

City of Memphis Civilian Law Enforcement Review Board Minutes for July 12, 2018

Call to Order

The meeting of the Civilian Law Enforcement Review Board was formally called to order by Chairman White at 4:20 p.m.

Board Members Present:

Ralph White, Chairman
Casey Bryant, Vice Chairman
June Chinn-Jointer
Florida Jackson
Marie Finney
Nicholas Bragorgos
Sandeep Pednekar
Hazel More
Jamita Swearingen, Council Liaison

Board Members Absent:

David Acey
Dwan Gilliom
Ricky Floyd

Approval of the Minutes:

Minutes of the prior meeting (June 14th) are still being prepared and will be approved at the next board meeting.

Items of Discussion:

- a) Ms. Wilson discussed three types of upcoming training opportunities
 - 1) Firearms training, August 11th.
 - 2) Citizen's Police Academy – required for all board members
 - 3) NACOLE Conference – last day for early bird registration is July 30th.

- b) Ms. Swearingen, newly-assigned chairperson of the Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee for the Memphis City Council, introduced herself to the board and expressed her willingness to hear the concerns of the board and to help develop solutions to problems. Ms. Swearingen then outlined a few areas of improvement and success that the city is experiencing, including using sentinel cameras in hot spots that have been identified in the City, encouraging residents to report vandalism and other

small incidents so that accurate crime numbers are reflected in the city's database, so those areas can become eligible for cameras, and discussing some programs that the City offers that can be used to combat crime and increase employment.

- c) A gentleman from the community thanked the board for all of their help with his situation with MPD and working to have the "hazard" designation removed from his home.

New Business:

- ISB case #AE2017-001 / Katrina Hart Case
Ms. Katrina Hart was sworn in by Chairman White. Chairman White then outlined that on August 22, 2017, Ms. Hart was at the Memphis Zoo and had a negative experience with Officer K. Rogers, wherein Officer Rogers instructed Ms. Hart she needed to enter the parking lot from a different direction.

Ms. Hart then testified that the officer directed her to enter the parking lot from a different direction, and that she didn't understand his direction as she had already entered the zoo parking lot after paying the parking fee and was trying to park in the handicapped area, but that she tried to do what he said. Upon encountering Ms. Hart the second time in the parking lot, the officer used vulgarity towards her, and that she felt threatened because the officer raised a clenched fist towards her. Ms. Hart then stated that she was visiting the zoo with her one-year-old child, and that after the negative interaction with the officer, wherein she was in fear for her and her child's safety, she departed the zoo without having entered the zoo, and she went to a police station on Crump to make a report against the officer.

Chairman White read the account as recorded by the officer, and it was agreed that this is a "he said/she said" case and a misunderstanding between the two parties, but that that didn't excuse the use of profanity by the officer towards Ms. Hart. There was also some question about whether the officer was using a marked MPD police car during this interaction, as reported by Ms. Hart, but denied by the officer.

Ms. Hart stated that she would like the officer to be disciplined or get further training, and that she was displeased with the conclusion of MPD's internal affairs to not proceed further with the case.

Mr. Bragorgos offered a motion to find the allegation not sustained, seconded by Ms. Finney, which, after polling the board, failed.

Chairman White suggested that because there were no witnesses to the event, it is difficult to bring this case to the police director's attention; however, the Chairman is willing to present the case as an example of the continuing need for sensitivity training for officers.

Ms. Bryant offered a motion to sustain the charge, seconded by Ms. Jackson. During discussion on the motion, Ms. Swearingen suggested that she contact the zoo and obtain a free entrance pass for Ms. Hart and her daughter as an apology for her experience on the day in question, to which the board members responded favorably.

Chairman White called for a vote on the motion to sustain, which vote passed in the affirmative. Ms. Jackson offered a sincere apology to Ms. Hart for the experience and hoped that with a free admission ticket, she would be able to enjoy experiencing the zoo with her daughter. Chairman White also offered an apology for Ms. Hart's experience and wished her well in the future.

Old Business:

Ms. Wilson updated the board on efforts to subpoena the officer in the Marcus Ward case by having the board members sign a request that will be forwarded to the appropriate parties.

Adjournment:

After thanking the board for their work and dedication, a motion to adjourn was offered by Chairman White and seconded by Ms. Finney. The meeting was formally adjourned at 5:50 p.m.