

Leadership for the Immediate Future: A Strategy for Transformative Policing

An Evaluation of the Columbus, Mississippi Police Department 2017



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Turners Enterprises, Inc.

August 1, 2017

The Honorable Robert Smith
Mayor of Columbus
523 Main Street
Columbus, MS 39701

Dear Mayor Smith:

On behalf of Turners Enterprises, Inc., I am pleased to present the results of the Columbus Police Department (CPD) evaluation. The Consultant reprioritized the progression of the evaluation as a result of the alarming low staffing level at the CPD, which had become a crisis. The Department continued to lose officers and the need for an immediate strategy to rebuild was necessary to recruit new officers and retain current officers to insure community safety.

Early in the evaluation, the Consultant determined there was a need for reform in several areas of the Department. Some of the reforms noted include a need to restructure the Department, update the Standard Operating Procedures, modify the rank structure, reassign personnel, increase training, and create opportunities for positive police-community relations.

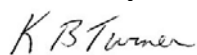
Included in the *Leadership for the Immediate Future: A Strategy for Transformative Policing* report, is the strong recommendation for the CPD to fully adopt and implement community policing, without exception. A police department

is effective only if it embraces the community it serves and the community feels a part of the department. Adoption and implementation of community policing is critical for overall success.

The primary and immediate task charged to the Consultant was to facilitate increasing the staffing level for the CPD. This has been accomplished. The Department has hired 30 new officers during the six-month evaluation period. Among the 30 are seven lateral hires. The remaining 23 are recruits who will have completed the state required basic academy training by the end of 2017. The next step is to transition the new recruits into the next phase; the field training component. There will be significant pressure on the new recruits to perform well and quickly. Moreover, similar pressures will face the veteran Field Training Officers (FTO) to get these new recruits prepared for solo duty. The Consultant is confident the veterans and new recruits will meet those challenges.

The Consultant strongly believes that if the City leadership, community, officers, and new police leadership support and implement the recommendations included in the evaluation, the Columbus Police Department will become more effective, efficient and responsive to the community.

Sincerely,



KB Turner, Ph.D.
President

The Consultant - Dr. KB Turner



Biography

Dr. KB Turner is a native of Columbus, MS and graduate of Lee High School. He is the President of Turners Enterprises, Inc., and currently an Associate Professor and Chairman of the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice Department at The University of Memphis. Under his leadership he has approximately 630 students on the Memphis and Jackson, Tennessee campuses and approximately 30 full-time and part-time faculty and staff members.

Dr. Turner received his undergraduate degree from Jackson State University in Criminal Justice with a Concentration in Police Science and his master's degree in Criminal Justice with a concentration in Public Administration from the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He earned his Ph.D. in Political Science with emphasis in Public Administration, Public Policy, and Legal Institutions from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He is a graduate of the Maxine Smith Fellows program, a year-long class under the auspices of the Tennessee Board of Regents designed to prepare administrators in higher education. Additionally, he graduated

from Leadership Memphis class on Criminal Justice and Juvenile Justice, a 12-month program. He has held professorships in Nebraska, Alabama, and Tennessee.

Dr. Turner, who began his law enforcement career with the Omaha Police Department in Omaha, Nebraska, has over 30 years of practical experience as an officer, trainer, consultant, and advisor. After serving only two years as a patrol officer he was designated lead officer of a 10-officer crew. Also, he has worked part time as a trainer or consultant for other law enforcement agencies including Boys Town (Nebraska) Police Department, Douglas County Sheriff's (Nebraska) Department, Montgomery County Sheriff's (Alabama), Desoto County Sheriff's Department (Mississippi), Tunica County Sheriff's Department (Mississippi), and Bolivar County Sheriff's Department (Mississippi).

During his law enforcement career, he has worked in patrol, investigations, traffic, training and firearms unit, accident investigations, background investigations, research and planning, vice and narcotics as a patrolman, motors, and dignitary protection/bodyguard for the mayor of Omaha. He holds instructor certificates in numerous areas in law enforcement and corrections including theory, officer safety, self-defense, and use of force.

Over the last decade, Dr. Turner has been a member of a consulting team responsible for organizing community support for an initiative related to addressing mental illness. He has aided in the training of hundreds of law enforcement and corrections officers representing approximately 25 states and foreign countries to better respond to individuals with mental illness.

Dr. Turner's scholarly activity includes presentations and published articles that examine issues related to policing, criminal justice administration, race and gender, and judicial decision making. His community involvement positioned him to serve on various boards and committees including the Omaha, Nebraska Charter Review Commission as well as the Police Civilian Review Board in Lincoln, Nebraska and the Memphis Shelby County Crime Commission. He was appointed by the chief of police in Omaha to serve on the transition team for the then newly elected Mayor, PJ Morgan. He also played a pivotal role on the transition team for Bolivar County, Mississippi Sheriff Kelvin Williams.

Most recently, Dr. Turner was a member of the public safety transition team for Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland. He continues to serve his community as a Battalion commander with the Mississippi State Guard, holding the rank of Major. Dr. Turner has a current full-time sworn officer Mississippi law enforcement certification and Mississippi law enforcement and jail instructor certification.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 17, 2017, the Columbus City Council voted unanimously, 6-0, to support Mayor Robert Smith's request to retain the services of a consultant to evaluate the Columbus Police Department and to devise a strategy to recruit, hire, and retain police officers. Upon the unanimous vote by the City Council, it was determined that the City would implement the recommendations of the Consultant. The Consultant hired was Dr. KB Turner, President of Turners Enterprises, Inc.

The decision of the January 17, 2017 City Council meeting came on the heels of an interview the previous week provided by Oscar Lewis, the current Columbus Chief of Police. The Chief held a press conference to entertain questions regarding rising crime in the City. According to the *Commercial Dispatch* newspaper, Chief Lewis acknowledged that the crime rate was "tough" and that he "believes one factor driving the trend is people turning away from God." The Chief continued his remarks by adding, "Prophecy is being fulfilled." Lewis further commented, "The end times are here, and things are going to get pretty bad. We're doing everything that we can to try to combat these things. There are things we can control and things we can't control." Furthermore, Chief Lewis added, "'I just think there are some things that have gone by the wayside as far as people and their faith in God and everything," He concluded, "That's a big part of the problem we're seeing today."

The response from some citizens, officers, and elected officials to the above referenced press conference was one of consternation. They were not opposed to his specific remarks; however, they were disappointed the Chief did not provide a concrete plan of action to address the crime issue.

On January 12, 2017 the CPD, under the command of Chief Lewis, had an actual strength level of 46 officers. The Department's authorized strength level was 67. The City Council voted December 19, 2016 to add an additional 10 officers, thereby, raising the overall authorized strength level to 77 officers.

Mathematically, the Department was short 21 officers prior to the vote of the City Council to increase to 77 officers. During a subsequent July 18, 2017 City Council meeting, Councilmen agreed to change the authorized strength level to 70 officers. The Consultant has successfully met the expectations of the Mayor and City Council to increase the CPD to an authorized strength of 70 officers. In the near future, it is hoped that the decision regarding this level of staffing is revisited to increase to a minimum of 80 officers.

