

The Police Professionalism and Accountability Coordinating Committee

August 26, 2013

A Proposal To Grow A Respected Citizen's Police Review Commission

"Power corrupts; Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely"

Within the Greensboro Police Department there has been too much power concentrated in too few hands, with too little independent oversight for far too long. This situation has impacted poor communities and communities of color in disperse ways. It should not come as a surprise that those parts of the community most negatively impacted have raised their voices the loudest.

Greensboro should not go on year after year with law-suits piling up, with embittering and embarrassing incidents as in the Bennett College episode and with hundreds of cases not brought before the current city apparatus because of the lack of trust. We believe the time is ripe for Greensboro to make bold changes in this area that will move our city forward and perhaps model for others an effective approach to quality solutions. To that end we put forward an initial set of ideas that we hope can be developed into an initial plan/proposal.

1. The BCC, citizens and groups have been meeting and carrying out work as an ad hoc *Police Professionalism and Accountability Committee*. We have been undertaking some of the functions of a citizens police review commission. We intend to refine our process and to declare ourselves as an ***interim Citizens Police Review Commission***.
 - We would continue doing the work we have been doing, i.e. receiving complaints and providing guidance that we deem proper, necessary and legal.
 - Further, we would inform and coordinate with whatever mechanism the City/Human Relations Commission has in ways we deem helpful to the persons with whom we are working.
 - The interim Citizens Police Review Board would continue to function until we democratically grow a permanent Citizens Police Review Commission.
2. We propose that a process be undertaken as soon as possible to bring together committed quality representatives from the university/college sector, the religious/faith sector, the neighborhood/community sector and the City/Police/Human Relations sectors. This sector group would work together to explore past practices in Greensboro (what worked/what did not) and best practices from around the nation and develop an initial draft of what makes sense for Greensboro.
3. After a period of work, this collective sector group could develop a creative process to grow the knowledge and ethical base necessary for a commission to function well; that might include holding several open meetings in each district to receive, share and discuss information and ideas.
4. At some point there might be a town hall meeting to bring together the five districts, building understanding, growing knowledge and forging trust.
5. Each district then might be equipped to select or elect a couple of representatives to sit on a citywide Citizen's Police Review Commission.

This is an initial draft of Ideas for Discussion only