



REVISED POLICE ADVISORY BOARD WORKSHOP MEETING

(The summaries regarding Livestreaming & AI in Policing were revised)

The Police Advisory Board (PAB) Workshop Meeting was held on February 19, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the Dover Police Department in the James L. Hutchison Public Assembly Room with Chairperson Dr. Chanda Jackson presiding. Members of the PAB in attendance were Rev. Dr. Carol Boggerty, Dr. Katera Moore (departed at 7:18pm), Mr. Otis Harris, Jr., Miss LillyRose Granger & Miss Ayrué Lin. Dr. Charlisa Holloway-Edelin, Ms. Melynda Cameron and Mr. Waverly Debraux were absent.

Ex-Officio Members in attendance Chief Thomas A. Johnson, (Dover Police Department) & Deputy Chief David Spicer (Delaware State University). Sergeant Ian Thompson (Dover Police Department) was also present.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mr. Chris Asay, representing the League of Women Voters of Delaware, provided public comment and noted that several new members had recently been added to the board. He asked whether the board felt it had reached at least the minimum membership required under the bylaws or if it was still seeking additional members. Dr. Jackson responded that the board is close to having sufficient membership for the time being, which will allow it to move forward with other priorities. It was noted that the bylaws specify a membership range of nine to thirteen members. While the board is not currently at the top of that range, it is believed that the board has likely reached at least the minimum number of members required.

Mr. Asay also commented that the list of board members on the organization's website appears to be approximately eighteen months out of date. He suggested that both the board member list and the board member biographies be updated, noting that only four members are currently displayed online. The board acknowledged this issue and indicated that updates to the website are already being addressed. Dr. Chanda Jackson stated that board members will be asked to submit professional photographs and biographies so the website can be updated with accurate and complete information.

Additionally, Mr. Asay referenced a suggestion he made at the November meeting recommending that the board produce a written annual report. He explained that such a report could serve both as a report to the department and as a public-facing document that allows the public to see and better appreciate the work the board has completed over the past year or two. He noted that he had not seen this topic included on the agendas for the January or February meetings and asked whether the board planned to discuss it. In response, Dr. Jackson stated that addressing membership had taken precedence in recent meetings. However, once new members are fully on boarded and settled, the board indicated that it would be appropriate to have a discussion about developing an annual report in the future.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Dr. Carol Boggerty moved to accept the Agenda, seconded by Dr. Katera Moore and unanimously carried.

CITIZEN COMPLAINTS - None Reported

MEMBERSHIP – MS. DOMINIQUE DIXON

Dr. Katera Moore asked for clarification regarding the application and vetting process for board membership, specifically whether applications remain open to the public and what steps occur before candidates are presented to the board for consideration. It was explained that applications are generally accepted on an ongoing basis when vacancies exist. Once an application is received, a vetting process takes place before the board makes a recommendation. After the board approves or recommends a candidate to move forward, the application is forwarded to the Mayor's Office, where the mayor makes the final determination regarding appointment.

Chief Johnson further explained that the vetting process is relatively straightforward because the role is a volunteer advisory position and not an employee position within the police department. Applicants provide demographic information and authorize a cursory criminal history check. While having a criminal history is not automatically disqualifying, individuals with violent criminal histories, sex offense-related histories, or active warrants are screened out. This is done to ensure the safety and integrity of the board, particularly considering the presence of younger board members. The Chief also noted that the board seeks to maintain a diversity of perspectives among its members. After the preliminary review, the mayor—who is ultimately responsible for matters related to the police department under the city charter—ratifies the board’s selection, provided there are no issues in the applicant’s background that would prevent them from serving. When asked whether any applicants had previously been denied, it was confirmed that there have been instances where applicants were not approved.

Mr. Otis Harris asked Chief Johnson for clarification regarding the applicant, Dominique, noting that she had mentioned previously completing the required training. Mr. Harris asked whether she had been a prior candidate or whether her training was completed through participation in the Citizens Police Academy or another similar program.

In response, it was clarified that the reference was to training requirements rather than the vetting process for appointment. The applicant explained that she had completed the required workshop hours approximately one to two years earlier. Chief Johnson confirmed that she had attended and participated in the advisory board training seminars he previously developed for the state. He noted that she attended the classes before expressing interest in becoming a board member, which is somewhat unusual, as the training is typically completed after individuals are appointed to the board.

