The Atlanta Citizen Review Board (ACRB) meeting for the month of November was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Cecilia Torrence.

AGENDA

ROLL CALL
(The ACRB consist of thirteen board members)

ACTIVE MEMBERS PRESENT

CECILIA HOUSTON TORRENCE, Board Chair (League of Women Voters, Atlanta-Fulton County)
TAMARA ORANGE, Vice Chair (Georgia Coalition for the Peoples Agenda)

TRUDY BOYCE (Atlanta City Council President)
MICHAEL HOPKINS (APAB, NPU Group S-Z)
GLORIA HAWKINS WYNN (Atlanta City Council)
SHERRY WILLIAMS (APAB, NPU Group G-L.)

SHUNTAY PITRE (Urban League of Greater Atlanta)
BARBARA WARD GROVES (APAB, NPU Group M-R)
JAMES HARDY (APAB, NPU Group A-F)

ACTIVE MEMBERS ABSENT

Tracee McDaniel (Office of the Mayor) Excused Absent-Notification Provided
Keith Hasson (Atlanta Bar Association) Excused Absent-Notification Provided

VACANT BOARD SEATS

Gate City Bar Association - Confirmation Pending
Atlanta Business League - Confirmation Pending

ACRB STAFF & CITY EMPLOYEES ATTENDEES

SAMUEL LEE REID, Executive Director (Reid); MYOLA SMITH, Project Manager & Transcriber (Smith);
BRIAN FLEMING, Investigator, Senior (Inv. Fleming); RONALD JACKSON, Investigator, Senior (Inv. Jackson);
CHARLES CURRY, Public Information Officer (Curry); ADRIENNE GILLIS, Administrative Assistant, (Gillis);
MADISON TRICE, Administrative Assistant, (Trice); LIEUTENANT SCOTT JIMENEZ (Lt. Jimenez), APD, Office of Professional Standards; KIMBERLY CARLISLE, COA Law Department, (Attorney Carlisle).

Special Notes:
• ACRB staff has made every effort to capture comments as stated by each speaker; however, in some instance the words may have been inaudible and therefore, unable to transcribe verbatim. In such cases, staff attempted to capture, at best, the essences of the statement.
• It should also be noted that when the Board votes on an issue, the Chair does not vote unless there is a tie vote or to ensure a quorum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: OCTOBER 10, 2019 BOARD MEETING

Hopkins moved to approve the minutes. Hawkins-Wynn seconded. Hearing no discussion, the vote was called, and the motion was approved unanimously by all members present: Orange, Hopkins, Ward-Groves, Hardy, Hawkins-Wynn, Williams, Boyce.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: OCTOBER 30, 2019 BOARD SPECIAL CALL MEETING

One correction: Orange. “You have me listed with the League of Women Voters and that needs to be changed to “Georgia Coalition for the People’s Agenda.”

Hopkins moved to approve the minutes with noted correction. Hawkins-Wynn seconded. Hearing no discussion, the vote was called, and the motion was approved unanimously by all members present: Boyce. Orange, Hopkins, Ward-Groves, Hardy, Hawkins-Wynn, Williams.

POLLING OF THE AUDIENCE

The Chair opened the floor to receive additional information from the public regarding the cases on the agenda. There was no new information presented from the audience for the board to consider; therefore, the Chair continued with the agenda.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

The Board received a written comprehensive report from Director Reid in advance of the meeting. Reid highlighted the following information from the report:

• New Board Member
  Germaine Austin, the representative for the Gate City Bar, went before the Public Safety Committee on Tuesday, November 12, 2019 to state why he wanted to serve on the board and he was approved. On Monday, Mr. Austin will go before the full City Council for a confirmation vote. Once he is confirmed by the full Council, the next step is for him to be sworn in by the Municipal Clerk. Hopefully, he will be seated for the December 12th board meeting.

  Dr. Michael Turner has been nominated by the Atlanta Business League. He is currently in the background review stages of the process. Pending a favorable review, hopefully he will be seated before the February meeting.

• New Staff Member
  Madison Trice is our newest staff member. She will assume the duties and responsibilities formally held by Melisa Reese as an Administrative Assistant Senior. Ms. Trice is a recent graduate of Clark Atlanta University.
• **Training**
  
  *Reid* reported that he has passed communication over to the police department to partner with them on training to address some ongoing questions that the board continues to have related to traffic charges and physical arrest including probable cause, citations, and police discretion…*what an officer can and cannot do, etc.*. He indicated that he is waiting to hear back from APD, and hopefully, by the first of the year, we will have some dates. He said, “Depending on how long the training may take, it could mean, training time outside of a board meeting on another date.”

