

CHARLOTTESVILLE POLICE CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: July 9, 2026

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, Caron LeNoir-Kelly, Nathalie Reaves, Ruairi Vaughan.

Board Members Not Attending: George Dillard Jr.

Staff Present: James Walker, Acting Director.

Guests: Kim Powell, Chief Operations Officer, Charlottesville City Schools (CCS); Rodney Jordan, Director of Facilities Operations, CCS; Lieutenant Greg Wade, CPD.

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Dr. Jeffrey Fracher, who reviewed the ground rules for participation, including respectful conduct, the two public comment periods available in person and virtually, the three-minute limit for individual comments, the practice that the Board does not enter into dialogue during public comment, and the request that speakers state their name, affiliation, and jurisdiction of residence. Comments may be directed to pcob@charlottesville.gov.
- Mr. Walker called the roll. Seven Board members were present, constituting a quorum. Mr. Dillard had advised earlier in the day that he would not be present.

Agenda & Minutes Approval:

- A motion was made by Mr. Vaughan to approve the agenda for the July 9, 2026 regular meeting as written. Motion seconded by Mr. LaFave and approved unanimously by members present.
- A motion was made by Mr. Frye to approve the minutes from the June 11, 2026 regular meeting as written. Motion seconded by Mr. LaFave and approved unanimously by members present.

Announcements:

- Mr. Walker reported that the proposed ordinance revisions are under simultaneous legal review by the City Attorney's Office and the Board's independent counsel, both expected to conclude near the end of July. A final draft will come to the Board at the August meeting for a final vote, distributed well in advance with any changes from the legal review highlighted. Following Board approval, the ordinance will proceed to City Council for a first and second reading, with September identified as the target.
- Mr. Walker announced National Night Out, hosted by the Charlottesville Police Department at Booker T. Washington Park on Tuesday, August 4, 2026, beginning at 5:00 p.m. The PCOB has historically attended and staffed a table.

- Mr. Walker advised that he will circulate a poll by email and text regarding dates for a Board retreat and shirt sizes for Board apparel. Dr. Fracher added that he and Mr. Walker are seeking an experienced retreat facilitator and asked members to share recommendations for facilitators or locations.
- Mr. Walker reminded the Board that work on the upper levels of the Market Street Garage from July 13 through August 28 will substantially limit parking, and noted that parking at the Water Street Garage can be validated. No additional announcements were made.

Public Comment (First Period):

- One attendee was present online but did not wish to speak. A member of the public commented on retreat facilitation, observing that an effective facilitator functions primarily as a moderator ensuring all participants can express themselves.

School Resource Officer MOU – Supporting Implementation:

- Dr. Fracher welcomed Ms. Kim Powell, Chief Operations Officer for Charlottesville City Schools (CCS), and Lieutenant Greg Wade of the Charlottesville Police Department (CPD), and asked them to describe the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two organizations and the status of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program.

Background and Memorandum of Understanding

- Ms. Powell explained that the SRO program was discontinued in 2020 while students were out of school during the pandemic, and that the protocols adopted in its place proved difficult to apply once students returned. She emphasized that no single incident prompted the officers' return. She reported that the current working group involved substantially more community engagement than the prior process and that community concerns materially shaped the MOU.
- Ms. Powell acknowledged that some community members oppose the return of SROs. She explained that educators are not trained to perform functions required by state code and practical necessity, and noted that families have repeatedly described valuable relationships with prior SROs. She stated that this does not discount instances in which police conduct has fallen short, and identified the Board's oversight role as part of continuous improvement.
- At Dr. Fracher's request, Ms. Powell summarized the MOU's principal features. She identified the clarification of roles and responsibilities as the most significant difference from the prior program, and described a new feedback process, distinct from a formal complaint form, giving the school community two avenues for raising concerns or sharing positive observations: the existing CPD process or a school-based process. She introduced Mr. Rodney Jordan, formerly principal of what is now Charlottesville Middle School and now the division's Director of Facilities Operations.
- Lieutenant Wade emphasized the MOU's clarity on roles and responsibilities, contrasting it with programs elsewhere that place an officer in a school without ensuring the right person is selected, and described the process through the signing of the MOU shortly before Christmas 2025 as collaborative between CCS and CPD.
- Lieutenant Wade explained that the two SROs were selected through two separate panel interviews rather than an internal CPD decision. The first panel included Dr. Malone, principal of Charlottesville High School, and Ms. Jodie Murphy, the division coordinator for mental wellness; the second included Mr. Jordan, parent representatives, a special

education teacher, a student representative to the School Board, and the incoming middle school principal. Panel members scored candidates' responses, and both panels reached a unanimous decision. In response to a question from Dr. Fracher regarding whether candidates were self-selected or designated, Lieutenant Wade explained that CPD announces open positions department-wide and officers express interest through the chain of command; two officers applied and both were selected, and the panels were expressly advised they could select both, one, or neither.