Reflecting on the early mass exodus of CPD officers, community and police officers were perplexed by the Chief's inaction or slow response in rebuilding the Department. The Chief should have determined the reason(s) for the exodus in order to address the problems. Basically, in light of the significant shortage of officers and the continuing exodus, one would expect the Chief to act expeditiously

to recruit and hire new officers and develop plans to retain veteran officers.

Unfortunately, there is no evidence to support this happened. If there was a plan, it was not revealed to the Mayor, City Council, Consultant or others.

It was very disheartening to the Consultant to learn that the brave men and women of the CPD were on some days covering the entire city with only four officers on patrol. This low staffing crisis is unacceptable and can be traced back to the early actions or lack of action by the current Chief.

Employee turnover occurs in most, if not all organizations. A police department is not immune from employee turnover. The experience in officer turnover at the Columbus Police Department however, is highly atypical. The precipitous drop to 46 officers from 67 represented a serious dilemma for this community. The lax or apathetic response to this crisis placed the citizens of Columbus and CPD officers in a wholly vulnerable and unacceptable dangerous position. The Columbus Police Department was in the midst of a sworn personnel crisis. The research conducted for this evaluation indicates a change in leadership at the helm is needed. Unfortunately, Chief Oscar Lewis has unwittingly placed this community in a precarious situation as a result of his inability or failure to maintain an acceptable staffing level for public safety.

Initially, as part of the evaluation of the CPD, the Consultant had planned to examine the Department's relationship with other criminal justice components and

agencies as well as social service agencies. However, due to the continuing depletion in the ranks which negatively affected public safety, there had to be a reprioritization of the evaluation. Public and officer safety demanded that immediate and aggressive action be taken. Therefore, the Consultant quickly redirected efforts toward aggressively recruiting new officers while simultaneously considering various options to address the retention of current officers.

ABOUT THE CITY

Known as the Friendly City, Columbus, Mississippi is part of an area referred to as the Golden Triangle, which includes two other cities: West Point and Starkville. Columbus, the largest of the three, serves as the county seat for Lowndes County. Geographically, Columbus borders the Alabama state line and is approximately 60 miles west of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The City has experienced a decline in its overall population as the Census reports there were 25,944 in 2000¹, 23,640 in 2010² and the estimated population in 2012 was 23,452³. Demographically, African Americans make up approximately, 60 percent, Whites 37.4 percent, and Hispanics 1.4 percent⁴. The city is also home to the Mississippi University for Women and the Columbus Air Force Base. Several businesses are also located in Columbus.

OVERVIEW OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The CPD has an outdated website that focuses on, the mission statement, commitment, and organization. The section below includes the information as it appears *exactly* on the Department's website:

Mission Statement

The mission of the Columbus Police Department is to safeguard the lives and property of the people we serve in the City of Columbus by working cooperatively with the public and within the framework of the U.S. Constitution to enforce the laws, preserve the peace, reduce fear and provide for a safe environment that provides a safe place in which to live or visit. We will accomplish this mission by dedication to our core values service, responsiveness, integrity and professionalism. We are committed as servant leaders to meet the needs of the citizens and our fellow employees. We understand that the law enforcement badge stands for public trust and we will work with the citizenry to accomplish the purpose of protecting life and property. Our mandate is to do so with honor and integrity, while at all times conducting ourselves with the highest ethical standards to maintain public confidence by upholding the laws of our city, state, and nation.

Commitment

As members of the Columbus Police Department we accept responsibility

for contributing to the quality of life in our community. We believe the character of our Department is best reflected in the quality of service provided by each of our members. We will meet the challenge to provide quality through our mission statement. All that we do will reflect a "commitment" which ensures we merit the support and trust of our community. The City of Columbus is committed to addressing issues and problems in the community.

Organization

The Columbus Department is headed by a chief. The command staff consists of an assistant chief and two captains. There are divisions: patrol and criminal investigations (CID). The Department website from 2016 reports that 40 officers are assigned to the patrol division and 9 to CID. As is the case with a majority of police departments, patrol officers make up the bulk of officers and respond to calls for service from citizens and businesses. Through patrol, they provide community presence, a very important policing strategy. A lieutenant was recently promoted to captain to command the patrol division. The CID is also headed by a captain. The investigators work cases from the ground level to its completion in Circuit or Federal Court. The Department operates a crime lab staffed by a director and forensic scientist. The crime lab provides several services including: major crime scene response; latent print processing; fingerprint analysis; drug

analysis; AFIX Database search; cellular device analysis; forensic video analysis; and evidence maintenance.

The Department's website does not reference a statement indicating the CPD has joined the drug task force with the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department. During the time of the evaluation, there were three officers assigned. It has been reported that the task force has produced some early positive results.

The Department has experienced significant turnover at the chief's rank in the last 10 years. There have been six chiefs or acting chiefs during this period, obviously causing instability and conflicting leadership styles. Between 2016 and 2017, turnover among officers has also been dismal at best. The current chief, Oscar Lewis took the helm of the Department in February 2016 with a cadre of approximately 67 officers. By the following year, the *Commercial Dispatch* newspaper reported the staffing level at CPD had dropped to 46 sworn officers.⁵ This represented the lowest number of officers during the tenure of Chief Lewis.

UNIFORM PATROL FUNCTION

Due to the uniqueness of patrol in policing, additional comments are worthy.

Recruits learn early during their basic academy training that patrol is the most significant function of policing. Researchers Walker and Katz (2013) point out that patrol is referred to as the "backbone" of policing for several reasons, including the fact that most officers start their careers in patrol. Furthermore, it is

the most visible and accessible representative of government; patrol officers are available at every hour of the day, every day of the week, including holidays; respond to a multiplicity of incidents as well as those unrelated to violations of the law. Due to the actions of patrol officers who are considered first responders, they are required to make prompt decisions, that affects property and unfortunately, maybe the loss of life, including their own. Also importantly, patrol officers by virtual of their omnipotence, play a major role in shaping the public's perception of the police department, positive or negative. Because of the significance of patrol, it is important that this function and those assigned to it are well trained and equipped with the necessary resources to be successful in performing their duties.

One of the most important resources for patrol officers are additional patrol officers. Officers are trained to be ever cognizant of the potential for danger. Their strategy during interactions with citizens and how they approach all calls are based on their relentless concern about officer safety. Having other officers to serve as a timely backup on calls is critical in mitigating some concerns of officer safety.

During the evaluation period, there have been days when only four officers were on patrol, for the entire City. This is extremely dangerous for officers and citizens as it is virtually impossible to provide adequate protection with this level of patrol staffing. This risky practice is unsustainable and should change immediately.

