

MINUTES
ST. ALBANS POLICE ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
5:00 PM TUESDAY, JUNE 27, 2023

DRAFT

Commission Members Present: Jamie Pinkham, Chair; Melinda White, Vice Chair;
Marcus Neabar

Commission Members Absent: Kris Lukens; Danielle Lindley Mitchell; Winnie Wilkinson;
John Nicholls,

City Staff present: Paul Clapps, Minute Taker, Police Chief Lamothe, Lt. Ben Couture

Members of the public present: None

1. Call to Order. J. Pinkham began the meeting at 5:04

2. Mission Review

- *Mission: To offer advice to the St. Albans Police Department for the successful implementation of 21st Century Policing strategies and to assist the Police Department in following the established “Road Map” as amended by the City Council.*

3. Consider Approval of Minutes (May 2023)

- **No Minutes for approval this month, there was a problem with the May Minutes being sent to a spam folder.**

4. Internal Affairs Process (Lt. Couture)

- J. Pinkham gave a brief introduction to the Internal Affairs Process.
- Lt. Couture started with a presentation. He went over the criteria of Internal Affairs and where the process comes from. He specified that they accept all complaints no matter what. He also clarified what might be a minor complaint vs. a major complaint.
- **M. Nearbar arrived at 5:11**
- Each investigation is concluded in four categories: **Unsubstantiated, exonerated, substantiated, and policy failure.** The differences between each was elaborated by Lt. Couture.
- Each report is submitted after it’s been completed. Investigations must be opened regardless of the employment status of an officer. Lt. Couture explains their new

system, **Benchmark**, for tracking and monitoring complaints. This also notifies them if an officer receives too many complaints.

- J. Pinkham asked if unsubstantiated complaints are added to the benchmark system. Lt. Couture confirmed this.
- M. White asked how many complaints would constitute “too many.” Lt. Couture answered with 3-4. She also asked for a definition of “unsubstantiated.” This was clarified by Lt. Couture.
- J. Pinkham asked who might make the decision on a complaint. Is it one person, multiple people, a rubric, etc?
 - Lt. Couture specified that it could be submitted any number of ways, it’s then documented electronically, and finally it’s submitted to Lt. Couture for review. Depending on the type of complaint, it gets sent to a different person or team for processing.
 - Chief Lamothe specified that there needs to be a decision first as to whether this is an **Act 56 complaint** or something minor. This is a joint decision made by Lt. Couture and Chief Lamothe.
- J. Pinkham asked if there’s anything the officers would like the community to know.
 - Lt. Couture stated on the record that they take all complaints very seriously.
- The board expressed how grateful they were at the clear dedication to reviewing all complaints.
- J. Pinkham said that the board will go over this information next month to see if there are any additional questions or concerns.

5. Update on SAPD Hiring (Chief Lamothe)

- Chief Lamothe began with a presentation on the hiring updates. He was encouraged by the amount of good applicants and trainees.

6. Roundtable: Everyone

- Chief Lamothe gave a few other updates for the PAB.
- M. White gave a reminder for National Night Out this year, and that it would be great if the board members could attend.

7. Public Comment

- No public comment

8. M. Neabar motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by M. White. No discussion. The motion was approved with all in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 5:34.