• **Other Comments:**
  
  Director *Reid* expressed condolences to fellow member *Hawkins-Wynn* who suffered the loss of her husband. Flowers were sent to Mrs. *Wynn* on behalf of the Board and staff.

**INTAKE REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER**

*Investigator Fleming* reported that for the month of October 2019, the ACRB received eleven (11) complaints; however, recommending outright dismissal for five for the following reasons:

**A. COMPLAINT DISMISSALS**

1. **ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-118**
   
   *Allegation: Reckless Driving*
   
   The female complainant alleged that in 2005, she was involved in a motor vehicle accident that was caused by an Atlanta Police Department (“APD”) officer who was on a high-speed chase with a suspect and she sustained major injuries.  
   
   **Staff recommends dismissal because the complaint is time barred.**

2. **ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-124**
   
   *Allegation: Harassment*
   
   The male complainant alleged that on August 25, 2019, he was harassed by an unknown APD when he followed him 3.5 miles. He could not provide a description of the officer or the vehicle the officer was driving.
   
   **Staff recommends dismissal for lack of information.**

3. **ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-125**
   
   *Allegation: Illegal Entry*
   
   The male complainant alleged that in August 2018, APD officers tried to illegally enter his hotel room without a warrant.
   
   **Staff recommends dismissal because the complainant is time barred.**

4. **ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-127**
   
   *Allegation: Unknown*
   
   Female complainant claims that for the past 22 years, “there has been a lot of stuff going on” with her and the APD. The complainant alleged that she had been poisoned, had her hair damaged by a salon owner, issues with landlord, etc. However, she could not provide any specific incidents involving the APD or identifying information on the involved officers.
   
   **Staff recommends dismissal for lack of information.**

5. **ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-128**
   
   *Allegation: False Arrest & Excessive Force*
   
   The female complainant alleged that in February 2019, she was falsely arrested by an APD officer. She further alleged that the officer handcuffed her wrists and ankles too tightly.
   
   **Staff recommends dismissal because the complaint is time barred.**
Special Note: Dismissed Complainants and Complaints Outside ACRB’s Jurisdiction: It is noted that the proper referrals were given to those citizens whose complaints fall within this category.

B. AWAITING SIGNED COMPLAINTS (2 out of 11 Complaints)

1. ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-123
   Allegation: False Arrest & Misplacement of Property
   The male complainant that on October 10, 2019, he was falsely arrested by an APD officer. He further alleged that the officer failed to place his wallet into property.

   Awaiting the complainant’s signed complaint. If the complaint is received within the next few weeks and has merit, then recommend investigation as an Appropriate Action Required complaint.

2. ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-126
   Allegation: Unlawful Stop & Excessive Force
   The female complainant alleged that on October 16, 2019, her adult son, who is mentally disabled, was unlawfully stopped by an APD officer while crossing the street. She further alleged the officer engaged in excessive force when he physically assaulted her son and attempted to taze him.

   Awaiting the signed complaint. If the complaint is received within the next few weeks and has merit, then staff recommends investigation as a False Imprisonment and Excessive Force complaint.

C. COMPLAINTS THAT ARE SIGNED (4 out of 11)

1. ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-119
   Allegation: Inaccurate Report
   The female complainant alleged that an APD officer completed and inaccurate report accusing her of simple battery.

   Staff recommends investigation as an Appropriate Action Required complaint.

2. ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-120
   Allegation: Failure to Take Action
   The male complainant alleged that on October 12, 2019, he was physically assaulted in his home and the responding APD officer failed to take action.

   Staff recommends investigation as an Appropriate Action Required complaint.

3. ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-121
   Allegation: False Arrest
   The male complainant alleged that on October 5, 2019, he was falsely arrested by APD officers.

   Staff recommends investigation as an Appropriate Action Required complaint.

4. ACRB COMPLAINT NO. 19-122
   Allegation: Rude Behavior & Failure to Provide
   The male complainant alleged that on October 13, 2019, during a traffic stop, an APD officer was rude and aggressive towards him. He further alleged that the officer failed to provide his badge number.

   Staff recommends investigation as an Conduct and Failure to provide identification complaint.

Williams moved to accept the Intake Report for October. Pitre seconded. Hearing no discussion, the vote was called, and the motion was unanimously approved by all members present: Orange, Hopkins, Ward-Groves, Hardy, Pitre, Hawkins-Wynn, Williams.
CASE REVIEWS FOR THE MONTH

ACRB CASE NO. 19-018
(Investigator Ronald Jackson)

The male complainant alleged that on February 1, 2019, Atlanta Police Officer Collins McGhee: (1) unlawfully stopped and detained him during a routine traffic stop and (2) falsely arrested him.