RANDOM INTERACTION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

During the period of the evaluation, the Consultant:

- Met with officers of the Columbus Police Department in a mandatory general assembly meeting for introductions.
- Hosted separate Public Safety Forums in each of the six city council wards for an introduction and to engage citizens.
- Completed more than 60 interviews and meetings with members of CPD command staff, department personnel, city officials, elected officials, City department heads, City employees, community members and other stakeholders.
- Facilitated two effective Career Day recruiting events at the CPD resulting in approximately 70 applications submitted for consideration.
- Aided and closely monitored the application and hiring process that led to the hiring of 30 new police officers.
- Appeared before the City Council to provide a verbal progress report on the evaluation.
- Met with the Chief and Assistant Chief to share limited information regarding some of the initial preliminary findings from the evaluation.
- Reviewed organizational chart, rank structure, officer assignments, and training needs.

- Met and communicated on a regular basis with all police recruits to monitor their progress through their state required basic academy training.
- Facilitated the hiring of civilian volunteers to work at the CPD in a non-law enforcement capacity.
- Visited with newly hired civilian volunteers to welcome and express gratitude for their service to the Department and help to develop their orientation and training program.
- Discussed with the IT representative various technological advances that the Department should consider obtaining.
- Consulted with the Human Resources Director regarding the creation of a seamless real-time application process.
- Met with the Police Advisory Board to provide an update and to listen to their concerns.
- Attended a meeting to visit with members of neighborhood watch groups.
- Assisted in developing a training program for Field Training Officers (FTO) to insure quality control during the training of new recruits.
- Responded to every media request for an interview or information relative to the evaluation.

MAJOR OBSERVATIONS

- The perception of a lack of support from city officials following the recent police shooting has caused low morale among officers.
- The uniform enforcement and adherence to policies and procedures as it relates to clarity of assignments, promotions, training and shift rotation has been lacking. This has caused dissatisfaction among officers and ultimately eroded the team/group efforts to operate as a cohesive unit.
- There is an obvious lack of a comprehensive strategic recruitment and retention plan to address growth or attrition.
- There is an overall poor or lack of clear communication from the Chief.
- The exodus of officers has caused an unacceptable and dangerous low staffing level which resulted in a public and officer safety crisis.
- Most officers have serious concerns about the leadership style of the Chief. Also, many officers believe that the Chief does not have their best interest or the best interest of the people at heart.
- Many officers believe that the Chief engages in favoritism among a select few officers.
- The Chief's reluctance and failure to hold a meeting with officers immediately after his return to the Department last year was disappointing to most officers.

- There is strong resentment among officers due to the lack of a plan for promotions that includes the date, process and content to be tested over.
- Most officers indicated the Chief has not articulated his vision to the rank and file.
- The Chief has not been successful in building and cultivating interpersonal relationships with his officers.
- Many officers, citizens, and some elected officials expressed the need for infrastructural change beginning at the helm with the CPD.
- Many officers and citizens indicated the Chief is a “good” person. However, professionally, he has experienced difficulty establishing public trust and working with the citizenry to accomplish the purpose of protecting life and property. His failure to interact and articulate the mission of the Department with all stakeholders has been disappointing and questions whether he is an appropriate job fit.

INSURING ANONYMITY

It is critical that respondents or those interviewed have their identities protected during an evaluation. Although there were some officers who were willing to share their names, the Consultant declined to honor this. Per standard rules of ethics in conducting research and to maintain the integrity of the evaluation, it was appropriate not to reveal anyone’s identity. Moreover, citizens

who approached the Consultant in public places did not want their identities known. Again, their request has been honored. The Consultant emphasized prior to the start of any meeting or interview that no recording devices, cameras or otherwise electronic devices would be used and no one's identity or contact information will be made public.

APPROACH TO THE EVALUATION

In order to gain insight into the concerns related to public safety and the CPD in general, the Consultant conducted a series of meetings and interviews with police officers, citizens, business owners, and elected officials. The next section will detail how these stakeholders were involved in the evaluation of the CPD.

Current CPD officers. The Consultant engaged the officers to assess their concerns by hosting a general assembly with the rank and file of the CPD. In addition, interviews were held with officers, individual in-person and telephone interviews, and ride-alongs were conducted. In order to accommodate the officers with respect to their concerns of anonymity and privacy, the Consultant held interviews at various venues around the city including the library, squad cars, restaurants, hotels, government owned buildings and other public places. The Consultant assured the officers that absolutely no identifier, particularly their

names, would be used or reported. The Consultant was successful in conducting several interviews with numerous officers.

Former CPD officers. As part of the evaluation process, the Consultant determined it was critical to speak with former officers who left the CPD during the current administration. The former officers provided invaluable information regarding their experiences working for the CPD and why they separated from the Department.

Elected officials. The Consultant visited with several elected officials to gauge their assessment and concerns regarding the Department. The common theme that emerged from each was their desire for the CPD to have a strong and positive relationship with the community. Some were quite concerned about the direction of the Department and the leadership. However, all were positive in their comments related to the events that had occurred during the last few months, particularly the recruiting that led to a substantial increase in police staffing.

Community. It is evident that another main stakeholder is the community. To that end, the Consultant hosted a series of Public Safety Forums (town hall meetings) in each of the six city council wards. These gatherings afforded the community with the opportunity to meet the Consultant and share their concerns regarding public safety. Citizens were engaged and presented not only their

frustrations, but also suggestions on how to improve the CPD. At the Public Safety Forums, questionnaires were distributed for citizens to complete. The results of the analysis of the questionnaires are presented in the appendix of this document.

In addition to the Public Safety Forums, the Consultant spoke to members of the Rotary Club and Exchange Club during their meetings. Attendees were very engaged at these two well attended events. Several members pledged their support in working to improve the CPD.

Another group that makes up the community is the various neighborhood watch groups. A meeting with these groups was held at City Hall and was well attended. Members were provided an opportunity to pose questions and suggestions related to public safety.

Finally, the Consultant was regularly recognized and approached by some citizens in public places including Walmart, Applebee's, Longhorn Steak House, Logan's Steakhouse, Leigh Mall, Arby's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Hyatt Place Hotel, convenience stores, and in the parking lot near the CPD. Some citizens were able to obtain the Consultant's cell phone number and shared their concerns. The Consultant entertained all citizens who wanted to express their concerns regarding public safety.

A central theme began to emerge; that is, many officers and citizens were concerned about the leadership of the CPD. In particular, many officers were of the

opinion that Chief Lewis was unclear, inconsistent, played favorites, micromanaged, untrusting, and unapproachable. Most officers indicated that the Chief was a “good person” but should not be serving as chief of the CPD for the reasons alluded to in the Major Observations section of this evaluation. Some officers further indicated that he was “over his head” and lack the experience to serve as chief of police.

TRANSPARENCY IS LACKING. Few issues are more frustrating to police officers than the perception that the administration is not forthcoming about issues affecting them. In particular, several officers expressed to the Consultant that the Chief did not provide clarity regarding special assignments and promotion. One sentiment expressed by an officer is that recent personnel changes including moving officers around on the shifts were “sprung” on them. It is recommended that the Department increase its efforts to exercise better clarity as it relates to communicating issues of personnel assignments, promotions, training, and disciplinary actions. Engaging in open communication will aid in helping to eliminate the perception of favoritism.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Community

Total adoption of community policing. During the series of Public Safety Forums, the role of the community was frequently discussed. Citizens correctly believe officers should be more involved in the community in a non-law enforcement or non-confrontational manner.

