexander asked if the 10-hour policy been well received? Officer Scogin said yes. Started an initiative to reach out to historically black colleges and universities, been in contact with Savannah State University doing a virtual job fair along with Albany state and Bethune-Cookman. Including the ten applications that are pending, the demographic breakdown would be 11 white male candidates, 3 white female candidates, 7 black male candidates, two black female candidates, and one Hispanic male candidate. No other questions for Officer Scogin
7. Chairman Alexander makes a comment about tasers, body cameras, and in-car cameras. Since the numbers have come in, which is a large number, they are going to visit and talk with other agencies that are using other systems and get their feedback. Want to make sure we are getting the best for the price. Not off the shelf, just doing little more leg work. Discussion on past subjects.
8. Thoughts moving back to once a month meeting? All agreed. Vice-Chair McClinton asked if we could move our meetings from 5:00PM to 5:30PM. All agreed.
9. Justin Floyd, officer with the GCPD for five years, came to speak with the Panel. He has recently been added to a Panel within the department to boost morale. Merit increase and career track keep getting brought up, and that is something that will boost morale that they cannot do within the Panel. Officer Floyd pointed out that it helps with retention and it attracts new hires. Chairmen Alexander assured him that it is something they are going to go to the Commission on and the administrative staff. Lieutenant Talbert added that his 12 years in the department, Glynn County has had career track and merit increases have been taken away. They take them away from the county. He suggests that instead of taking them away from the entire county, they need to focus on the departments individually.

Adjourned: 6:22PM

Chairman, Carl Alexander

Attest:
