An Important Message for the Reader:

The Civilian Police Review Committee has begun its 2010 recruitment campaign. New members will be selected and trained by July 1, 2010.

This packet of information is to introduce you to what the committee does and to allow you to make an informed decision about joining us.

Other than the training period (which runs for approximately 4 weeks, 3 nights per week, 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; police ride-alongs, and two mandatory committee meetings), your commitment to this effort would involve two days each month. The two days would encompass your assigned subcommittee meeting, occurring on one of the first two Monday afternoons of the month at 5:30 p.m.; and, the Full Committee meeting held on the fourth Monday evening of the month at 7 p.m.

Please take a few minutes and look over the information provided and let me know what you think. I’ve enclosed my business card for your reference.

Thank you for your consideration.
The City of St. Petersburg

CIVILIAN POLICE REVIEW COMMITTEE

RECRUITMENT PACKET

Established
November 21, 1991
CIVILIAN POLICE REVIEW COMMITTEE
of St. Petersburg, Florida

The Committee has the following characteristics:

► Established by City Council
► 14 members appointed by the Mayor
► Reports to the Mayor via the Community Affairs Manager
► Racially diverse, gender-based membership that approximates the population in the community
► Dual chairpersons, chosen from among members for three-year terms
► Committee reviews cases after adjudication
► Committee has no disciplinary powers
► Committee has no subpoena authority
► Committee does not hold hearings
► Subcommittees will be established for case review on a rotational basis
► Subcommittees will report to the Full Committee with comments and conclusions on cases reviewed

The specific goal, objectives, membership and general operating rules are outlines as follows:

GOAL

To provide a forum for discussing police issues that are important to the community and the Police Department and to serve as a means of informing the Mayor, City Council, Chief of Police and the citizens of St. Petersburg with its views as to the quality and fairness of the police services being delivered.

OBJECTIVES

To publicly review cases that have been investigated by the Police Department as a result of citizen complaint or have otherwise received a high level of community interest.

To provide a means of making recommendations on improving police policies in St. Petersburg.

To hold Monthly Subcommittee meetings to receive public input related to community feelings regarding the police, provide for a full committee vote on the investigations and incorporate those results into its activity reports.
To serve as a forum for discussing the policies of the Police Department as they relate directly to community service.

To provide information to the community on the services and activities of the Police Department.

To make, at a minimum, activity reports to the Mayor, City Council, the Police Chief and the Manager of Community Affairs. Other reports will be encouraged if deemed necessary and appropriate by the membership or if requested by the Mayor. The report shall include, at a minimum, information concerning the results of case reviews as well as the general feeling concerning the delivery of police service to the citizens of St. Petersburg.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. Must be a resident of St. Petersburg
2. Must be at least 18 years of age
3. Must make a three-year commitment if possible
4. Must attend a minimum of 20 hours of training
5. Must commit to spending the necessary time to review the cases and attend the meetings (Subcommittee & full committee meetings)
6. Must not have any prior felony convictions nor any violation of a city ordinance involving moral turpitude (background check completed before interview)
7. Must not hold any political office
8. Must not be a City of St. Petersburg employee
9. Must not work for any law enforcement agency
10. Must not be related to members of the St. Petersburg Police Department

Citizens who feel they meet these requirements are invited to submit a brief letter stating why they wish to become members and attach a résumé. The résumé must include the citizen’s full legal name, date of birth, race and Driver’s License number in order to conduct the background check.
The letter and résumé can be sent to the following address:

Lendel Bright, Coordinator
Civilian Police Review Committee
Post Office Box 2842
St. Petersburg, FL  33731-2842

Or

Emailed: lendel.bright@stpete.org

Contact Phone #: 727-893-7229

The deadline for submission is March 1, 2010

(Please note: Sending the above information gives the coordinator automatic permission to conduct the background check.)

Interviews will be conducted with those candidates who successfully complete the background check.

MEMBERSHIP

- shall be appointed by the Mayor

- shall make recommendations to the Mayor for membership as vacancies occur

- shall be ethnically diverse, gender-based and shall number 14 and include as a minimum, but not limited to representatives of the following organizations or categories:

  Chamber of Commerce
  Churches
  Community Alliance
  Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA)
  Federation of Inner City Organizations (FICO)
  NAACP
  School Administration
  Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)
  Pinellas County Urban League
  Sororities and Fraternities
  Ethnic Community Organizations
  Community residents, etc
GENERAL INFORMATION

Civilian Police Review Committee meetings shall be open to the public with minutes kept and available to the public.

Case review meetings, scheduled on the first and second Mondays of the month, shall be held in Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 175 Fifth Street North.