Beginning in the 1980s many departments, large and small, began to transition toward implementing community policing. Throughout the country, mayors and city councils were asking for it to take place in their communities and police chiefs have endorsed it. Columbus Police Department must follow suit and do so immediately. The time is ripe as the Department is slated to have approximately 25-30 new officers by the end of 2017. This approach to modern policing must be infused into the new recruits while they are still in training.

The three prongs of community policing include:

Community Partnerships -Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police.

Organizational Transformation - The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving.

Problem Solving - The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and evaluate effective responses.

Figure 1: *Three interrelated prongs of community policing.*



Figure 2: *Community partnerships prong of community policing.*



No police department is successful without the positive involvement of the community it serves. The department must pursue collaborative relationships with various partners to seek solutions to problems faced by the community. Potential partners should be diverse and selected from community members, private businesses, health care profession, service industry, education, faith based, government, nonprofit, media, and others. The public's role in serving as a partner

with CPD is a necessary and critical ingredient for a successful community policing effort.

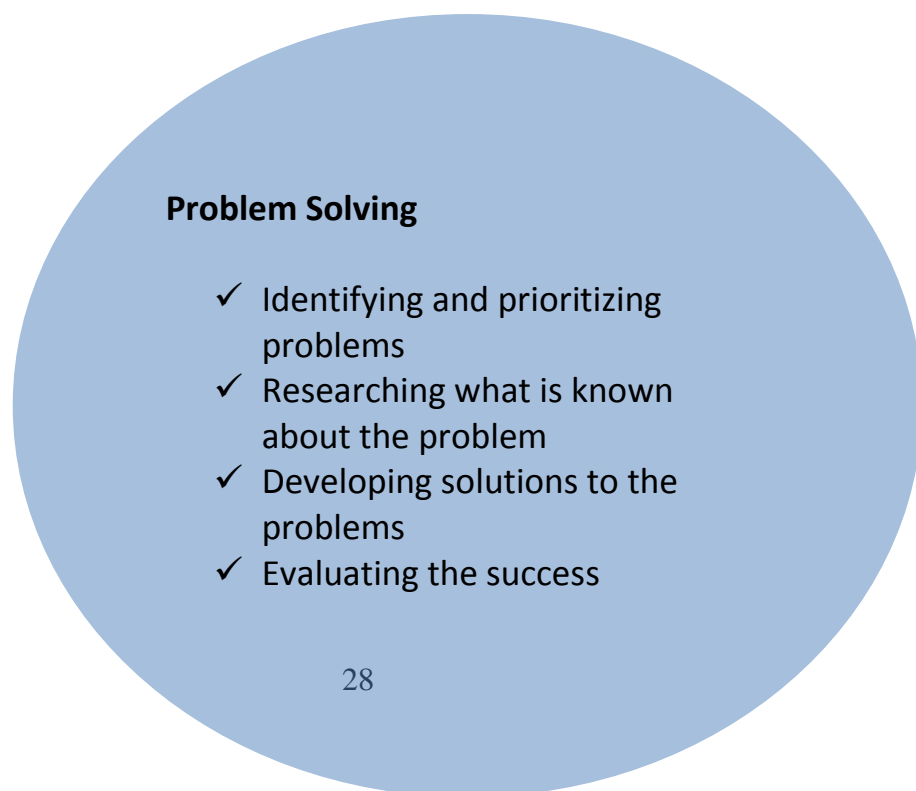
Figure 3: *Organizational transformation prong of community policing.*



Success demands that the police department be organized in a manner to meet the expectations of community policing. There may be the need to modify the existing infrastructure to insure greater success. Police officers must be given responsibility of a geographic area for an extended period of time to develop

necessary relationships with the community. Technology must also be included in an effort to transform the department. Most importantly, the Chief and commanders must take an active role in securing and cultivating existing and new relationships to implement community policing. Furthermore, the Chief and his immediate command staff must be diplomatic in influencing and educating the rank and file members of the Department and the community on the philosophy of community policing. As the Department implements and maintains community policing, it will be necessary that future officers understand and are amendable to the philosophy. Finally, it is ultimately the Chief's responsibility to articulate the Department's community policing vision, values, and mission to the community.

Figure 4: *Problem solving prong of community policing.*



Another critical aspect under the philosophy of community policing is the requirement that police officers become problem solvers. In order to effectively address crime, items that lead to or contribute to disorder must first be addressed. Opposed to the traditional approach of responding to crime, community policing strongly encourages police department to proactively develop solutions to the underlying conditions that challenge public safety. This approach must be exercised by all units in the police department. It is recommended that the CPD consider the SARA problem solving model. This is a four-point model that includes:

Scanning - Identifying and prioritizing problems.

Analysis - Researching what is known about the problem.

Response - Developing solutions to bring about lasting reductions in the number and extent of the problems.

Assessment- Using the crime triangle (victim/crime/location) to focus on immediate conditions.

In summary, an important aspect of community policing is the realizations that in order for it to be most effective, police leadership must strongly support the philosophy. Additionally, the Chief must ensure that every member of the CPD understands and operates according to the expectations of community policing.

There must be no deviation if success is to be realized. It is strongly recommended that the CPD fully adopt and implement community policing.

The chief should have frequent meetings with stakeholders. Open and consistent communication with key stakeholders is important to a successful police department. It allows for the police leader to share the goals and vision of the agency. Conversely, it presents an opportunity for citizens to engage the police leader with their concerns.

Meeting with citizens. The chief should hold quarterly meetings allowing concerned citizens to listen and have their concerns addressed. Beat officers should also be in attendance during these meetings to speak to citizens.

Meeting with business owners. Business owners (large and small) are also key stakeholders in the community and have a vested interest in an effective, efficient, and responsive police department. The Chief must make it a priority to meet with business owners on a regular basis. Beat officers should also be in attendance during these meetings to speak to business owners.

Neighborhood Watch. Citizens involvement in neighborhood watch groups are an excellent resource for a police department. However, they must be recognized and supported by the chief of police. There were mixed reactions from some members of the various neighborhood watch groups regarding the level of involvement of the Chief. It is recommended that every effort must be made to

meet with these citizens on a regular basis to learn more about what is happening in their communities.

Community feedback. Citizens should be given an opportunity to provide feedback on how well the police department is performing. One of the most convenient and effective ways to accomplish this is to create an online survey that is accessible to citizens at least twice a year. The survey may be accessed on the Department's website. Additionally, a hard copy of the survey should be available at the Department, public library and City Hall.

Provision of crime data- The public deserves to know about the safety level of the community in which they reside. This is an old principle dating back to the creation of the London Metropolitan Police Department in 1829. Crime data should be posting on the Department web page on a regular basis for public consumption.

Officers' positive interactions with the public. Many citizens enjoy the opportunity to speak with police officers. It also serves to break down barriers and is consistent with the philosophy of community policing. Police officers should make at least two non-confrontational face-to-face contacts with citizens on a weekly basis.