A. ALLEGATION #1 FALSE IMPRISONMENT

Issue: The complainant allegation that Officer McGhee unlawfully stopped him.

The ACRB staff recommends that the allegation of False Imprisonment against Officer Collins McGhee be assigned a finding of “Exonerated” (the investigation established that the alleged act(s) occurred but were justified, legal, or properly within Department policy).

BOARD VOTES OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO FIND THE ALLEGATION “EXONERATED”

Orange moved to accepts staff’s recommendation of “Exonerated.” Ward-Groves seconded. Hearing no discussion, the vote was called, and the motion was approved by: Orange, Boyce, Hopkins, Ward-Groves, Hardy, Hawkins-Wynn, Williams. There was one vote to abstained, Hawkins-Wynn who indicated that she did not have an opportunity to review the file. Motion carried.

B. ALLEGATION #2 APPROPRIATE ACTION REQUIRED

Issue: The male complainant alleged that Officer McGhee falsely arrested him.

The ACRB staff recommends that the allegation of Appropriate Action Required related to this issue against Officer Collins McGhee be assigned a finding of “Exonerated” (the investigation established that the alleged act(s) occurred but were justified, legal, or properly within Department policy).

BOARD VOTES OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO FIND THE ALLEGATION “EXONERATED”

Hardy moved to accept staff’s recommendation of “Appropriate Action Required.” Williams seconded. Hearing no discussion, the vote was called, and the motion was approved by: Orange, Boyce, Hopkins, Ward-Groves, Hardy, Hawkins-Wynn, Williams. There was one vote to abstained, Hawkins-Wynn who indicated that she did not have an opportunity to review the file. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

(Public comments are limited to two (2) minutes.)

No speakers

NACOLE CONFERENCE REPORT

The National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) Conference

Theme: Celebrating NACOLE at 25 - Courage, Collaboration, and Community,
September 22-26, 2019, in Detroit, Michigan

The ACRB Delegation included Cecilia Houston-Torrente, Barbara Ward-Groves, Michael Hopkins and Lee Reid.

Director Reid reported on behalf of the delegation. Reid made a power point presentation and provided each Boardmember with a hard copy of the presentation. The following information was presented:

**NACOLE Conference Report**

Four tracks of interest, focusing on:
- Training
- Community Trust
- Institutional Culture and Correctional Oversight
- Collaboration

Thirty-one (31) different plenary and concurrent sessions covering topics:
- Principles of civilian oversights and effective practices;
- Community-police mediation;
- Building juvenile correctional oversight;
- How to build relationships with law enforcement while maintaining your independence.

Over 500 attendees including:
- Civilian oversight practitioners
- Community members
- Law enforcement officials
- Journalists
- Elected officials
- Activists

Other countries included Jamaica, Canada and Puerto Rico

**General Thoughts**

All oversight agencies share the same problems and concerns:
- Access to information regarding discipline
- Funding
- Limitations of authority
- Threats to independence
- Overall message…we are not alone and can lead on each other to accomplish the mission of civilian oversight – improving officer accountability.
- Successful oversight agencies have found ways to work with police departments, while maintaining their agencies’ independence.
- Panelists comments were insightful and generated many discussions among the attendees.
- The schedule was tight and many of the more popular sessions could have benefitted from additional time to allow the panelists and attendees to dig deeper into points raised during the sessions.
- Conference highlights: networks opportunities and learning and sharing with other agencies.

**NACOLE Delegation Report**

The report is in five parts:
1. What’s Happening?
2. What Other Agencies are Doing
3. Matters to Consider
4. Take Aways
5. Suggestions
1. What’s Happening?

A. Use of Data
   - Misuse of data collection can have detrimental impact on individuals by contributing to biased policing
   - Purchase of big data projects should go through public, civilian oversight, and elected official scrutiny
B. Jail and Prison Oversight
   - Oversight can be successful in jails and prisons (CA, IL, NY)
   - Monitoring functions are strong
C. Facial Recognition
   - Should definitely have community input at the very beginning of FR projects
   - Concern that the technology will have a disparate impact on minorities.
D. Why are They Always Calling the Cops on Me?
   - Better trained 911 operators can have an impact on the “living while black” calls.
   - More jurisdictions are looking to charge for abuse of the 911 system.
E. Building Relationships with Law Enforcement while Maintaining Independence
   - Important aspect of civilian oversight
   - Must be aware of perceptions that can be created when too familiar

2. What Other Agencies are Doing

A. Inclusion in Policy Development
   - Automatic participation
   - Participation in the early development of policy
   - Increased community buy in
B. Use of Policy Analysts
   - Entities can be more proactive – trends and developments
   - Dedicated staff for studies and reports
C. Self-Initiate Complaints
   - Entities can bring the complaint on behalf of the individual
D. Onsite Presence at Officer-Involved Shootings
   - Lead or participate in on-scene officer involved shootings
   - Can refer for criminal charges
E. Input in the Police Chief Performance Evaluation and Hiring of New Chief
   - Entity participation in chief’s PE with regard to work with the oversight agency.

