

CITY OF COLUMBIA

CITIZENS POLICE REVIEW BOARD 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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2024 CITIZENS POLICE REVIEW BOARD MEMBERS

(as of December 31, 2024)

Denise Balazic

(appointed October 2023 with term ending November 1, 2026)

Maurey Bland, Jr.

(appointed Dec 16, 2024, with term ending November 1, 2027)

Harry Castilow

(appointed March, 2024 with term ending November 1, 2025)

Stephanie Coleman

(appointed October 2022 with current term November 1, 2026)

Douglas Hunt

(appointed March 2023 with term ending November 1, 2024;
elected Chair February 14, 2024;
Reappointed December 16, 2024, with term ending November 1, 2027)

Steven Jeffrey

(appointed February 2022 with current term ending November 1, 2026;
elected Vice Chair February 14, 2024)

Xavier Scruggs

(appointed October 2022 with term ending November 1, 2025)

Edward Robinson

(appointed Dec 16, 2024, with term ending November 1, 2027)

Steph Yoakum

(appointed by the Human Rights Commission on April 2, 2024 for the remainder of a term which ended November 1, 2024; reappointed December, 2024)

Members who resigned, or who had their service end during the year 2024:

Brandon Barnes

(appointed October 2022 with term ending November 1, 2025; member of outreach subcommittee; resigned January 10, 2024)

Reece Ellis

(appointed October 2022 with term ending November 1, 2024; elected chair June 14, 2023 and served as Chair through December 13, 2023)

Jamie Thornsberry

(appointed March 2023 with term ending November 1, 2024)

HISTORY OF THE FORMATION OF THE CITIZENS POLICE REVIEW BOARD

In 2007, a coalition of citizens and groups proposed the idea of creating a civilian review board to the City Council. The City Council appointed a fourteen member committee to study whether or not a review board was needed and to consider how such a board would be structured. The committee reviewed all complaints that existed before the professional standards unit was established. In addition, they studied and considered different models used by different cities, and hosted public events to gather input from the citizens. After extensive study and public input, the committee unanimously agreed to recommend that the City of Columbia establish a citizens police review board.

In July of 2009, the City Council of the City of Columbia, by adopting Ordinance No. 020331, created a nine member Citizens Police Review Board. The ordinance outlined the duties of the Citizens Police Review Board as follows:

The Citizens Police Review Board shall have the following duties:

- (1) Review appeals from the police chief's decisions on alleged police misconduct as provided for in this article.
- (2) Host public meetings and educational programs for Columbia residents and police officers.
- (3) Review and make recommendations to the police chief and city manager on police policies, procedures and training.
- (4) Prepare and submit to the City Council annual reports that analyze citizen and police complaints including demographic data on complainants, complaint disposition, investigative findings and disciplinary actions. The reports should also describe the Board's community outreach and educational programs. The reports should also set forth any recommendations made on police policies, procedures and training. The reports shall be submitted no later than March 1 for the previous calendar year.

The City Council initially appointed the first eight members of the Citizens Police Review Board in November of 2009. Also in November of 2009, the Human Rights Commission appointed its first member to the Board. The Board met for the first time on November 18, 2009.

In 2014, the City Council, at the request of the Citizens Police Review Board, amended Section 21-49, to add additional duties. Pursuant to these amendments to the ordinance, the Board was also to conduct a jurisdictional review from the decision by the police chief that a person's allegations do not fall within the requirements set forth in the article related

to complaints. The Board was also to conduct audits or reviews of the records of the police department for compliance with the requirements of the ordinances.

In 2021, Governor Parson signed into law Senate Bill 26, which contains a police officer bill of rights in Section 590.502 RSMo. Section 590.502 RSMo has necessitated changes to Chapters 19 and 21 of the City's Code. In order to comply with the new state law, the City Council amended the code to reduce the time periods for filing appeals, removed community service aides from the jurisdiction of the Board, and provided for the confidentiality of records related to complaints and for the closure of meetings to hear appeals which are subject to Section 590.502 RSMo.

On August 15, 2022, the City Council voted to temporarily suspend the regular monthly meetings of the Board so that the Board had an opportunity to focus on its primary purpose - the review of appeals. The Board resumed regular monthly meetings on March 8, 2023.

In 2024, Governor Parsons signed into law a bill which further restricted the authority of civilian oversight entities. Section 590.653 RSMO now states that a civilian review board "shall have the power solely limited to receiving, investigating, making findings and recommending disciplinary action upon complaints by members of the public against members of the police department that allege misconduct involving excessive use of force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, or the use of offensive language..." The new law also stated that "[o]nly the powers specifically granted herein are authorized and any and all authority granted to future or existing boards, divisions or entities outside the scope of the powers listed herein are expressly preempted and void as a matter of law." As a result of this new state law, the City Council passed Ordinance Number 025750 to revise Chapter 21, Article III to align the Board's authority with the restrictions in Section 590.653 RSMo.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual report includes information on the Citizens Police Review Board's work from January 2024 through the end of December 2024.

The Citizens Police Review Board's accomplishments include:

- (1) The Board reviewed appeals from the police chief's determinations on alleged police misconduct. During this reporting period, citizens requested that the Board review the police chief's determinations fifteen different times. Additionally, the Board completed its review of a 2023 appeal which was filed on December 28, 2023.
- (2) Before the state law changed in August of 2024, the Board conducted audits of 17 2023 complaints and provided recommendations to the police department and city manager.

- (3) The Board is submitting to the City Council the following annual report outlining the Board's actions from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.
- (4) The Board also provided recommendations on police training and policies.

SUMMARY OF APPEALS

During this 2024 reporting period, citizens requested civilian review on fifteen (15) occasions. The Board also concluded an appeal that was filed on December 28, 2023. The Board conducted a thorough and fair review of the records related to the appeals. The Board's actions on these matters are summarized below.

- ▶ Two matters were for jurisdictional review only. On both, the Board concurred with the police chief's determination.
- ▶ One matter was withdrawn by the complainant and therefore, administratively closed by the Board.
- ▶ On two appeals, the Board disagreed with the police chief and provided additional recommendations.
- ▶ On three appeals, the Board agreed with the police chief's preliminary determination and did not provide additional recommendations.
- ▶ On three appeals, the Board agreed with the police chief and provided additional recommendations.
- ▶ On one appeal, the Board determined that there was no jurisdiction on all of the allegations except one allegation. On that one allegation, the Board agreed with the police chief's preliminary determination.
- ▶ On four appeals, the Board concluded that it did not have jurisdiction. On one of these four appeals, the Board provided recommendations to the police chief.

AUDITS

Before state law changed, the Board's duties as set forth in City Code Section 21-49 included conducting audits or reviews of the records of the police department for compliance with Chapter 21 article III requirements. The Board decided to audit 2023 complaints about search and seizure, discourtesy, and use of force. The Board conducted 17 audits. The Board also provided recommendations to the police chief related to its audits of the 2023 complaints.

ANALYSIS OF CITIZEN COMPLAINTS DATA

At the time this report was prepared, the Board had not received data from the City of Columbia Police Department regarding 2024 complaints. When the Police Department provides the data needed, the Board will provide a supplemental report to the City Council.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS

On March 18, 2024, the Board recommended changes to Section 21-52(h) and these changes were adopted by the City Council on May 20, 2024. (See REP 26-24).

On July 16, 2024, the Board provided its recommendations related to the impact of new state law. (See *REP 51-24*).

On August 15, 2024, the Board provided a supplemental report with its additional recommendations related to the impact of the new state law. (See *B 192-24*).

ADDITIONAL BOARD AND MEMBER ACTIVITIES

During this review period, the Citizens Police Review Board completed the following additional activities.

January 10, 2024	The Board met with Police Chief Schlude. The Board also voted to dissolve the Outreach Subcommittee.
February 6, 2024	Stephanie Coleman gave presentations to two Forensics classes at Battle High School.
March 9, 2024	Reece Ellis participated in the Human Rights Commission's Community Event.
April 10, 2024	The Board changed its bylaws to clarify the role of staff liaisons.
April 24, 2024	The Board hosted a public work session on police policy 447.
May 8, 2024	The Board adopted a new brochure and business card designed by city staff. At their request, the Board's landing page was also redesigned to make it easier for citizens to find information and forms.
April 26, 2024	Harry Castilow went on a ride along from 8:00 p.m. to midnight.
June 1, 2024	Steph Yoakum went on a ride along from 8:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.
June 6, 2024	Xavier Lee Scruggs went on a ride along from noon to 4:00 p.m.
July 25, 2024	Stephanie Coleman went on a ride along from 8 p.m. to midnight.
September 12, 2024	Stephanie Coleman gave presentations to three forensics classes.

October, 2024

Denise Balazic and Stephanie Coleman attended the 2024 Annual National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement Conference in Tucson, Arizona.

CONCLUSION

This report outlines the work of the Citizens Police Review Board in 2024. The Board performs its duties in accordance with the City of Columbia Code of Ordinances and state law. The Board looks forward to continuing to provide the City of Columbia and all constituencies with an independent, fair, impartial body for the review of complaints of actual or perceived misconduct by members of Columbia Police Department to ensure that all persons, citizens and officers, are treated with equality, respect and dignity leading ultimately to a safer, more inclusive community.