Board Questions and Discussion

- Mrs. LeNoir-Kelly asked what protocols are in place or changing with respect to sexual misconduct by adults within the schools and what protections exist for affected children's privacy, referencing recent events in Albemarle County. Lieutenant Wade responded that CPD has two detectives assigned specifically to crimes against children who work closely with the division's mental wellness coordinator, and expressed confidence that the relationships established between CPD and the schools would serve both organizations well should such a matter arise.
- Ms. Powell added that required background checks cannot alone guarantee prevention, and described steps being taken, including ensuring that spaces used for one-on-one meetings with students have glass in the door or a sidelight, and a refresher on volunteer vetting to be led by Mr. Jordan at an upcoming division safety summit. Mr. Jordan described the published volunteer approval process and longstanding practices, including never meeting alone with a child or an adult, requiring a second employee for home visits and student transportation, and referring all reports to the division office.
- Mrs. LeNoir-Kelly observed that events in the County had caused a break in public trust and emphasized the importance of re-establishing it, particularly given the controversy surrounding the return of SROs, so that families and staff have confidence that students will be believed. A member of the public asked that acronyms be explained for those following the discussion; Ms. Powell reviewed the terms in use.
- Ms. Powell stated that maintaining community confidence that meaningful oversight exists is valuable, and noted that the division's feedback process is intended to dovetail with the Board's. Dr. Fracher responded that the Board has substantial access to police body-worn camera records and reviews complaints as they are received, including any arising from an SRO's physical contact with a student, and offered the Board as an ally. Ms. Powell noted that such questions historically arise in ambiguous situations, that the division cannot release the underlying records because they are protected under FERPA, and that staff training will emphasize that the return of SROs does not permit staff to defer situations they would otherwise handle.
- Mr. Walker noted that the Board is a civilian-led body with a distinctive legal structure under state code and unusual access, that its jurisdiction extends to the Police Department rather than the schools, and that it can provide perspective, recommendations, and opinions in a structured and confidential format.

Staffing, Response, and Daily Operations

- Dr. Fracher asked whether a single officer at each school represents adequate coverage. Lieutenant Wade responded that the officers will adhere to the Department's mission of building relationships and trust at Charlottesville High School (CHS) and Charlottesville

Middle School (CMS), acknowledged that circumstances may call for more than one officer but stated that one is better than none, and noted that any expansion would depend on program performance and the will of the schools and community.

- Mr. LaFave asked what objections community members have raised and how those are being addressed. Lieutenant Wade identified two: that an officer's presence would convert matters ordinarily handled through school discipline into arrests, and that SROs will be armed in a school setting. He stated that the MOU is explicit that where a matter can be handled as school discipline it will be, and that firearms reflect state code and Department policy.
- Mrs. LeNoir-Kelly raised community concerns regarding profiling on the basis of race and of sexual and gender identity. Ms. Powell confirmed those concerns have been expressed publicly and added that families in the immigrant community have raised concerns regarding federal immigration enforcement. She stated that there is no agreement for CPD to assist with immigration enforcement, that the division could terminate the MOU should that change, and that the program is a school resource function rather than school policing.
- Ms. Powell directed the Board to the June 4, 2026 School Board meeting, which included the division's first comprehensive presentation of the underlying data. Calls for service at Charlottesville High School were 64 (2019), 65 (2020, a partial year), 41 (2021), 95 (2022), 82 (2023), 76 (2024), 55 (2025), and 12 through the first quarter of 2026. She indicated that arrests over the same period were minimal and should not be expected to increase as a result of the program, and noted that the MOU calls for quarterly reporting.
- Mr. Vaughan asked whether any comparison exists between disciplinary trends in Charlottesville City Schools and in nearby localities that retained their SRO programs, clarifying that his interest was in incident trends. Ms. Powell responded that no such comparison has been conducted and observed that, because the MOU excludes SROs from school discipline, discipline data may not be the appropriate measure. Mr. Walker offered the Office's and Board's assistance in reviewing comparable localities, asking only that the resulting data be shared.
- Mr. LaFave asked how quickly a single SRO can respond to an incident and what de-escalation techniques would be used. Lieutenant Wade explained that SROs carry both a police radio and a school radio and know the building layout, giving them direct awareness of developing situations and allowing a faster response than a patrol officer dispatched through a 911 call.
- Dr. Fracher asked Mr. Jordan how a feedback loop with the central office would function. Mr. Jordan confirmed that he will be in regular communication with the SROs, Lieutenant Wade, and the building principals, and that the SRO reports directly to the principal. Lieutenant Wade added that the MOU governs what it terms official contact with a student (an investigative stop or other police action) and requires the officer both to articulate a constitutional basis and to clear the contact with the principal in advance, absent an emergent situation. He stated that nothing done in an enforcement capacity would go unmonitored or unrecorded, and that any pattern of profiling would be identified early through those safeguards.
- Mrs. LeNoir-Kelly asked what activities the SROs will undertake to integrate into the school community, including informal engagement with students. Lieutenant Wade identified the back-to-school period as an immediate opportunity, citing National Night Out and back-to-school events. Ms. Powell described focus groups arranged with student leaders shortly after the officers were selected, in which students advised the SROs on how best to

