

Chief's Advisory Committee

November 30, 2021, at 2:30 p.m.

Meeting Participants: Chief Bieber, Captain Braman, Captain Buttice, Earl Gooding Jr., Kaneshia Henderson, Noah Leavitt, Dick Morgan, Steve Moss, Roberto Rodriguez (via Zoom)

Absent: Brooke Bouchey, Roger Esparza, Sandy García, Ruthell Martinez, Curtis Phillips

1) Chief's welcome and thank you—The meeting opened by Chief Bieber.

2) Discuss WSP race/ethnicity traffic stop data collection

Lieutenant Justin Destito works in the Tacoma office of the Washington State Patrol (WSP). Previously he was a Sergeant of the Walla Walla detachment. Troopers mainly hand out tickets on highways within Walla Walla County, not within the limits of the City of Walla Walla. WSP troopers are given Time and Activity Report (TAR) training. Since troopers cannot ask the race or ethnicity of an individual and race/ethnicity is not listed on a driver's license, this designation is based on a best guess by surname, physical observation, etc. This may not be accurate, and the data may or may not be accurate.

The College Place Police Department tracks using Sector. Sector is a statewide computer system that does ticketing.

The only accurate way to obtain accurate race/ethnicity data is to ask and we are not allowed to do that. Chief Bieber is unaware of a study being done locally regarding the race of an officer and the traffic recipient. Still a study could have been elsewhere to investigate bias. The WSP Patrol Captain gives bias-based report training to our officers every year.

As a general practice, case law keeps officers from pulling over people on a pre-text stop. Pre-text law came from people being pulled over after leaving a known drug house. There must be a violation to pull over a vehicle. It is not okay to pull over a vehicle for no reason—this is fishing. Still if an officer pulls over a vehicle due to a vehicle's light being burned out, then the officer can respond if an individual in the vehicle has an outstanding warrant.

We have been expending extra effort to recruit ethnically and culturally diverse officer candidates, especially Hispanic and Spanish speaking individuals. Those efforts have gotten us more diverse candidates, but the candidates have not made it through the hiring process. We have started holding open houses prior to officer testing to de-mystify the process. Passing the written test has been problematic. We give out a test preparation manual to potential applicants and will provide a copy free of charge if the cost is an issue. The written test was created by Public Safety Testing, and it has been

culturally vetted. During the open house we also explain the physical fitness portion. The oral board is comprised of one civilian, one sergeant, and two captains. The community panel is comprised of local civilians. Completing a polygraph and psychological exam are final steps in the hiring process and another area of “washing out.” It is agency specific to decide what drugs can be in the applicant’s past and how recently the last event.

If an individual has been excluded from the civil service list, then Human Resources will issue a letter to the individual clarifying if they will be allowed to reapply in X years. Still some hurdles may not be overcome.

- 3) Swearing In Officers**—Five new officers will be sworn in on December 14 at 7pm at the Marcus Whitman Hotel. The new Parking Enforcement Officer is also being introduced, along with a newly hired dispatcher for WESCOM (Dispatch).
- 4) City Council Presentation**—Steve Moss noted the majority of the Advisory Board felt the City of Walla Walla should pursue body-worn cameras for the officers. The Advisory Board will be presenting to the Walla Walla City Council during February or March 2022. There will be three new Council members then. Providence St. Mary Medical Center applied for funding with Greater Columbia Behavioral Health in hopes of funding a second person for the Community Paramedic Program.
- 5) Police Chief Hiring Process**—The City Manager has been authorized to hire a recruitment firm out of California. The top candidates will be involved in a review process.
- 6) Next meeting**—January 25, 2022, from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 in-person at the WWPD.
NOTE: The December 28, 2021, meeting has been canceled.

The November 30, 2021, meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.
Submitted by Deborah Minter