

Citizens and Police Community Relations Advisory Committee  
September 27, 2021  
City Hall  
6:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Andy Oguntola at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Andy Oguntola, Tiffany Davis, Al Goldstein, Narvell Peterson, Michael Smith and Dwight Wilson

Chairman Oguntola introduced new member Al Goldstein.

2. BODY CAMERA DEMONSTRATION BY SGT. MAULTSBY

Sgt. Maultsby presented a body camera demonstration of a real time event, as a supervisor would view live. Sgt. Maultsby advised that since the program has rolled out, we have over 2,000 recorded events. Supervisors can log into Evidence.com and observe live the event as it unfolds. Officer Jacob Raines was present for the demo, and Sgt. Maultsby advised that Officer Raines was one of the first to wear the camera. Officer Raines passed the camera around for Committee members to see. Sgt. Maultsby described the features. Officer Raines activated his camera, and the Committee observed the scene on the projection screen. Sgt. Maultsby advised we will be getting new tasers, and Axon will be working with our new cameras as well.

Dwight Wilson asked if the County is aware that the cameras are being used, and Al Goldstein asked if any other cities are operating with body cameras right now. Sgt. Maultsby responded that the County is aware that the cameras are being used, and as of right now, Lake Wales Police Department is the only agency in the County operating the body cameras. Al Goldstein mentioned that Lakeland Commission approve the purchase of cameras. Lt. Smith added that Lakeland is purchasing the cameras we have. Winter Haven, Haines City, and Bartow are looking at purchasing.

Andy Oguntola asked when the other agencies have cameras, will our cameras work with theirs. Lt. Smith responded that if we are on scene and another agency uses Axon cameras, and draws their gun, our cameras will be activated.

Chief Velasquez advised that we have 24 more cameras that are ready, but currently we are installing modules in the cars. We are still working with the State Attorney's Office on sharing the videos with specific state attorney working a case. We are still working the bugs out, but the program is going well.

Chairman Oguntola asked when the first cameras went active. Sgt. Maultsby responded August 8, 2021. He added that there are two cameras on every squad right now. After everyone has a camera, there will be a tremendous amount of video, and a lot of redacting time when needed.

Narvell Peterson asked how long the videos would be kept. Sgt. Maultsby advised that the retention is different for different incidents, and each video is categorized, i.e., a citizen contact is

90 days, and a murder incident is forever. Lt. Smith added that the system does not automatically delete videos. At 90 days, Sgt. Maulsby will be notified of the 90-day mark. Officers cannot delete or edit video. The system will track every edit and have an audit trail. Additionally, the original video will always be kept along with the edited video.

Sgt. Maulsby created a scenario for officer Raines and demonstrated the camera live to the Committee.

St. Maulsby mentioned that he is currently taking a class at Orange County Sheriff's Office, and they have 1,500 cameras.

It was asked how many public records request are there for video, and Chief responded that there are 115 requests from the State Attorney's Officer per day.

Andy Oguntola stated that we have about 8,000 new residents coming to Lake Wales; however, we have the same amount of officers, and he asked if this Committee could request the City to review for more officers. He further asked if our server is ready for this volume, and if we have enough technicians for this program. Andy asked what is the Committee's responsibility with voicing the need for more employees with the city.

Chief advised that there could come a point where the Committee can come together and make recommendations to the City. Right now, we are doing okay and just hired more officers, and we have some in the academy. Chief remarked that he believes the City would be open to the needs that may come up.

Narvell Peterson stated that the pay scale needs to be reviewed before we hire more officers. Chief responded that is another area to be looked at, and to look into pay studies in the County for the purpose of hiring and keeping officers.

Chairman Oguntola remarked that the body camera program is a great program, and we are the first to start the program. It would be great if a demonstration could be done at a commission meeting.

Present in the meeting was Deputy Stephanie Krager from the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, and she spoke before the group. Deputy Krager advised that all sworn have the body cameras, and they love them. She added that the citizens were able to see the video of where their deputy was recently shot in the arm.

Andy Oguntola asked if video could be published. Lt. Smith responded that once the trial is over, the video could be published.

Deputy Krager advised that Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office published the video at that time due to the large interest in the community. Publishing the video earlier, does not happen all of the time, it depends upon all of the circumstances, including communicating with the State Attorney's Office. Dwight Wilson stated the cameras would be helpful to release soon so that the public can see the severity and possibly ID for the suspect.

Dwight Wilson asked if our traffic unit could have the 360 car cameras. Chief responded that a lot of our growth would be in the traffic enforcement area. Traffic is a heavy load on law enforcement. Al Goldstein added that crime affects some of us, but traffic affects all of us. He advised him I going to continue to work with the Commission on importance of traffic enforcement.

### 3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Chief advised we could talk about community engagement at the same time. As you can see, people do not come just to hear a meeting, for we do not have anyone here tonight. The community engagement works, and we are doing what we can. They will show up if they need to address an issue. As we move forward, I believe our first is the media. I am expecting to request personnel to handle public information and social media. Getting the support from this committee will be very helpful in getting media personnel. We are missing the mark with putting out there our community engagement, but we are looking at. Andy Oguntola expressed that he is on board with the media specialist, for there are so many things we can make the community aware of. Andy mentioned that he and Narvell went to the commission and spoke on behalf of this committee. Andy spoke that the Committee needs a charge. The Committee needs a media person, and the need should be brought to the Commission.

Narvell Peterson stated that other cities have signs that say no truckers, and he spoke on the trucks from Citrus World coming through the City and speeding in the Northwest Section. Chief Velasquez stated this is a very valid point, and our Patrol Commander is taking note.

Dwight Wilson spoke that people are not coming to our meeting, but they have been speaking their complaints. Recently regarding the head-on collision on E Street. People are doing doughnuts on Washington near Citrus world and doing this repeatedly disrespecting the neighborhood. We support more traffic officers, and they are needed. Community is also complaining of loud music.

### 4. MEETING FREQUENCY

It was discussed if the Committee should continue to meet each month or every other month. It was agreed that the Committee would continue to meet monthly.

### 5. AROUND THE ROOM

Discussion was held on how this Committee can do more. Andy advised we have two universities and a state college. If we put an internship together, it can be a pilot program for what we are trying to do. We can get creative in using our universities and our college.

Narvell Peterson advised that Sunrise meet on 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed of each month 6:00 to sunrise. He also mentioned that his door is open anytime to the new officers. Communication is the best teacher. You need to get to know your people.

Al Goldstein remarked that we need to get out the in community and communicate. A communications specialist would be great, and we have many wounded vets that can handle a computer. A new newspaper may be coming into our area, and we need an article in there.

Lt. Smith remarked we would be taking the body camera demonstration to the commission. It was requested that we have a demonstration for this Committee, and as we have done that, we are ready to go to the commission.

Dwight Wilson commented about the book that they each received. The book is written by a former Los Angeles Police Officer, and you cannot tell his affiliation. He just cares about the police department and the community. Dwight cited a story from the book of how he partnered to get the community engaged. This book shows how to engage the community.

Tiffany Davis commented that she uses interns for her restaurant and providing food for Lake Wales kids' sports teams.

Chairman Oguntola stated the Committee would meet next on Monday, October 25 at 6:00 p.m.

Andy Oguntola made a final comment to make sure you talk to your Commissioners who appointed you of what the Committee talks about.

## 6. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.