

CHARLOTTESVILLE POLICE CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT BOARD
MEETING MINUTES

Date: May 14, 2026

Scheduled Time: 6:30 p.m.

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

Board Members Attending: Dr. Jeffrey Fracher (Chair), George Dillard Jr., Andrew Frye, Albe LaFave, Caron LeNoir-Kelly (arrived at 6:45 p.m.), Nathalie Reaves, Ruairi Vaughan.

Board Members Not Attending: Dr. Kyle Dobson (Vice Chair).

Staff Present: James Walker, Acting Director.

Guests: None.

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order by Chair Dr. Jeffrey Fracher at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Fracher reviewed the ground rules for participation, including respectful conduct, the two public comment opportunities, the three-minute time limit for public speakers, the practice of submitting questions to the Office in writing rather than engaging in dialogue with the Board, and the request that speakers state their name, affiliation, and jurisdiction. He noted that comments may be submitted to pcob@charlottesville.gov.
- The roll was called by Mr. Walker. Seven of the eight Board members were present, constituting a quorum.

Agenda & Minutes Approval:

- A motion was made by Mr. Vaughan to approve the May 14, 2026 meeting agenda. Motion seconded by Mr. LaFave and approved unanimously by members present.
- Mr. Walker noted, as a matter of process, that he prepares the minutes from the meeting recording using an AI-assisted transcript, which he then reviews in full against the video to verify accuracy.
- A motion was made by Mr. Frye to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2026 regular meeting and the April 27, 2026 special work session. Motion seconded by Mr. LaFave and approved unanimously by members present.

Announcements:

- Mr. Walker reminded the Board of the shared calendar link distributed in the weekly email and encouraged members to bookmark it for easy access.
- Mr. Walker noted that the annual law enforcement memorial honoring fallen officers was held on May 13. Councilor Lloyd Snook and Chief Kochis spoke, and the event was well attended by community members.

- Mr. Walker advised that he anticipates being out of the office in the coming weeks for a personal matter, and that the Office has planned accordingly, including for the May 18 City Council session.
- Mr. Walker previewed the June 11, 2026 regular meeting, at which Chief Kochis and CPD staff will present an overview of the Department's technology systems, including a data system referred to as ForceMetrics, and seek the Board's input. Dr. Fracher noted that the Board's role is to evaluate and question such systems. Mr. Walker noted that he expects to be absent from the June 11 meeting.
- Mr. Walker reported that the Office held an open house during Public Service Recognition Week, with approximately 20 attendees, and noted an upcoming City community event at a local park that is open for Board members to attend.
- Mr. Walker and Dr. Fracher reminded Board members to schedule their ride-alongs before the end of summer, noting the required participation form (which includes a background check) and that Sgt. Thomas coordinates scheduling. Mr. Dillard, given his prior service in law enforcement, was excused from the requirement.
- Mr. LaFave reported speaking with former City Councilor Brian Pinkston, who suggested that individual Board members meet informally with City Councilors (for example, for coffee) to build relationships ahead of the joint session. The suggestion was well received.

First Public Comment Period:

- No public comment was received, either in person or online.

Presentation to Council of Proposed Ordinance Revisions:

- Mr. Walker and Dr. Fracher reviewed the framework for the joint work session with City Council scheduled for Monday, May 18, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Dr. Fracher explained that he would make brief opening remarks and that Mr. Walker would present the substance of the proposed ordinance revisions; if Mr. Walker is unavailable, Dr. Fracher would present. The session is allotted one hour, will follow a work-session format, and will include questions from Council. Dr. Fracher encouraged all Board members to attend to demonstrate a united Board.
- Mr. Walker explained that the Council packet includes three documents: a high-level presentation (the focus of the session), a mid-level table documenting each proposed change and its rationale, and the full redlined ordinance. The session will be driven by the presentation, with the detailed table and redline provided for Council's files. The presentation was developed in coordination with Mr. Walker's supervisor, Steve King, Assistant to the City Manager.
- Mr. Walker emphasized that Council will not vote on May 18. The proposed revisions have been submitted to the City Attorney's Office and to the Board's independent counsel for review, and Council will provide feedback. Adoption requires two readings; Mr. Walker anticipated a finalized proposal around July, followed by first and second readings.