B. Personnel

Some police departments refer to staffing issues as authorized strength and actual strength. Authorized strength pertains to the number of officers a department is allowed to employ. Most often, the budget determines this variable. On the other hand, actual strength level is in reference to the number of officers available at a given time. Generally, police departments tend to operate below their authorized strength level due to departments inability to keep pace with attrition, retirements, terminations and budget constraints. A progressive police leader must always prepare and have contingency plans in place to maintain acceptable staffing levels to ensure public safety.

Authorized strength level. There is no exact science, formula, or equation that all police experts agree on in determining appropriate staffing levels for a police department. No two cities are the same. There are numerous variables to be considered. The Columbus City County voted in 2016 to increase the Department from 67 to 77 officers. This staffing level does provide the chief with greater flexibility to provide a higher degree of public safety. In July 2017 due to budgetary constraints, the staffing level was changed to 70 officers. The proposed organization chart displayed in the appendix is designed to reflect 70 sworn officers.

Actual strength level. Due to the continuing resignations of officers, it was elusive at times to ascertain the accurate size of the Department. At the start of the evaluation period, the Department had 48 sworn officers. This was down from 67 prior to the current chief's tenure. This low level represented a serious citizen and officer safety issue. As a result of the Consultant's aggressive recruiting initiative, the Department, at the release time of this evaluation report, has 12 recruits in basic training at the Mississippi Delta Law Enforcement Training Academy (MDLETA) in Morehead, Mississippi. The Department was also successful in achieving lateral hires. There are five recruits undergoing (pre-academy) training at the CPD who will start state required basic training on August 20, 2017. They will be joined by an additional six recruits approved by the City Council on July 18, 2017. The total number with these recruits, including the lateral hires brings the actual strength of the CPD to 70 officers, the complement voted on by the City Council at the July 18, 2017 meeting.

The Crime lab must be staffed with additional crime technicians. The crime lab is a gem in the City and should be treated accordingly. It is commanded by a very capable director with one fulltime crime lab technician and occasionally college interns. The crime lab not only serves Columbus, but many other surrounding jurisdictions. The benefit of having a local crime lab is invaluable. It saves times, is less costly and CPD officers have quick access to the crime lab.

Other noted shortcomings include: The Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) computer is not connected to the mainframe at the Lowndes Sheriff's Department. This only allows the fingerprint examiner use of data contained in that stand-alone computer. The analytical equipment is also old and outdated. While both crime lab personnel are extremely talented, they do not have a second employee there for specialty to peer review or quality control their work. Unfortunately, this does not meet the standard for presentation of scientific evidence or requirements for crime lab certification. Finally, there are space limitations in the current building.

The recommendation relevant to the crime lab is to hire two crime lab technicians immediately. One possible option is to hire one full-time employee two part-time technicians. The crime lab is also in a position to generate revenue for the City by performing forensics on evidence from other agencies. This can help to offset the cost of hiring additional crime lab technicians. The time for adding more personnel to the crime lab has come and should be done, or the city will risk losing it.

Another recommendation is to determine the status of the fiber optic cable for the AFIS from the Lowndes County Sheriff to the CPD. Additionally, consider the purchase/ lease of new/updated analytical instruments. The space issue will need to be addressed soon. Therefore, the City should begin to search for a larger

space to accommodate the crime lab's growing responsibilities. Consider expanding the building to include a bay area where vehicles can be secured while being processed and all evidence can be contained in one building. The crime lab should determine how to continue using Evidence Tracker software and link it to the incident report software. Without this linkage, it greatly limits the usefulness of a computerized system.

Property room- as it currently stands; the evidence module of report software is not being used. This is limiting as evidence cannot be linked to a specific complainant/victim/suspect. Further, found property and personal property are not managed in any significant way. Items were observed by the Consultant to be stacked in rooms and hallways without any sense of logic. This is unacceptable and unbecoming for the CPD. These items need to be tracked, owners located or property destroyed/disposed of. It is recommended that an individual be hired as a property/evidence custodian. Due to the sensitive nature of the position, extra care should be exercised in the hiring of this person. In fact, the person should be required to undergo a similar, if not the same process as police officer applicants. An evidence custodian is essential to the proper maintenance of an evidence room.

Command and supervisors retreat. It is often difficult to have meaningful dialogue with employees in short weekly command staff meetings that typically

last less than one hour. There is a need to physically move away from the confines of the police department to engage employees. One option to address this is to host a staff retreat. This will allow staff to concentrate on issues with less distractions and interruptions. It allows for an opportunity to boost morale. Although staff retreats are common in the private sector, they can also be beneficial for a police department.

In the next section below are some additional benefits to a staff retreat advanced by Steve Bova of MeetingsNet:

- Taking the staff out of their normal surroundings and into a neutral environment allows for fewer interruptions. It also neutralizes any power structure that is normally in place at the office
- It's all about the big picture! It's easy to get weighed down with day-to-day responsibilities and lose sight of the company's collective goal when you're stuck in a routine. Take the opportunity to show team members how their work contributes to the overall objectives that the organization or company has in place.
- You can use everything as a learning opportunity: "Celebrate recent team and organizational accomplishments, acknowledge defeats or setbacks, and learn from them."

- Plan for the future by openly communicating your visions, goals, and expectations, in an environment where everyone has open ears.
- There is a multitude of different activities and exercises that can lead to interesting insights.
- When you're on a retreat, it eliminates a sense of hierarchy and neutralizes the playing field. If you are on the team, you have a voice, and people will listen.
- Getting to know colleagues on a personal level is invaluable. Building upon these relationships off-site will lead to stronger teamwork once back in the office.

As Bova notes, a retreat is “a small investment that reaps immeasurable returns.”

Source: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/7-benefits-staff-retreats-dee-burner>

In a police department, it is more challenging to have a retreat given the responsibilities of the profession. but it is not impossible. A full one-day retreat can produce meaningful results. It is recommended that the Chief consider hosting a one-day off-site staff retreat.

Police reserves- The CPD employs approximately 20 police reserves. Provided their training is up to date, they are an excellent resource. The minimum hours

each reserve officer should donate to the CPD should be re-evaluated to determine how their contribution can best benefit the Department and citizens. Among some officers and citizens, there was the perception that reserve officers are self-serving opposed to serving the community.

Applications should originate with City Human Resources (HR) Department.

There was much confusion during the evaluation period that revealed significant deficiencies in the application process. When police applicants called to inquire about their status, there was great difficulty locating the applications, determining the stage of the application process as well as knowing what was to occur next in the process. Several police employees handle applications. The HR Director should know the location of all application packets, including the personal history statements at all times. Additionally, the HR Director should be in a position to inform the applicant and others on the status of their application. This currently does not exist. The city's IT representative should create an interactive real-time application tracking program to be accessed by the HR Director. All city employees should be trained to direct all potential police applicants to the City HR Department. No applications should be accepted by any employee other than those who work in the HR Department. All applicants should be aware of this policy by posting the information on the city and police department respective web sites.

