

Meeting Minutes (4/29/2024)

Camden and Wyoming Chief Advisory Board

Board members in attendance: Dr. Corey Miklus, Bishop Carol Boggerty, Michael Morasco, and Fleur McKendell

Others in attendance, Chief Marcus Whitney and Chief Richard Baker

1. Meeting called to order by Chief Whitney at 6:07pm.
2. Each member introduced themselves, providing a brief background on their professional experience and personal interests in serving on the Board.
3. Chief Whitney provided an overview of House Bill 206, which requires that each Delaware police department establish a Police Advisory Committee or Board. The primary goals of the Board are to make recommendations to the Camden and Wyoming police departments on crime and safety initiatives, enhance community interaction, improve the two-way communication between the community and police department, and to work collaboratively with existing local partnerships through community events to enable continued police outreach. Board members are required to earn 20 hours of training with the local police department by way of 1 on 1's with police chief, ride alongs, information sessions etc. within the first year. Chief Whitney and Chief Baker will log the training hours.
4. The Board reviewed and discussed the proposed Code of Conduct. Chief Whitney made a recommendation to the attendance requirement that the word "unexcused" be added to ensure that emergency absences do not count against the 3 no absence rule. The Code of Conduct has been updated to reflect the change and will be reviewed and moved for final adoption at the next Board meeting.
5. Chief Whitney and Chief Baker discussed their respective department's community policing initiatives. Chief Baker reported on initiatives such as coffee with a cop, easter egg hunt, partnering with local churches, meals/toys for the needy, fishing derby, national night out. Chief Whitney reported on initiatives such as coffee with a cop, job fairs, and national night out.
6. Chief Whitney and Chief Baker discussed current crime trends.

Camden has approximately 6,000 residents. Chief Whitney reported that Camden's police force currently has 10 officers including him. Approximately 85% of Camden police calls are to commercial businesses. There has been an uptick in complaints so Chief Whitney has been responding to calls more often. The rising homelessness issue needs local, state and federal attention and collaboration because all the police

can really do is move them on and they settle somewhere else. There appears to be a lack of shelters for single males and that's predominantly the demographic that Camden runs across. Camden is experiencing a rising heroin problem.

Wyoming has approximately 2,000 residents. Chief Baker reported that Wyoming's police force currently has 5 officers including him who also answers calls on a regular basis. Chief Baker reported that Wyoming is experiencing a rising heroin and meth problem.

7. The Board discussed potential areas of focus such as adding a Youth Subcommittee comprised of students, more regular social media and local media coverage on police issues and initiatives, eventual School Resource Officer from local police department instead of State Police which will render more of a community feel, Camden and Wyoming collaborating on community policing events, and having eyes and ears on local and statewide homelessness task forces. Bishop Boggerty mentioned eventually having a Board community response script for crisis management to ensure that all Board members are on one accord if approached by a member of the community about an issue.
8. The Board discussed having future meetings held within the 3rd or 4th week of each month at 6pm. Next meeting will be held on May 28th at 6pm.
9. The meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.