

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 31, 2020

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Commission

VIA: James Slaton, Interim City Manager

FROM: Jennifer Nanek, City Clerk

SUBJECT: Resolution 2020-25 – Amending the Citizens and Police Community Relations Advisory Committee.

SYNOPSIS: *Resolution 2020-25 modifies the Citizens and Police Community Relations Advisory Committee, expanding the committee to 6 members from 3 members, allowing for each Commissioner to nominate members and changing the meeting schedule to monthly.*

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Commission adopt RESOLUTION 2020-25.

BACKGROUND

At a recent City Commission Work Session, staff was directed to prepare a resolution to modify the Citizens and Police Community Relations Advisory Committee. This resolution expands the Committee to 6 members from 3 members and provides each Commissioner the ability to nominate one member each. The 6th member will continue to be appointed by the Chief of Police. This resolution also changes the meeting frequency from quarterly to monthly.

The Lake Wales City Commission on May 3, 2011 adopted Resolution 2011-05 to establish the Citizens and Police Community Relations Advisory Committee “to provide a forum for respectful discussion that will lead to a greater partnership and stronger working relationship between all community members and the police department.”

The primary goal of the Community Relations Committee was to improve the relationship between the community and the police department.

The main provisions of Resolution 2011-05 were as follows:

- A three-member Community Relations Committee was created. Two citizen members were appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the Commission, and one police officer member was appointed by the Police Chief
- The committee regularly met once a month in the Municipal Administration Building, but any member of the committee could call a special meeting if one was deemed to be necessary. The committee and its members were subject to the Sunshine Law and other applicable State laws and City ordinances
- The committee provided a forum in which citizens could express opinions or concerns and positively resolve issues they may have with police policies or procedures

Resolution 2011-05 was later amended with the adoption of Resolution 2012-02, which expanded the committee from three members to five (one police officer and four citizens) and removed the restriction of holding the meetings in the City Administration Building, allowing the meetings to take place anywhere in the community determined by the committee.

A final amendment, Resolution 2014-07, changed the meeting schedule of the Community Relations Committee from monthly to quarterly. Although the committee was effective in providing constructive dialogue between citizens and the police department, citizen attendance eventually declined, which led to the amended meeting schedule. The previous amendment expanding the board to four citizen members was not carried forward in this particular amendment.

Due to a lack of involvement, the committee eventually stopped meeting altogether around 2016. The committee, however, was not among the 10 boards officially dissolved by the commission on Feb. 7, 2017 through Resolution 2017-02.

The Police Chief and the City Commission have indicated an interest in re-establishing a Citizen and Police Community Relations Advisory Committee. A copy of the current Resolution, 2014-07, is attached for the Commission to review and to provide any desired changes to staff.

Input received has indicated possible interest in amending the committee member appointment process, with the Commissioners nominating one committee member each. If this is the desired direction of the Commission, the committee size would need to be expanded to six (five citizens and one police officer).

City Commission comments expressed during the July 21, 2020 City Commission meeting resulted in the following additional amendments to the proposed Resolution:

- In accordance with the City's Charter, each Commissioner shall recommend one appointment to the Mayor. The Mayor's appoints will then be subject to approval by the City Commission
- In the case of a vacancy, a new member will be appointed through the same process used to make the initial appointments
- The committee will be empowered to make recommendations to the City Commission on ways to improve upon the structure and purpose of the committee

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution 2020-25