Chief should hold quarterly meetings with officers and civilian employees.

Lack of meetings with the Chief in a general assembly was a major point of contention for many of the officers. They view these types of meetings as an opportunity to hear from the Chief. A general assembly should be held every quarter to recognize officers and civilians for their work and to update them on any new policies affecting the Department.

Sworn trainers. The CPD currently has a civilian serving as the Training Director. Many officers have serious reservations with a non-sworn employee in this capacity; although it is an acceptable practice for a civilian to hold this position. There is a significant lack of trust from officers as they believe the Training Director lacks credibility. It is recommended that two sworn and experienced officers be assigned to the training unit to provide training, in addition to the Training Director. The selected officers should earn their instructor certifications from the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers` Training Academy (MLEOTA) as soon as possible.

Civilian employees. Oftentimes, civilian employees and their contributions are overlooked in a police department. These valued employees contribute significantly to the overall mission of a police department. During the evaluation period, the Consultant observed CPD's civilians to be dedicated and professional

in their work. Some of them were asked to assist in conducting the background check of the police applicants. As a result of their work ethic, the application process was expedited which allowed the Department to quickly develop an eligibility list of police applicants. It is recommended that an analysis be conducted to determine other tasks civilians can perform. The invaluable skills possessed by CPD civilians should be utilized in all instances where possible.

Civilian volunteers. Police officer's shifts are generally replete with calls for service. Oftentimes these calls require the completion of reports. Some report writing can be delegated to civilians. Recently, CPD has hired civilians for this purpose. This resource should be used to the fullest extent. Many citizens are interested in getting involved to help their local police department. Other tasks that civilian volunteers can assist the CPD are in the area of conducting background checks and inventory control. Additionally, there may be opportunities for assistance for the CPD crime lab. It is important that all civilian volunteers undergo the application process as other city employee including background checks and drug screening.

Friction between the Chief and Assistant Chief. The CPD Assistant Chief of Police Chief is a 30 year plus veteran of the force. He has served in numerous capacities, including a stint as the interim chief during a very volatile time following an officer involved shooting. Unfortunately, the shooting resulted in the

death of a citizen. The Assistant Chief previously served as the current Chief's supervisor. Officers and citizens have observed friction between the Chief and Assistant Chief. The Chief presented an organizational chart to the City Council that effectively and significantly reduced the Assistant Chief's influence in the Department. Based on interviews with the primaries, officers, citizens, and elected official, it appears that the schism is personal in nature. It is recommended that both parties work to resolve their personal (and professional) differences and ultimately come together to for the good of public safety.

Mayor and City Council interference. During the course of the evaluation, the Consultant heard from some officers and citizens alike indicating they believed the Mayor/and or the City Council were too involved with the Department. This is a common sentiment normally expressed in jurisdictions where the police department is experiencing some type of turmoil. One should note that the Mayor of a city is ultimately responsible for the public safety of citizens. The mayor appoints department heads and should expect accountability on behalf of citizens. When citizens have complaints, including those related to public safety, they often contact the mayor's office, and not the chief of police. An effective and concerned mayor must respond in an attempt to satisfy citizens, if possible. The mayor should be involved at some level with the department, particularly, if citizens or officers have legitimate concerns. However, their involvement should be measured and not

intrude on the day-to-day operations of the department. It is recommended that the mayor and city council carefully monitor their involvement in the police department and make certain that it does not trample on the responsibilities of the Chief.

Recruiting and retention planning. The CPD should always have ongoing recruiting and retention activities, and not only during a time of crisis. Police departments like other organizations, public and private experience employee turnover. Some employees resign to pursue other opportunities for various reasons, some retire, yet others are terminated. Regardless of the reason/s for the separation, a progressive police department must always have a strategy to recruit and retain officers, even during a period of full employment. An active eligibility list must always be in place to include potential police recruits. When officers resign from the Department, an exit interview to determine the reason(s) for the separation should be conducted by HR and the Department.

Public Information Officer (PIO). The provision of communication and accurate information regarding the police department should be at a premium. The City currently has a PIO who is responsible for communicating with the media and the public on all matters related to the City. During the evaluation period, it was shared with the Consultant that there was some resistance between the Chief and the PIO. This is unhealthy and must be addressed. The individual holding this position

should have total access to all departments, including the CPD. The PIO reports to the Columbus Chief Operating Officer and Mayor. Additionally, the PIO:

- Must have full civilian access to all reports, videos and other documentation in CPD for preparation of answers to media and public on specific cases.
- Must have full access to brief and schedule individual interviews, ride-alongs, etc., with any member of CPD.
- Will prepare press releases on felony arrests by working with CID.
- Have officers, staff investigators and other employees of CPD to return calls in a timely matter understanding that media deadlines are often short and urgent.
- Must have full access to city Twitter, Facebook, other social media and City web site and coordinate with city IT department for timely postings etc.
- Must have external access to crime scenes to the extent of not entering the sterile area of the scene, but closer than standard media to allow better understanding and explanation to media.
- Will be contacted by shift leaders on major accidents and incidents as soon as possible after initial call for help while not interfering with response.
- Must have full access to officers, CID employees and others to answer questions on incidents.

- Will honor all requests for information to remain non-public and confidential.
- Will work with all department personnel to maintain privacy and confidential information as requested to not hamper investigations.
- Will be present during media interviews and brief CPD officials on interview preparation.
- Will closely coordinate with city attorney and CPD officials on what items can be released and what is held confidential.

Any person serving as the PIO should undergo a full background check similar to holding a civilian position at CPD.

Criminal investigators should assist with patrol. There is a perception (real or imagined) revealed by some officers through interviews that CID officers have too much “down time” on duty. Officers indicated that oftentimes investigators can be observed at their desks viewing or playing video games. If this is true, supervisors need to address this. Furthermore, if there is any truth to the perception, investigators should be expected to supplement patrol, especially during periods of extremely low staffing.

C. Policy

Rotation of officers between units – In developing officers’ talent, it is recommended that officers be allowed to spend time in various units in the Department. In particular, patrol officers should be assigned to CID for a specific period. This practice will allow officers to have an opportunity to gain greater appreciation and understanding of the investigative function. It will likely encourage officers to write better field reports. Also, officers may be able to determine if this is a career path they wish to pursue.

Update the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). During the evaluation, some officers complained that the SOP was sorely in need of updating. Others indicated that the police commanders referred to “multiple” SOPs when citing policy. A police department should thoroughly review and update its policy manual every 3-5 years. This can be accomplished by creating a department committee to work on the certain components of the manual, or the CPD can contract with an outside firm to update the SOP.

Promotional exam process- Many officers expressed frustration with the promotional process. One officer described it as a “secretive” process so the chief can select who he really wants. It is recommended that the Department use the

SOP as the basis for promotional exams, after it has been updated. Additionally, it is necessary that the Chief develop and publish the expectations, and procedures to compete along with identifying who is eligible to compete in promotional exams.

