

## **POLICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **I. Organization and Make-Up of PAC**

- A. Nine (9) member committee, appointed by the Mayor, comprised of:
  - 1. Mayor
  - 2. Police Chief
  - 3. Seven (7) city residents representing the Diversity & Cultural backgrounds of the City.
- B. Committee is subject to Sunshine Act and Right-to-Know requirements and regulations.
- C. The Mayor and Police Chief shall be considered advisory members of the committee and shall have no voting rights.
- D. Bi-monthly (i.e., every other month) meetings and such other committee meetings as members deem necessary in public meeting rooms or facilities of the City.
- E. Except for the Mayor and Chief of Police, no member shall be a public official or municipal employee.

### **II. Terms, Vacancies, Expiration and Removal**

- A. The appointed committee members shall have terms as follows:
  - i. Four (4) members shall have terms of 5 years.
  - ii. Three (3) members shall have terms of 3 years.
- B. At its inaugural meeting, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson to act as the presiding officer.
- C. A person appointed to fill a vacancy shall serve for the balance of the term for which their predecessor was appointed.
- D. The Chairperson shall notify the Office of the Mayor in writing no less than 30 days prior to the expiration of a member's term or within 30 days of any vacancy occurring on the Committee.
- E. A Committee member may be removed from his or her position by a majority vote of other Committee members for good cause shown.

### **III. Role and Function.**

The core functions of the PAC shall be to:

- A. Assist in fostering a better understanding of the role of law enforcement throughout the City, reviewing as necessary law enforcement policies, practices and data. The goal should be to improve transparency and accessibility to public information.
- B. Provide City residents a forum to give voice to concerns about police interactions and responses, to help identify critical, systemic or recurring issues of importance for residents and businesses throughout Wilkes-Barre, and to facilitate whenever necessary changes in local law enforcement practices.
- C. Promote policies and practices for the protection of the local community to further the goal of the fair, just and dignified treatment of each and every person.
- D. Provide recommendations as necessary to the Wilkes-Barre Police Department and the Mayor on policies to maintain public safety for all, promote law and order, assist in the reduction of crime, and protect all in the community.
- E. Foster positive relationships and an improved understanding between the Wilkes-Barre Police Department and the members of the community.

#### **IV. Powers and Duties**

The following advisory powers and duties are vested in PAC.

##### **Information Gathering.**

To gather, maintain, summarize and report on public information and statistics regarding local law enforcement in one (1) or more of the following categories:

- A. Officer and supervisory training and education programs and options.
- B. Wilkes-Barre Police Department (WBPD) published General Orders and related policies.
- C. Reports on law enforcement interactions with the public.
- D. Citizen complaint summaries.
- E. Similar categories of public information on other law enforcement agencies.

##### **Analysis.**

To analyze public information and data derived from any of the foregoing WBPD records for comparison with other similarly situated municipalities, other municipalities in the region or national statistics.

### Communication.

To promote and encourage open communications, cooperation and dialogue between the WBPD and the residents and businesses of Wilkes-Barre through any of the following activities:

- A. Developing recommendations on how to better inform the community on the responsibilities of a person and law enforcement personnel when contact with law enforcement officers occurs.
- B. Facilitating effective means of participation for City residents in the making of program recommendations to effectively supplement law enforcement training, when needed, to assure that a sensitive, effective and responsive approach to the needs of residents becomes self-evident.
- C. Providing a community perspective to law enforcement and City officials when concerns of the effectiveness of law enforcement services and relations are at issue.
- D. Foster and encourage public participation in crime prevention activities throughout the City.
- E. Promoting productive law enforcement and community interaction to assist the WBPD in achieving a greater understanding of the nature and causes of complex community problems in the areas of diversity and human relations.
- F. Effectively addressing the concerns of the community by promoting cooperative programs and approaches to the solutions of community crime.
- G. Advocating for the principle that the administration of justice requires total community involvement and personal responsibility.
- H. Hold public meetings from time to time for the purpose of soliciting public input on general or specific ways to improve communication and partnership between local law enforcement and the communities they serve.
- I. To serve as a liaison between the WBPD and the community, as necessary.
- J. Engaging and encouraging neighborhood and community organizations throughout the City to participate in training, discussions and promotion of programs and opportunities to foster public safety and improve communication with and regarding local law enforcement.

### Reports and Recommendations.

To approve and issue advisory reports and recommendations to the WBPB and the Mayor as follows:

- A. To provide recommendations consistent with the committee purposes in respect to the modification, adoption or reform of any internal WBPB policy, practice or procedure that the PAC determines would benefit public safety or otherwise foster improved relations between law enforcement personnel and the community they serve.
- B. To issue reports to the Mayor on any practice or specific action of law enforcement that in the assessment of the PAC are matters of genuine community concern or controversy.
- C. To provide recommendations to the Mayor on legislative or non-legislative actions to improve relations between local law enforcement and the community.
- D. To provide recommendations of the adoption of any program, intergovernmental agreement, or activity that PAC determines would serve to strengthen bonds between the WBPB and the community, to thereby make manifest the promise of equal protection and service for all citizens.
- E. To provide an annual written report on their activities to the Mayor.

Compensation.

Committee members shall not receive any compensation for serving as a member of the Committee.

Related Provisions and Restrictions.

Nothing herein is intended or shall be deemed to mandate or authorize any person, official, department, bureau or public employee to release any record or information otherwise subject to non-disclosure under state or federal law, including but not limited to Pennsylvania's Criminal History Record Information Act (CHIRA) and Pennsylvania's Right to Know Law (RTKL), or that would otherwise impact the continuation or completion of an open criminal investigation. Nothing herein is intended to alter, diminish or impede the Mayor's exercise of his exclusive authority to supervise the WBPB as provided under the City's Home Rule City Charter and otherwise by law.