Full Committee meetings (each fourth Monday of the month), shall be aired “live” over WSPF Channel 35 and Cable Channel 615 and chaired alternately by the co-chairs.

Subcommittees shall be assigned cases for review and shall be rotated bi-annually. The subcommittee shall report their comments and conclusions on reviewed cases to the entire committee at the Full Committee meetings.

Staff support shall be provided by the Community Affairs Department.

The 14-member body is divided as follows:

- 2 serve as Co-Chairs;
- 12 serve as regular members assigned in groups of six to each of the two subcommittees; (2 Alternate members may be added if requested or needed)

TRAINING

In the capacity as a reviewer of previously decided cases, members will be familiarized with the work and the day-to-day responsibilities of a St. Petersburg police officer. To accomplish this, a minimum of four weeks of instruction in a classroom setting is presented. City employees and police personnel will familiarize the members with their areas of expertise. The training syllabus contains, at a minimum, the following topics:

- Introduction to Civilian Oversight and the Review Committee
- Police Department Discipline Philosophy and Law Enforcement Ethics
- City of St. Petersburg Rules and Regulations of the Personnel Management System
- City Charter and State Statutes
- Police Department Written Directives
Appeal, Grievance and Arbitration Procedures

Policy on Use of Force (Response to Resistance)
  Philosophy
  Non-deadly Force
  Deadly Force

Internal Affairs’ Complaint Processing
  Reception
  Classification
  Investigative Procedures
  Confidentiality
  Internal Affairs Cases and Bureau Investigation Cases
  Time Constraints
  Findings

Civilian Police Review Committee’s Review Process
  Reception of closed cases
  Review Procedures
  Recommendations

Mock Case Reviews
  (Participants will apply classroom instruction to actual case reviews; discussed at the end of the training session)

The training staff makes an extensive use of handouts, texts and other instructional materials.

There is a mandatory ride-along requirement and meeting attendance requirement. The city of St. Petersburg is divided into three patrol districts. New members must ride along with an officer in one district for a shift, at a minimum. New members must also attend one case review meeting and one full committee meeting. Classroom instruction, the ride-alongs and the required meetings must be completed prior to July 1, 2010.

CASE REVIEWS

As citizen complaint cases are completed* by the police department, they are sent to the coordinator of the committee. The coordinator reviews each file for completeness. Copies of each case are made, assigned to the appropriate subcommittee and mailed a minimum of one month prior to review. Included in the case file are the actual investigation, supporting documentation and the officer’s Internal Affairs history.
beginning with the date of the current complaint under review and going back in time eighteen months. This is the same information the Chief of Police or the investigating supervisor gets to review prior to determining what discipline an officer is to receive should the complaint be sustained against the officer.

The City of St. Petersburg operates under a progressive discipline philosophy whereby all employees are subjected to increasingly severe levels of discipline for each successive instance of the same or related misconduct.

Each subcommittee is given a minimum of two weeks to prepare for its case review. Within three days after receipt of the case file, members who are related to or who are personal friends of either the complainant or the accused officer must declare a Conflict of Interest and return the case to the coordinator for reassignment. A form will be included in each case file for this declaration. Prior to the review, members may request information referenced in a file which may not be physically located in the file.

A public case review meeting is scheduled (barring any city-observed holidays) where the allegation is discussed, the adequacy of the investigation is determined, and if discipline was meted out, a determination of its appropriateness is made. The members then vote to:

Agree with the Police Department’s finding, with or without comment;

Disagree with the Police Department’s finding with comment; or,

Forward the case to the Full Committee for a vote (in cases of a tie or absence of a quorum)

The results of the case reviews are compiled which lists the case number, complainant, accused officer(s), nature of the allegation(s), summary, the department’s findings and the Committee’s findings to include its comments, questions, and any recommendations it made is then sent to the Chief of Police.

The chief or his designee then provide replies to the questions asked and where appropriate, outline the steps to be taken to implement any recommendations. If the chief chooses not to act on a recommendation, a justification for that decision or alternative measures must be provided.

*Completed means the police department’s investigation (an Internal Affairs case or Bureau investigation case) has been complete, absent any criminal investigations, State Attorney investigations, appeal and grievance rights imposed by the officer or the arbitration process.

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The cases that have been reviewed on the previous two Mondays are then voted on by the Full Committee in order for each case to receive a total affirmation by all members. This meeting is televised and is scheduled for every fourth Monday of each, barring any city-observed holidays. The recommendations and the chief’s actions on those recommendations are presented at this time to the Full Committee and the public.