Take home car policy. The take home car (out of county) program should be phased out. This is a generous policy to have that may have served a specific purpose earlier. However, for officers residing outside Lowndes County it raises questions of accountability. In addition, it represents a cost factor as it relates to extra fuel, mileage, and general wear and tear on the vehicles. Moreover, it makes it difficult to determine an equitable manner in deciding who should be provided take home cars. Finally, the general sentiment of citizens suggests that they prefer police officers live in the jurisdiction they serve. As applicants apply to become police officers they are likely to assume they will not need to reside in Columbus or Lowndes County due to the City's provision on the take home car policy. This may not be a wise policy. The City should phase out the out of town take home car policy as soon as possible. Do allow, however, for current officers affected by this policy to make other arrangements for personal travel to and from work.

The City should reconsider a residency requirement for police officers. Within a reasonable amount of time, all future police hires should be residing in the City of Columbus or within the boundaries of Lowndes County. A strong sentiment

from the community was the desire for officers to be a resident of the city of Columbus.

D. Organization

The CPD organizational chart should be revamped to accommodate 70-80 sworn officers.

As the Department is experiencing growth, there is a need to re-examine the current organizational chart. Recommended changes include employing two captains to command two separate bureaus; Operations Bureau which includes patrol and CID and the second bureau for Administration and Technical Services. All civilians will be assigned to the latter bureau. A proposed future organizational chart is presented in the Appendix.

Reorganize the rank structure- The new structure of the CPD should include a Chief, two captains, two lieutenants, and five sergeants, and officers filling out the ranks. Missing from this structure are the ranks of assistant chief and corporal. The assistant chief and corporal ranks should be phased out as current officers holding these positions are promoted, retired or otherwise no longer employed by the Department.

Police officer rank

There has been some consideration previously to changing the officer rank structure. It is time to consider once again. The officer rank should be structured to

reflect Police Officer I, II and III. The first level, Police Officer I is an officer still on probation. Upon successful completion of his/her probationary period, this officer receives an automatic advancement to Police Officer II. Typical assignments for a police Officer II can include foot patrol, bicycle patrol, motorcycle or a specialized unit such as K-9 or S.W.A.T. Finally, upon completion of five years, a Police Officer III can serve as a Field Training Officer (FTO) and can act in the absence of a sergeant as the lead officer of a shift. Each level of police officer rank should be associated with an increase pay scale as one advances to the next level.

Patrol beats. There are currently five patrol beats: north, south, east, west, central. Additionally, there is a citywide beat for patrol shift leaders. Ideally, one officer is assigned to each beat. It is recommended that two officers be assigned to each beat.

The Criminal Investigation Division (CID) must be restructured. Currently, the CID is commanded by a captain with a span of control of approximately 8-10 officers. This is a gross underuse of a command rank and inefficient. This division should be reduced to a unit and commanded by a sergeant or lieutenant with a span of control not exceeding 12 investigators.

Software and equipment concerns- The need to obtain contemporary report software is necessary as the current package in use is outdated. The Division Commander cannot determine which detective is assigned to a case. There are no case/crime analysis capabilities. The evidence module (if it exists) is not in use. Furthermore, the Division Commander cannot track evidence as it relates to a particular case. The interview rooms are also in need of updating including hardware/software to record activities in said rooms. It is recommended that new software be purchased. The Hattiesburg Police Department uses a web-based system that may be beneficial to CPD. Monitors and microphones need to be repaired or replaced in interview rooms.

Create an Office of Professional Standards. On occasion, citizens have complaints against officers. Regardless of whether their complaints are valid or not, there should be an office for them to register their complaints. It is recommended that this office be created as soon as possible. Ideally, this office should be at an offsite location separate from police headquarters. This will allow citizens to feel less intimidated if filing complaints against an officer.

Seek Accreditation. One goal of any progressive chief of police should be for his/her department to seek and be granted accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. The purpose of CALEA is to

enhance law enforcement as a profession and to improve law enforcement service delivery. A more localized option for accreditation is through Mississippi Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission (MSLEAC). The purpose of MSLEAC is to establish professional standards at an affordable cost for Mississippi law enforcement agencies. The Commission develops and administers the program in order to recognize professional excellence in the law enforcement community.

Specifically, the MSLEAC accreditation program focuses on six primary goals:

- Strengthening crime prevention and control capabilities.
- Formalizing essential management procedures.
- Establishing fair and nondiscriminatory personnel practices.
- Improving service delivery.
- Solidifying cooperation and coordination.
- Boosting citizen and staff confidence in the agency.⁶

Benefits of accreditation can help to lower insurance costs for the City, greater accountability within the agency, and increased community advocacy.⁷

Achieving accreditation is an arduous process, but can be accomplished. It is recommended the CPD begin to prepare for the accreditation process in the near future through MSLEAC.

E. Technical

Camera assisted report writing. In an attempt to free up time for officers to remain in their beats on patrol; the Department should consider technology that will allow a civilian to write a report based on recorded video from an on-scene officer. It is recommended that the Department explore options available with Dragon Law enforcement- Speed Incident Reporting by Voice.

Wi-Fi Network. It is recommended that the Wi-Fi network system be upgraded and/or repaired to allow patrol officers to complete their reports from any location. This positively affects public safety as officers are able to remain on their beats if there is no need to travel to headquarters to write their reports.

Software needs of the CID. There are some software needs of the CID. A close analysis of the most critical needs should be undertaken to prioritize what items can be purchased. Although software and hardware are very expensive items, they play a major role in successful investigations. The associated costs and urgency of purchase must be carefully considered. It is recommended that the commander in CID prepare a prioritized list of software needs and present for purchase consideration.

Encourage the use of more security cameras around the city. Although, cameras are not a panacea, grant funding, nevertheless, should be pursued to

purchase cameras to be strategically placed in locations around the city. Dedicated space can be used to monitor activity by civilian volunteers. The use of cameras as an added tool for public safety is not only for businesses, but can also be used to monitor neighborhoods and public gathering places. Mobile cameras should also be considered to provide the flexibility to move to those areas that are considered hotspots.

Seek grant funding opportunities. Although CPD currently benefits from grant funding, it is recommended that a more aggressive pursuit of grant funding from Homeland Security, National Institute of Justice (NIJ), Community Oriented Policing Service (COPS), and other funders be initiated. The time is ripe as the current administration in Washington D.C., along with the Justice Department seemingly has a renewed interest in assisting cities with criminal justice reform. It is recommended that the City consider hiring a grant writer to focus on the needs of CPD. The grant writer's salary can be negotiated and offset by an amount awarded in the grant.

E. Training

Many officers during the evaluation period expressed their frustration regarding the lack of training opportunities. Additionally, officers complained about the procedures used to apply for training and a perceived practice of

favoritism in who is selected to attend training classes. Police officers generally enjoy meaningful and consistent training as they understand this will keep them prepared to meet the demands of the job. These shortcomings, real or imagined, must be addressed immediately.

Applying for training. The CPD should produce an annual training calendar that is posted for all officers to see. Information contained in these postings should include the type of training, dates, venue, how to apply, what forms are necessary to apply, and who is eligible to attend the training.

