

CHARLOTTESVILLE POLICE CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

Date: December 11, 2025

Scheduled Time: 6:30 p.m.

Location: CitySpace - 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902

Board Members Attending: Dr. Jeffrey Fracher (Chair), Dr. Kyle Dobson (Vice Chair), Andrew Frye, Albe LaFave.

Board Members Not Attending: George Dillard Jr., Ruairi Vaughan.

Guests: N/A

Call to Order | Roll Call:

- The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Dr. Jeffrey Fracher.

Agenda Approval:

- A motion was made by Mr. LaFave to approve the current meeting agenda for December 11, 2025. Motion seconded by Dr. Dobson and approved unanimously.

Minutes Approval:

- A motion was made by Mr. Frye to approve the meeting minutes from November 13, 2025. Motion seconded by Dr. Dobson and approved unanimously.

Announcements:

- Mr. Walker reported that Mr. Dillard was absent due to work in Washington, D.C.
- Mr. Walker provided an update on board member appointments: the application window closed November 17, 2025, and City Council has scheduled interviews for January. Five applications were received, with three candidates selected for interviews. New members would join the Board at the February meeting, giving the Board a full eight members.
- Mr. Walker explained changes to the parking garage access system. The new system uses license plate scanning technology. Board members will need to provide their license plate information to be added to the validation system for official Board business.
- Dr. Fracher provided an update on independent counsel. The City Attorney's office is screening potential attorneys, and they have narrowed the selection to two or three firms. There has been a shift in utilization rules such that outside counsel would only be engaged if there is a dispute between the Board and the City. The City Attorney will represent the Board in all matters that do not involve an adversarial position with the City. Mr. Walker indicated the Board has budget allocated for attorney fees. The final determination for selecting an attorney will be subject to the full Board's consideration and approval.

Public Comment One:

- Kate Fraleigh (KF), who has followed the Police Civilian Oversight Board since 2018, encouraged the Board to review historical documents and consult with original founders. KF read elements the original members considered critical to successful oversight, including: independent authority to review complaints, independent authority to conduct parallel investigations, access to CPD documents and data, professional support staff with appropriate budget, and public engagement and reporting. KF noted the original proposed ordinance was changed before adoption.
- Alec Pandaleon (AP) asked whether the Board member candidate interviews are public. Dr. Fracher confirmed they are private and conducted by City Council. AP asked how many 8 or 12-hour shifts each Board member and the Acting Director have completed as ride-alongs with CPD. Dr. Dobson and Mr. Frye each reported one 8-hour shift. Mr. LaFave reported none with CPD. Mr. Walker indicated he is looking forward to engaging in this once the Board and Office are set on firm footing again and replacement staff are hired.

Office Presentation:

- Mr. Walker presented an overview of civilian oversight models as identified by NACOLE (National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement).
 - i. *Investigation Focused Model:* Emphasizes independent investigations conducted by the oversight body or professional staff. Allows for independent intake of complaints, investigation, findings, and disciplinary recommendations. Requires trained investigators, officer interview capabilities, and greater staffing. Mr. Walker noted this model is limited for the PCOB because the Board cannot compel officer testimony due to an inability to extend Garrity protections.
 - a. Dr. Fracher elaborated that there are other legal barriers beyond Garrity, including resource and staffing constraints. Many investigative models require paid board members or dedicated investigative staff.
 - b. Mr. Walker explained Garrity protections: public sector employees can be compelled to testify in administrative investigations under threat of discipline, but that testimony cannot be used in criminal proceedings. Only entities with disciplinary authority over officers can provide Garrity protection; since the PCOB lacks this authority, it cannot compel testimony.
 - ii. *Auditor/Monitor Focused Model:* Involves active engagement during complaint investigations conducted by law enforcement, including monitoring officer interviews and auditing case files. Focuses on systemic changes, policies, and trends. Mr. Walker rated PCOB's status in this model as moderate. The Office currently attends Internal Affairs interviews as an observer, monitors systems like the automated license plate readers, and sits on the use of force review panel.
 - a. Dr. Fracher clarified that while Mr. Walker can attend interviews, he does not have authority to ask questions, as that would constitute compelling the officer to answer the PCOB's questions.
 - iii. *Review Focused Model:* A quality assurance function where the board reviews completed Internal Affairs investigations. Provides accountability over the police department's process without direct engagement in investigations. Mr. Walker

rated PCOB's status as developing, noting the Board can review completed cases but has not yet done so in practice.