Chief Johnson further explained that the applicant participated in a combination of training sessions over the previous two years, attending classes that covered the responsibilities and functions of advisory boards. He remarked that it is uncommon for a non-member to complete the training prior to seeking appointment and noted that this situation may be unique among recent applicants.

Dr. Carol Boggerty moved to accept the application of Ms. Dominique Dixon for membership on the Police Advisory Board pending recommendation by Mayor Robin Christiansen, seconded by Miss LillyRose Granger and unanimously carried.

MEETING LIVESTREAM DISCUSSION

The Board held a workshop discussion regarding the feasibility of livestreaming future meetings to enhance public accessibility and transparency. It was noted that livestreaming is not mandated, but the topic was introduced for consideration because other advisory boards currently offer virtual access. Members emphasized the importance of proactively exploring options and ensuring the public understands that the Board has thoughtfully considered the matter.

Chief Johnson provided preliminary information obtained through consultation with the City’s Information Technology Department. He advised that livestreaming would require equipment purchases, software subscriptions, and upgrades to the room’s current audio system. Estimated first-year costs range from approximately \$1,640 to \$2,140 for one-way viewing capability, with costs potentially reaching \$3,000 or more for a more interactive setup. Additional staffing support would also likely be necessary to operate and troubleshoot the technology during meetings.

The Board was informed that the current meeting space presents technological limitations, including unreliable internet connectivity, inadequate speaker capacity, and limited seating accommodations. Questions were also raised regarding camera placement, streaming platforms, and whether interactive public participation through chat or remote comments would be possible. Zoom Business licensing was identified as one possible platform option.

Board members discussed the importance of evaluating community demand before pursuing funding, noting that some public meetings experience minimal virtual attendance. Comparisons were made to New Castle County Police Advisory Board meetings, where livestreaming is available and attendance varies. It was further noted that New Castle County serves a significantly larger geographic area and population, making direct comparisons difficult.

Following discussion, the Board agreed the matter should remain under consideration for future planning. Potential options mentioned included seeking funding through future budget requests or other fundraising opportunities. No formal action was taken at this time.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN POLICING DISCUSSION

The Board held a discussion regarding the use of artificial intelligence technology in law enforcement, prompted by prior public comments expressing concerns about privacy, data security, profiling, and the use of specific surveillance platforms. Members noted that the concerns raised were not directed at artificial intelligence as a whole, but rather at how certain technologies collect, secure, and utilize data, particularly with regard to vulnerable populations.

Chief Johnson explained that artificial intelligence is currently being used primarily as an investigative aid and enhancement to existing law enforcement tools rather than as a replacement for traditional policing practices. Using license plate reader technology as an example, he described how newer systems can identify additional vehicle characteristics beyond license plates, such as physical damage or distinguishing features, to assist in locating vehicles connected to criminal investigations or public safety alerts. He emphasized that any searches or queries must be tied to a legitimate law enforcement purpose.

The Chief also discussed the potential future implementation of “ZeroEyes,” a firearm detection technology currently in use at Delaware State University. He advised that the system is designed to identify visible firearms through existing camera systems and send alerts for human review before law enforcement is notified. Board members were informed that the technology is narrowly focused on weapon detection and is not intended to analyze behavior or profile individuals. It was further noted that officers would still be required to independently assess the circumstances and determine whether any enforcement action is necessary.

Questions were raised regarding how firearm alerts would be handled in an open-carry state. Law enforcement representatives explained that any response would involve investigative measures to determine whether the individual is legally permitted to carry a weapon and whether criminal activity is occurring. If no violation exists, contact would be limited and the individual would be free to proceed.

The Board also discussed data security concerns involving the Flock system. Chief Johnson stated that law enforcement agencies require legitimate reasons to access protected databases and that misuse of information can result in disciplinary action. He acknowledged that recent vendor vulnerabilities had raised concerns and advised that corrective measures are being monitored closely. He further stated that agencies would reevaluate continued use of the technology if security issues persist.

Chief Johnson cited a previous investigation in which Flock technology assisted Dover Police detectives in identifying and apprehending a serial shooter, demonstrating the value of the system when used appropriately. He reiterated that technology serves only as a starting point for investigations and that officers must still establish independent probable cause through traditional investigative methods.