3. Matters to Consider

A. National/Regional Conference in Atlanta
   - People want to come to Atlanta
   - Regional training first
   - National conference 2021 or 2022
B. Increasing Auditing Functions
   - Policy analyst
   - Proactive
C. Addressing Trauma
   - Continue to explore the role of oversight in healing community trauma related to police actions.
4. **Take Aways**

   A. Oversight is moving away from best practices to effective practices.
   B. Oversight in Atlanta is in a great position.
      - Using many of the most effective practices
      - Establishing footprint
      - Community engagement
      - Working relationship with local police
   C. From our commitment to outreach to our working relationships with the APD, the ACRB is positioning itself to be the national model; however, the agency is behind in the level of funding as compared to comparable agencies, which slow our progress.

5. **Suggestions**

   A. ACRB staff should regularly attend the national and regional conferences. This is critical for staff development and support. The ACRB should continue to increase its influence and footprint. The ACRB should increase its involvement in NACOLE and conversations surrounding civilian oversight.
   B. Atlanta should be represented on the national board and conference panels.
   C. ACRB should continue to focus on messaging the agency’s success to help expand our footprint nationally and locally.
   D. The ACRB should secure a policy analyst and increase agency funding.
   E. Atlanta should pursue hosting a regional or national conference.

**OLD BUSINESS**

*No old business to report.*

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Chair Houston-Torrence:**

“I would like to thank Barbara *Ward-Groves*, my dear now friend and colleague for her service to our board. This is her last meeting and I would also like to thank my dear former Vice Chair Shuntay *Pitre*. I want to thank you both for your service. It takes a special kind of person that can do this, and you were obviously doing it for the right reasons. We appreciate your service and we hope that will stay connected with us and continue to be advocates for us in the community. Thank you.”

**Shuntay Pitre:**

“This is my first time serving on an oversight board. I been on the board for the last three years and it has been a rewarding experience, a learning experience and informative. It feels like a family affair…we agree and disagree, and it’s just been a plus to be of services to Atlanta. I’m thankful for the opportunity. I want to thank you Mr. Reid and the staff for always being so on time, professional…it helps. I can see why outside of Atlanta, we seem to be more like the top, the number one oversight program. When I attended the conference, I came away feeling that way. I felt like okay, Atlanta is already doing some of the things that they are trying to do. So, I think the board is headed in the right direction, as for my other board members, I want you guys to continue doing what you are doing, it’s not going unnoticed. Thank you.”

**Barbara Ward-Groves:**

“I really just want to say thank you. I really enjoyed serving on this board. In fact, I told Mr. *Reid* and Cecilia (*Chair*) that I will still be willing to do some volunteering to help them especially if they decided to do the regional conference. If I had not gone to Detroit, I probably would have stayed on the board; but after going to Detroit and seeing the importance of what we do and the amount of time it takes and the dedication, I came back
and said unless I can give it 100%, I’m not going to do it at all. I think that anybody that sits up here in these seats, you need to be either 100% dedicated to the mission or let someone else have it. I think what you all do on this board is too important to have someone not give this their undivided attention. Now while I have been here, I have given 100% but as I am looking into the future, for me personally, there are some other things that I want to do, and I think it’s best that I leave as a professional on my terms as opposed to Mr. Reid saying you probably need to leave. This has been a wonderful experience and I just thank you all for being a part of it.”

**Hawkins-Wynn:**

“I just want to say thank you to the Board, Mr. Reid and the staff for sending those flowers. My husband just passed on Friday, but I know I am moving in his honor. He had a pulmonary embolism, which is basically a blood clot in the lungs, which lead to respiratory failure and that lead to cardiac arrest. I just thank God that his spirit lives on and I just thank God that I have a bunch of family and the ACRB family is one of them. I just thank God I can honor my husband’s life and legacy with continued work and his handprint is on everything that I do. Pray for my strength. I have yet to bury him, so just pray for my strength. Amen.”

**Williams:**

“I just want to wish everyone a happy and healthy Thanksgiving as we will celebrate the holiday before our next meeting.”

**ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Boyce to adjourn the meeting. Hopkins seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.