- iv. *Hybrid Model*: A combination of characteristics from other models. The PCOB is authorized as a hybrid model with authority under all three approaches. Mr. Walker suggested the Office could focus primarily on audit/monitor functions while the Board focuses on review functions.
- Mr. Walker listed Virginia oversight entities: Alexandria, Arlington, Richmond, and Fairfax operate hybrid models; Norfolk and Virginia Beach operate review-focused models. Charlottesville was among the first in Virginia to establish civilian oversight.
 - Dr. Fracher noted the Board will need to develop a recommendation to City Council for changes to the ordinance to make the current model workable, as the Board has struggled to function effectively in six years under the current structure.
 - Dr. Dobson encouraged public observers to look past labels and focus on the concrete actions and work the Board is doing, rather than getting caught up in which model category applies.
 - Mr. Walker emphasized the goal is to codify the Board's work more clearly and focus it so that outcomes are accomplishable by a volunteer board with limited staff.
 - Mr. Walker presented an evaluation of the PCOB against NACOLE's 13 Principles of Effective Oversight, providing rankings from 1-5. Key findings included: Independence rated 3/5 (developing); Unfettered Access to Records rated 4/5 (strong access through current Chief, but not fully codified in ordinance); Access to Law Enforcement Executives rated 4/5; Full Cooperation rated 3/5 (limited by inability to compel testimony); Sustained Stakeholder Support rated 2/5 (limited and inconsistent); Adequate Funding and Resources rated low (current resources insufficient for full mandate; four full-time staff recommended); Public Reporting and Transparency rated 4/5.
 - Dr. Fracher noted that the current Chief has been very open about providing access, but the previous Chief provided little to no access. Without codification in the ordinance, access remains at the discretion of whoever holds the position.
 - Mr. Walker presented 2022-2025 complaint statistics from Internal Affairs. In 2025 to date: 46 external complaints (from public or PCOB) and 28 internal complaints (from within the department). Mr. Walker noted the increasing trend in internal investigations suggests a growing culture of accountability within the department.
 - i. Top allegation types across all years: unsatisfactory performance, courtesy, conformance to law, unbecoming conduct, truthfulness, and excessive force.
 - ii. Finding distribution across 2022-2025: approximately 42% of allegations were sustained, with roughly equal representation of unfounded versus sustained findings. Mr. Walker noted the exonerated category (allegation occurred but officer followed policy) could be a focus area for policy review.
 - Mr. Walker demonstrated the PCOB website, highlighting the data and reporting section, the 2024 annual report, complaint filing portal, and ongoing development efforts for transparency.

Board Member Discussion and Activity Items:

- Dr. Dobson presented a draft work plan developed with Mr. Walker. The vision involves a four-stage monthly process: (1) Seek Understanding - gathering community experiences through canvassing, surveys, and engagement at community events; (2) Analysis - coding and interpreting community feedback to identify themes and focal points; (3) Prioritize Work - using community input to determine monthly oversight priorities; (4) Report Outcomes - communicating work completed to the community, Chief of Police, City Council, and City Manager's office.
- Dr. Dobson emphasized the goal is to put community concerns first while creating a documented, evidence-based approach to oversight work with a clear monthly cadence.
- Mr. Walker noted the draft work plan is very rough, developed in approximately one hour, and is intended to introduce the concept for further development. The goal is to formalize and make sustainable the Board's work.
- Dr. Fracher expressed support for the model but suggested waiting until the Board has its full membership to formally adopt the work plan through a vote.
- Dr. Dobson indicated he would commit to participating in downtown mall canvassing and attending community events during December.
- Mr. Walker offered to provide historical documents for Board members to review, including a report from a previous town hall and original documents from the PCOB's founding.
- The Board discussed potential December activities including: stationary canvassing on the downtown mall, attending neighborhood association meetings and community events, and reviewing historical documents.
- Mr. LaFave indicated he would visit the office the following afternoon.

Public Comment Two:

- Kate Fraleigh (KF) provided a list of organizations for potential community outreach: Legal Aid Justice Center, Virginia Organizing, People's Coalition, one-stop shop at Carver Recreation Center, Jefferson School African-American Heritage Center, and the NAACP (noting Mr. Dillard is Vice-President of the local chapter). KF noted that original PCOB Board members were selected through a public process at the Jefferson School where candidates gave speeches and attendees provided input to the City. KF expressed concern that City Council's sole control over Board appointments may limit diversity of perspectives.
- Dr. Fracher noted that Board appointment procedures are in the ordinance and could be addressed in future joint conversations with City Council.
- KF offered to connect Board members with original PCOB founders, including Gloria Beard, for conversations about the Board's history and original intent.
- Dr. Fracher reminded attendees that if more than two Board members are present for community engagement, it constitutes a public meeting with associated requirements.
- Dr. Dobson noted interest in exploring whether public input on Board appointments could still be gathered and submitted to City Council, even if not formally required.

Adjournment:

- A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Dobson, seconded by Mr. Frye, and approved unanimously.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Motion: Frye
Second: LaFave
Approved Unanimously

Certified by James Walker, Acting PCOB Director

Date Adopted: 1/8/2026

Certified: 