

Chief's Advisory Committee

December 27, 2022, at 2:30 p.m.

Fulton Community Conference Room

Meeting Participants: Chief Buttice, Sandy García (via Zoom), Earl Gooding Jr. (via Zoom), Kanasha Henderson, Dick Morgan, Steve Moss

Absent: Captain Braman, Robert Dixson, Mark Higgins, Captain Knudson, Noah Leavitt

1) Chief's Welcome

2) Body Worn Camera Program—Chief Buttice thanked the committee members for their support, and especially for having the difficult conversations with your community then providing feedback. Both Chief Buttice and Steve Moss voiced surprise at finding the City Manager's proposed budget for 2023-2024 did *not* include the body worn camera (BWC) program. Steve Moss added the City Council was supportive of finding funding for this project. Kanasha Henderson voiced continued support for the BWC project being funded. Chief Buttice also thanked the City Council, City Manager Elizabeth Chamberlain, and Jean Teasdale and Liz Moeller of City Finance for identifying funding for the project. We see the BWC Project as critical to improving trust with the community. Mount Vernon is a similarly sized city and has a BWC Program. Mount Vernon sent data and a short video showing the steps and time required for redacting a video. Both the Walla Walla County Sheriff's Office and College Place Police Department have found the redaction process is time intensive. We will implement our BWC program by March 30. First, we need to train on the system and create a policy. Some data, like in the case of a homicide investigation, will need to be retained forever. All sworn officers will have BWC, except for the two Captains and Chief Buttice because our three positions do not respond to calls for service.

3) Social Media Plan—Nikki Raver is taking over the social media. We hope to implement the new social media in early January, most likely on Facebook and/or NextDoor.com. We want to present the message without allowing side comments. Some cities are shutting down the comments on Facebook because readers have posted felony hate crimes on the platform. Kanasha Henderson agreed readers comments should not be allowed on the Police Department's social media.

4) WWPB Budget 2023-2024—We started budgeting in May 2022 for the 2023-2024 budget. It is a lean budget to allow the BWC in our budget. Our current patrol cars are five years into service. Replacement cars were ordered in late 2021 and should arrive in 2023. Fleet budgets for the vehicle replacements; inflation increases are built into their projections.

5) New WWPB Officers and Staffing—Our two newest officers, Ari Lopez and Sergio Arroyo, were hired on December 5 and will start at academy in another week. Both officers are bicultural, bilingual, and incredibly good chefs too. The final opening will be filled by Mason Knowles; he starts in May 2023 to coincide with the next available slot at the academy. Currently Mason is employed at the City Parks Department. Mason was

offered the opening when the previous candidate did not pass a critical background check.

- 6) Potential Retirements and Vacancies**—Sergeant Gunner Fulmer is retiring on December 30. We will look at the entry level list and the lateral officer list for potential candidates to fill the slot. While a significant portion of our sworn officers could retire at any time, there are also law enforcement agencies offering significant signing bonuses and higher wages, which increases the chance that officers may leave before reaching their retirement age. It is much more cost effective to hire a trained law enforcement officer than to pay for six months of academy training. We may have to get creative to fully staff patrol. On a side note, Michelle Long just retired as a dispatcher for the Walla Walla Emergency Services Communications Center (WESCOM). She accepted a new job as the Code Enforcement Officer located under Development Services.
- 7) Working on our New Five-Year Strategic Plan to Align with City's Strategic Plan**
- 8) Forecast Topics to Talk About During the Spring Meeting**—The committee was asked what topics they would like to learn more about during the upcoming meetings. We can focus at one of these topics during each of the upcoming meetings. Possibly to learn more about the challenges in serving protection orders, or what officers can and cannot do with landlord/tenant protection orders.
- 9) Wrap Up**—Chief Buttice observed the only change from the last round of entry level officer recruitment compared to previous ones was having a specific officer assigned to an officer candidate. We had a strong candidate list this year, and Chief Buttice credits hard work and dedication from the recruitment committee members as a large part of the success this year. Again, he thanked the committee members for their feedback and perceptions. In addition, if you see anyone that would be a good fit for the career of law enforcement, then please refer them to us.
- 10) Next Meeting**—Due to the spring break for many local schools taking place during the last week in March, the next meeting is being rescheduled. It *is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, April 18 at 2:30pm* in the Fulton Community Room.

The December 27, 2022, meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.
Submitted by Deborah Minter