integrate, and Mr. Jordan described pep rallies, athletic events, and performing arts productions as further opportunities. Mrs. LeNoir-Kelly noted that her daughter recently graduated from Charlottesville High School and had observed that students were not consulted when SROs were removed or returned.

- Mr. Jordan noted that the SRO should not ordinarily be the first responder to a typical school incident, explaining that care and safety assistants assigned to specific locations should respond first. Ms. Powell identified this as a significant change: the division now employs care and safety assistants who are DCJS-certified school security officers, a resource that did not exist previously and part of why a single SRO per school may be sufficient. She noted that the community does not want SROs patrolling hallways, that student searches remain governed by a reasonable suspicion standard, and that vape detector alerts and cell phone policy are handled by administrators, not the SRO.
- Dr. Dobson observed that the data reflects substantial demand for service alongside very low arrest activity. He noted that some community members will not trust the institutions represented in the room to uphold the MOU, and that the Board's role is to hold both accountable. He argued that institutions measure discipline and arrests far better than the mentorship functions the MOU assigns to SROs, and urged that those outcomes be defined and measured early. Dr. Fracher agreed that messaging remains essential.
- Mr. Frye asked about how connections between officers and students will be continuing practice? Ms. Powell noted that Ms. Bianca Johnson, who oversees restorative practices for the division, attended the student focus groups and took notes, and reported recommending that the incoming middle school principal include the SRO in her weekly message to staff and families. Ms. Powell also described a process for engaging officers through classes, specific student groups already formed for other purposes, but noted this process needs to be more fully developed over time.
- Mr. Vaughan asked how readily the MOU could be adjusted if a provision proved unworkable, using officer deployment within the building as an example, and clarified that his concern was the ability to revisit provisions following a case review that generated community concern. Ms. Powell responded that the principal determines where the SRO is assigned and may redeploy the officer as circumstances require, described an order of operations under which life-safety emergencies take precedence, followed by threat assessments and scheduled activities, and noted that the agreement is reviewed annually.
- Mr. Vaughan asked about the renewal process for the MOU, which concludes in 2028, and how SROs will be apprised of in-classroom strategies used by educational staff. Ms. Powell responded that quarterly reports and an annual review are the principal mechanisms and that the agreement continues absent termination by either party, and that the SROs will participate in pre-week safety training, DCJS training, and restorative justice training. Mr. Frye asked how the student focus group engagement would be sustained; Ms. Powell noted that state-required school climate surveys include questions on students' perceptions of their SRO, and acknowledged that ongoing student dialogue has not yet been formalized.
- Mr. Vaughan asked whether that training identifies the threshold at which law enforcement becomes involved. Lieutenant Wade described two circumstances: where conduct presents a serious threat of bodily harm to another, in which case involvement does not automatically result in charges; and where a victim wishes to seek prosecution, in which case officers are obligated by law to assist.
- Lieutenant Wade confirmed that the SROs will be assigned within the Community Services Bureau. Dr. Fracher thanked the guests and noted a low level of community awareness that

the Board will provide oversight of the program; Ms. Powell suggested collaborating on messaging so that the community is reminded of the Board's role. Mr. Walker noted that the MOU provides that concerns proceed through CPD's process and does not address the Board's role, although the Board's jurisdiction over the officers creates a clear connection.

