

Statement From State's Attorney Tony Covington Regarding Civilian Review Board

Posted by [TBN\(Staff\)](#) On 06/29/2020

LA PLATA, Md. - On June 3, 2020, I issued a statement that, among other things, advocated for the creation of a Civilian Review Board (CRB) to review citizen claims of excessive force by police in Charles County. On June 12th and 26th, Charles County Sheriff Troy Berry, issued releases that, among other things, advocated for the re-constitution of the Board of Public Safety (BPS) to provide "review and oversight of the entire criminal justice system in Charles County." I have been repeatedly asked if the Sheriff is proposing the BPS as a substitute for a CRB. I do not know the answer to that question. I can say, however, that I would not support any use of the BPS as a substitute for a properly organized CRB.

I have many reasons why I would not support the BPS as an oversight body for excessive force complaints that I will not address in this release. To hear my reasons, please listen to our "Civilian Review Board" podcast which can be found on the State's Attorney's Office (SAO) website, www.CCSAO.us.

So everyone is clear on the type of CRB that I will support, below I have outlined the structure/make-up of what I believe would be an effective CRB. This list is not exhaustive nor is it touted as the only way an effective CRB can be organized. For more details about the makeup of a CRB, again please listen to our "Civilian Review Board" podcast.

Civilian Review Board (CRB)

- The CRB will review all use of force resulting in death or serious bodily injury, all instances of use of deadly force and any citizen complaint of excessive use of force.
- The CRB will be independent from and operate independently from all police agencies.
- The CRB will be comprised of 9 volunteer members who must be residents of the County. None of the CRB members will be elected officials, police officers of any jurisdiction, or a person with a vested interest in the County or a police agency.
- The CRB members will be selected by a combination of the County Board of Commissioners, Charles County legislative delegation, County police agencies, Ministers Coalition, and willing community groups like the Women of Action Charles County, NAACP, Lifestyles etc.
- In addition to the 9-member board, there will be a non-voting police advisor and a non-voting legal advisor attached to the CRB.
- Initially, CRB will have a full-time investigator and a full-time administrator. Staff may increase depending on the volume of cases.
- The CRB will have the same subpoena authority that all State's Attorneys in Maryland have under Maryland's Criminal Procedure Article, Section 15-108.
- After review, the CRB will issue a report of its findings to the public.
- If appropriate, the CRB will make public recommendations to the involved police agency and the State's Attorney.
- The CRB report and recommendations shall be maintained and available to the public.

Tony Covington
State's Attorney, Charles County, MD

Copyright © 2020 thebaynet.com. All rights reserved.