Recommendation to Council of Proposed Ordinance Revisions:

- Mr. Walker read the current draft purpose statement and explained that the revisions reflected Board discussion from prior sessions, placing community well-being and safety

first, identifying the advancement of the quality of policing through civilian-led transparency and accountability as the means, and describing the Board's methods (monitoring, auditing, and reviewing) and outcomes (public reports and recommendations). The draft read:

- "The purpose of the Board is to support community well-being and safety by advancing the quality of policing in the City of Charlottesville through civilian-led transparency and accountability. The Board fulfills this purpose by monitoring, auditing, and reviewing department conduct, policies, practices, and procedures, and by issuing public reports with recommendations for corrective action and the adoption of best practices in policing."
- Mr. Walker shared emailed feedback from Mrs. Reaves on the purpose statement: (1) adding language to "promote justice and fairness" in connection with recommendations for corrective action, which the Board accepted by consensus; and (2) adding language at the opening regarding "upholding the rights, dignity, and voices of all residents" and "the ethical quality of policing." The Board agreed the second addition captured useful framing but may require tightening for length. Mr. Walker will revise and circulate the purpose statement for further feedback.
- Mrs. LeNoir-Kelly member asked how "quality of policing" would be defined and measured. Mr. Walker explained that the term is given effect throughout the ordinance and that a definitions section now exists in which such terms may be defined. A Board member cautioned against defining the term too narrowly in order to preserve flexibility. The Board agreed to flag "quality of policing" for possible inclusion in the definitions section.
- Mr. Walker reviewed the remaining presentation slides:
 - Transition from the independent-investigation model to a monitor, audit, and review framework, which forms the core of the revised ordinance.
 - Emphasis on public reporting and oversight outcomes, including the Chief of Police's required written public response to Board reports, a provision already in the ordinance that is now clarified and emphasized. The Board's principal authority lies in making its findings public and requiring a response.
 - A workable scope for Board hearings, reframed from an officer-trial format to broader topics (such as trends, complaints, audits, and policies), with voluntary participation by police, experts, witnesses, and public input, while avoiding confidential information. Dr. Fracher recalled a prior practice hearing that did not succeed because testimony could not be compelled and due-process concerns arose given collective-bargaining protections.
 - Subpoena authority, narrowed to remove the ability to subpoena an officer while retaining the ability to subpoena records, including certain third-party records. Any subpoena would require action by the Circuit Court and is expected to be used rarely, if ever, but is retained as an option.
 - Removal of barriers associated with the independent-investigation model and the absence of binding disciplinary authority over officers, both of which arise from constraints at the state, constitutional, legal, and departmental levels (including collective bargaining). The revisions are intended to direct current and future Boards toward achievable oversight outcomes.

- In place of binding discipline, two retroactive powers are retained: providing an opinion on whether the Chief applied discipline consistent with policy, and reviewing the disciplinary policy itself, with the goal of influencing future practice rather than individual resolved cases.
- Mr. Dillard asked whether the Board receives copies of updated CPD policies. Mr. Walker confirmed that the Board has access to the Department's policies and procedures, most of which are published online (certain tactics-related policies are withheld), and identified the discipline matrix and the standards of conduct as the policies most relevant to complaints and discipline. Policies are determined by the Chief with command-staff input and are reviewed by the City Attorney's Office. The Board agreed it should monitor changes to these policies.
- Clarification to Board membership: priority is given to City residents, then to Albemarle County residents with ties to the City, and only if no such applicants exist, to any Virginia resident. The revision also changes terms to two years with up to four consecutive terms, staggered to help avoid the loss of a quorum; current members are unaffected until reappointment. Mr. Vaughan asked whether City residency takes priority regardless of qualifications. Dr. Fracher and Mr. Walker explained that appointments remain at Council's discretion under listed criteria (including demonstrated commitment, community service, training and lived experience, and relevant expertise), with City residency intended to function as a tiebreaker among equally qualified candidates. The City Attorney's Office may further revise this language.
- Mr. Walker noted that the remaining provisions are largely consolidations of previously approved documents (such as access procedures and the monitoring of interviews) into the ordinance, along with revisions to the mediation and alternative-resolution and accommodation sections and a new definitions section.
- Mr. Walker advised the Board of a potential new complaint: a community member had contacted the Office, and Mr. Walker spoke with them briefly and is awaiting a return call. He noted that such contacts sometimes involve requests for information or clarification rather than formal complaints, and that he documents all calls and can bring relevant information to the Board.
- Following discussion, Board members expressed support for the proposal and for the simplified, clarified language.
- A motion was made by Dr. Fracher to accept the proposed ordinance revisions in their current form for presentation to City Council on May 18, 2026, with the understanding that the document is not a final product and remains subject to legal review by the City Attorney's Office and independent counsel, feedback from City Council, and further refinement of the purpose statement. Motion seconded by Mr. Frye and approved unanimously by members present.