Work Plan Updates – Office and Board:

- Mr. Walker reported that he has reviewed the MOU and identified questions for the Board, including that it does not address body-worn camera activation, and raised whether the Board could serve as an additional avenue for receiving complaints alongside the schools' feedback process.
- Mr. Walker described the binders distributed to Board members, intended to provide a consistent and updated set of reference materials including the Office work plan and goals, which he will collect and update at each meeting and can also share digitally. He thanked Mrs. LeNoir-Kelly for her assistance.
- Mr. Walker reported that he is completing his FY27 work plan, due the following week and serving as the basis for his evaluation through the City Manager's Office, and will share it with the Board. He recommended that the Board revisit the work plan it developed at the beginning of the year, noting Mr. LaFave's earlier emphasis on establishing priorities and that School Resource Officer matters have become time-sensitive with the school year approaching. He proposed identifying a date for a work session focused on a small number of priorities and will include the question in the scheduling poll.

Advancing Priorities:

- Community Connections: Mr. Walker reported that the community listening survey has been finalized and is available in digital and print formats. He noted that surveys are a collection tool rather than a substitute for building relationships, and asked the Board to consider ways to distribute it alongside opportunities for direct conversation.
- Policy Review: Mr. Walker identified the CPD policies connected to the SRO program as a near-term focus, including whether any conflicts exist between the MOU and Department policy.
- Direct Oversight: Dr. Dobson stated that case review is likely the function the community most expects of the Board. Measured against a model of parallel review of all complaints received by CPD, the Board is approximately fourteen cases behind for the year, of which four fall within the courtesy category. He proposed beginning with those four and proceeding systematically through the remaining categories, and suggested identifying a date outside the regular meeting and whether a small group or the full Board would conduct the review. Parallel review would also allow the Board to provide complainants with more than the single-page disposition letter currently issued. The proposal was offered for discussion rather than as a matter requiring a vote.
- Dr. Fracher asked whether clarification had been obtained regarding closed sessions and case review. Mr. Walker responded that the applicable statute is restrictive and permits closed session only in limited circumstances, but noted that matters involving school resource officers and juveniles may create new pathways for closed session, which benefits confidentiality and privacy.

- Dr. Fracher asked how material reviewed individually or in pairs would be brought together for a public position. Mr. Walker described the scorecard process, a draft of which is in the Board binders. Board members would review body-worn camera footage and the case summary at the Office individually or in pairs, scoring the case and taking notes with the understanding that the material will be used in public session and must contain no identifying information, subject to redaction. The subsequent public discussion would address findings, decisions, and policy implications in general terms.
- Dr. Fracher reported preliminary discussion regarding the second position in the Office, including its job description and role, with the goal of shifting day-to-day work from the Acting Director and supporting case review preparation. He noted that the title and placement within the City's structure remain under consideration and expressed hope the position could be filled by the end of the year.
- Dr. Fracher and Mr. Walker urged Board members to complete their ride-alongs by the end of July. Dr. Dobson asked that members document observations from ride-alongs, conversations, and community events so that the knowledge gained is captured for the Board rather than retained individually; Dr. Dobson concurred.
- Mr. Walker indicated he would circulate dates for back-to-school events, noting that they allow for brief contact and distribution of materials rather than extended dialogue but remain valuable. He identified an event at Southwood in Albemarle County, which draws significant participation from the immigrant and Hispanic community, as well as events downtown. Dr. Fracher cautioned that a member of that community, with whom they had spoken that morning, described a high level of fear following recent federal immigration enforcement activity in Greene County, and advised that anxiety within the community may limit turnout.
- Dr. Dobson indicated he would follow up on dates for case review, noting that if a first review is completed within one to two months, the September or October regular meeting could serve as the public session at which the four cases are reviewed.

Public Comment (Second Period):

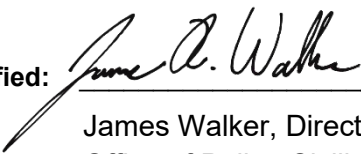
- Mr. Clarence Johnson addressed the Board, describing prior experience in community activism dating to 1995 and commending the Board for taking a proactive rather than a reactive approach. He encouraged the Board to hold town halls or similar forums so that community members can see how they benefit and become involved, which he suggested would also generate volunteers. He emphasized keeping lines of communication open. No additional public comment was received, either in person or online.

Adjournment:

- A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Frye and seconded by Mr. LaFave. The motion was approved unanimously by members present.
- Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:20 p.m.

Motion made by Mr. LaFave to approve the July 9, 2026 regular board meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Frye.

Approved by the Charlottesville Police Civilian Oversight Board on the 13th day of August, 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	___	Absent ___

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.