

Atlanta Citizen Review Board Proposed Ordinance Changes

On Tuesday, February 23, 2016, the Atlanta City Council Public Safety Committee was scheduled to discuss the proposed changes to the ACRB ordinance. The discussion was canceled. The committee chairman announced that the issue will be discussed in a closed work session. The changes will increase efficiency, increase accountability, increase governance of the board, and increase service to citizens. The fact table below details the challenges of the current ordinance and the proposed ordinance changes to address the challenges.

FACTS about the current ACRB ordinance:

- ✓ The ACRB dismisses on average 30% of received complaints because the citizen allegations fall outside of the current ordinance jurisdiction (*areas ACRB can legally investigate*).
- ✓ The ACRB cannot accept anonymous complaints.
- ✓ Board vacancies have gone as long as three years.
- ✓ ACRB members devote as much as 12 -15 volunteer hours a month to board business without compensation.
- ✓ In 2015, the APD only accepted one sustained ACRB decision, with many complaints awaiting a final decision from the chief of police.
- ✓ No mediation program that could bring citizen and police officer face-to-face.
- ✓ No standard of board member behavior.
- ✓ No board member outreach requirement.
- ✓ Incorrect Standard of Proof (*clear and convincing*)

FACTS about the proposed ACRB ordinance changes:

- ✓ Nearly 70% of the changes are board member related including:
 - Expansion of allegation jurisdiction.
 - Expansion and clarification of ordinance definitions.
- ✓ Allows anonymous complaints.
- ✓ Provides a mechanism to reduce the length of board member vacancies, and board member term limits
- ✓ Board member compensated \$25 per board meeting and training day.
- ✓ Require detailed responses from chiefs of police and corrections.
- ✓ Implementation of a citizen/officer mediation program.
- ✓ Detailed definition for board member removal.
- ✓ Requirement of board member outreach.
- ✓ Correction of standard of proof (*preponderance of the evidence – 51% of the evidence supports the decision*).
- ✓ Board member training requirement.
- ✓ Expand board seats from 11 to 13 to include more citizen input.