Board members encouraged continued transparency regarding the Department's use of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies. Law enforcement representatives agreed and advised that policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with best practices, legal standards, and evolving technology. No formal action was taken.

YOUTH

Miss LillyRose Granger and Miss Ayrué Lin presented a report regarding substance use and disciplinary practices at Dover High School. The students explained that they were tasked with gathering information on substance use trends and reviewing how discipline is handled within the school. They reported that available data indicates a decrease in substance-related incidents, although areas for continued improvement remain.

According to information provided by School Resource Officer Corporal Stevenson, the primary substance-related issue at the school involves THC vape devices, with occasional incidents involving THC edibles. Corporal Stevenson stated that there is not a significant drug problem at the school and emphasized that physical altercations remain the more prevalent concern. Data shared in the report indicated that fights have decreased from 179 incidents during the 2023–2024 school year to 89 incidents during the 2024–2025 school year, with 18 incidents reported thus far in the current school year.

The students explained that Corporal Stevenson generally exercises officer discretion and attempts to avoid criminal charges for first-time offenses. School disciplinary decisions are handled by the Associate Principal for Discipline, Mr. Cohen, in accordance with the school's Student Success Guide. Under the current policy, a first offense involving a THC vape results in a one-day out-of-school suspension, a second offense results in a three-day suspension, and a third offense may lead to a five-day suspension with possible alternative placement outside Dover High School. Tobacco violations follow a similar progressive discipline model but begin with in-school consequences before escalating to more serious disciplinary action. Corporal Stevenson noted that criminal charges may occur if there is evidence of distribution, such as selling vape cartridges, but stated that he has only pursued criminal charges in limited circumstances.

The students also reported that the school has implemented several measures to improve safety and reduce incidents. These include the addition of three hall monitors, four constables, two behavior specialists, and additional lunch staff. According to Corporal Stevenson, the increased staff presence throughout the building has contributed to the reduction in fights. Vape detectors were also considered but were determined to be ineffective due to frequent false alerts.

The Youth Committee members shared several potential strategies to further address vaping and substance use among students. These included asking supportive questions when a vape is confiscated, even on a first offense, to better understand why students are using vaping products and whether they need support or resources. They also suggested implementing student check-ins after incidents, expanding peer support opportunities, increasing parental or guardian engagement through informational sessions, and replacing first-offense out-of-school suspensions with educational interventions focused on the effects of vaping. Additionally, they recommended expanding community-based activities to provide students with more positive engagement opportunities outside of school.

Board members thanked the Youth Committee for their report and commended their efforts. A board member asked whether the students needed additional support from the committee as they continue gathering information.

Chief Johnson provided additional context regarding school resource officer training and noted that officers complete both a 40-hour basic course and a 40-hour advanced course related to school-based policing. He emphasized that arrest or formal criminal charges are considered a last resort and that officer's work closely with school administration to address behavioral issues through school policies whenever possible. Chief Johnson noted that the goal is to maintain a safe educational environment while minimizing unnecessary involvement of students in the criminal justice system.

COMMUNITY MEETING UPDATES

Miss Lin informed the board that Dover High School students had organized a scheduled walkout in connection with protests occurring at multiple high schools regarding immigration enforcement (ICE). The student stated that the walkout was approved by Dr. Solomon and was scheduled for March 3. It was also noted that the walkout was planned so that it would not disrupt class time.

The student further indicated that the event had not yet occurred at the time of the meeting, so there were no outcomes or results to report. In response to a question from a board member regarding whether the student representatives would be speaking during the protest, the student stated that they may potentially participate as speakers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Deputy Chief David Spicer (DSU Police) reported that Delaware State University is preparing for commencement, which is scheduled for May 15, with staff, faculty, and students looking forward to the event. He also noted that DSU will host the DIAA High School Basketball Championships on March 1, an event expected to draw strong attendance and excitement. Deputy Chief Spicer added that Dover High School is currently ranked number one in the state and may participate in the championship.

Chief Johnson reported that he and the department's Accreditation Manager, Mr. Robert Scott, will be attending the CALEA Conference in Tucson to appear before the East Coast Regional Board regarding the Dover Police Department's four-year accreditation review. Chief Johnson explained that the department must demonstrate continued adherence to established best practices in order to maintain accreditation. He noted that the department has already received positive preliminary feedback from the assessor and expressed hope that the accreditation renewal will be finalized before the board's next regular meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:31 pm