School Resource Officers MOU:

- Mr. Walker asked whether the Board wished to discuss the School Resource Officer (SRO) Memorandum of Understanding further and offered to prepare materials that break the topic down for the Board.
- Mr. Dillard recommended inviting Charlottesville City Schools Superintendent Dr. Royal Gurley Jr. to a future meeting to share his perspective on School Resource Officers, noting

that the topic had recently arisen at an NAACP meeting. Dr. Fracher asked that the invitation also seek the Superintendent's view of the Board's role, if any. The Board agreed; Dr. Fracher and Mr. Walker will extend the invitation, with the July 9, 2026 meeting identified as a possible date.

- The Board discussed questions to raise regarding SROs, including: whether the Board could obtain access to school security-camera footage (as distinct from student records) for case reviews, in light of a recent change in state law expanding access to certain juvenile records in closed session; the status of SRO hiring (the position was opened statewide, candidates must be sworn officers, and the process is ongoing); and staffing and coverage, including whether a back-up officer would be available when an assigned officer is unavailable, and coverage during summer school. Mr. Walker noted that, because SROs are CPD officers, incidents involving them would fall within the Board's purview.

Board Work Plan Updates:

- Community events: Mr. Walker will circulate a list of summer and fall community events for Board participation and noted that back-to-school events offer good opportunities to reach families. He flagged that some events would require Board members to staff them directly.
- CPD policies most relevant to the Board: the discipline policy and the standards of conduct, as discussed earlier in the meeting.
- Internal process and documentation: continued development of the Board's review and audit manuals and related process documents.
- Outreach: In response to a question, Mr. Walker confirmed that outreach to neighborhood-association leaders remains on the work plan. The Board also held a brief, informal discussion of local housing and homelessness initiatives, including shelter capacity, in the context of community awareness.

Second Public Comment Period:

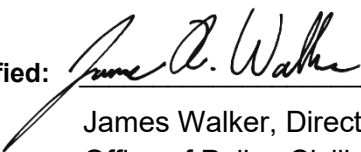
- No public comment was received.

Adjournment:

- A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Frye and seconded by Mrs. Reaves. The motion was approved unanimously by members present.
- Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:47 p.m.

Motion made by Mr. Vaughan to approve the May 14, 2026 regular board meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Frye.

Approved by the Charlottesville Police Civilian Oversight Board on the 11th day of June, 2026.

Certified: 
James Walker, Director
Office of Police Civilian Oversight
Email: walkerj@charlottesville.gov
Phone: (434) 970-3794

	Yes	No
Fracher	<u>X</u>	___
Dobson	<u>X</u>	___
Frye	<u>X</u>	___
LaFave	<u>X</u>	___
LeNoir-Kelly	<u>X</u>	___
Reaves	<u>X</u>	___
Vaughan	<u>X</u>	___

Note: The law enforcement seat, currently held by Mr. Dillard, is specifically designated as a non-voting member. The seat is intended to provide the Board with an advisory perspective and expertise from law enforcement experience.