Specific training on mental illness. Mental illness response training is needed for officers. In recent months it was announced that the Mississippi Department of Mental Health plans to eliminate 650 positions over the next year because of state budget cuts. These cuts will have a direct impact on law enforcement, including the CPD. In preparation for the inevitable, the Department must continue and increase training for officers on how to handle individuals with mental illness. It is anticipated that more individuals will be without mental health services and come into contact with police. It is imperative that officers understand issues surrounding mental illness and how to respond to these affected individuals. It is recommended that additional mental illness training for CPD officers increases immediately.

Specific training on sexual harassment. During the course of the evaluation, some officers alluded to events that suggested to the Consultant the need for sexual harassment training. It was unclear as to when the last time this training was provided to CPD officers. Regardless of when the last training occurred, it is recommended that with the recent and continuing addition of new officers, there is a need to provide this mandatory training as soon as possible.

Specific training on equality and diversity. As communities are becoming more diverse, a police department must continue to be open and responsive. There must be a commitment to understanding equality and diversity. Each officer, particularly those assigned to patrol must make a concerted effort to know about the various groups on their beat. Internally, it must be recognized that diversity exists within a department. It is recommended that regular training courses be required to update and refresh Department personnel on awareness of the different needs of different groups.

Specific training on implicit bias policing. Somewhat related to the importance of requiring equality and diversity training, implicit bias policing must be required. Reducing the influence of implicit bias is vitally important to strengthening relationships between police and minority communities. Some studies suggest that implicit bias contributes to shooter bias; the tendency for police to shoot unarmed African American more often than whites, well as the

frequency of police stops for members of minority groups. To limited this from occurring, is recommended all CPD officers be required to complete training on implicit bias policing.

Specific training on officer safety. The Department is also in need of officer safety *training* which should be an ongoing and consistent activity in a progressive police department. There was no evidence of this occurring. This type of training, which takes on many forms is paramount to keeping officers alert, especially in the field. The training does not have to take very much time. In fact, some officer safety training can be conducted during roll call.

Specific training on front line supervision. Another need is in the area of training for front line supervisors. It was brought to the attention of the Consultant that there have been occasions where supervisors “had no clue” about how to supervise. In addition, there were some complaints regarding how supervisors communicated in a disrespectful manner to subordinates. This type of behavior is detrimental to officer morale and must be addressed immediately. Hence, it is recommended that all CPD supervisors receive training (or remedial training) for front line supervisors as soon possible.

Invite civilians to participate in training. Police training should be as realistic as possible. One way to accomplish reality training is to involve individuals, unaffiliated with the police department, to serve as role players. A

residual benefit of involving citizens is it allows for officers and citizens to connect in a non-confrontational and meaningful way. It is likely to enhance police and community relations in a positive manner.

CID training. There is also a need to provide more training for detectives. The immediate needs are for interviewing and interrogation techniques, crime scene investigations, and statement analysis. The certified investigator program through the State may be an option.

Pre-police academy. The CPD must be proactive to ensure greater success for recruits during their basic training at the state academy. As soon as recruits are cleared for hire at CPD, they should immediately start the in-house pre-academy training. In particular, structured training during this period should focus on learning the culture and expectations of the CPD, report writing, and policies. Additionally, there has to be an emphasis on firearms training and physical fitness. The pre-academy training allows the Department to assess whether the recruit is a good fit.

The CPD is lacking adequate space for the purpose of training. The City should commence a search immediately for a convenient place to conduct training and host meetings. The space or training center can serve multiple purposes for the various City departments including orientation sessions for new employees. The

room/s should all be *smart rooms* that will allow for video conferencing, PowerPoint presentations, have cameras and modular desks.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

For clarity, the various recommendations discussed above are now identified in the upcoming section in a more succinct manner. There are seven areas, with some overlapping. The seven areas are: **A) Community, B) Personnel, C) Policy, D) Organization E) Technical, F) Training, and E) Leadership.**

A. Community

1. Adopt and implement community policing as soon as possible.
2. The Chief should have regularly scheduled meetings with stakeholders which include officers, civilian CPD employees, citizens, neighborhood watch groups, business representatives, clergy, and others with concerns regarding public safety.
3. The Department should make available a community survey for citizens to share their concerns.
4. Make crime data available, both on the Department website and in physical form at the Department that will allow citizens to be educated and fully aware of criminal activity in their communities.

5. Officers should be encouraged to interact with the community. Hence, they should attempt to have a minimum of two positive interactions with citizens weekly.

B. Personnel

1. The Chief should maintain the authorized strength level for the Department.
2. Hire additional staff for the crime lab.
3. Hire an individual to serve as a property/evidence custodian.
4. The Chief should host a one-day, off-site staff retreat.
5. Reexamine all policies related to police reserves.
6. Develop an application process that begins and ends with the City Human Resources Department
7. Two sworn and experienced officers should be assigned to the training unit to work with the Training Director to deliver training.
8. An analysis should be completed to determine additional tasks civilian employees can perform.
9. Continue hiring volunteers to perform non-law enforcement duties.
10. Friction between Chief and Assistant Chief must be eliminated to avoid further organizational breakdown.
11. Mayor and City Council should limit their involvement in CPD matters.

12. Establish major recruiting career day events twice a year (fall & spring) to coincide with colleges and university graduations within a 100-mile radius.
13. Work closely with the local military bases in the four-state area to host recruiting activities.

C. Policy

1. Allow officers to be assigned to various units in the police department. In particular, patrol officers should be assigned to CID for a specific period of time to gain a better understanding of investigations.
2. Continue recruiting potential police applicants with a goal of staffing the Department with 80 sworn officers.
3. Investigators should respond to calls for service when there is low staffing of patrol officers.
4. The Chief should post the requirements, expectations, and dates for promotional exams.
5. Upon completion of updating the SOP, a consideration should be given to returning to the SOP as the source for the promotional exams.
6. Eliminate the Take Home Car program for officers residing outside the City limits of Columbus or Lowndes County.
7. Reconsider a residency requirement for future hired police officers.
8. The PIO should have complete access to the Department in an effort to more

effectively speak on behalf of the City which includes handling media requests.

9. The process of updating the SOP should begin immediately.
10. Develop a clear policy regarding training including the posting of training opportunities, eligibility, and procedures to how to apply.
11. Develop a policy regarding ongoing recruiting and retention efforts.
12. Create non-emergency (611) services number for citizens to call.
13. Collectively, the Chief and senior officers should develop a 3, 5, and 10- year crime control plan.

D. Organization

1. Create an organizational chart to reflect a department of 70 – 80 sworn officers.
2. Reorganize the rank structure and prepare for the future by eliminating the positions of assistant chief and corporal; create patrolman I, II, and III positions.
3. Restructure CID. As time progresses, consider eliminating the rank of captain and replace with rank of sergeant or lieutenant.
4. Increase the number of assigned officers from one to two officers per beat as the actual strength increases.
5. Create an office of Professional Standards
- 6 Address the critical equipment needs of the CPD Crime Lab.

E. Technical

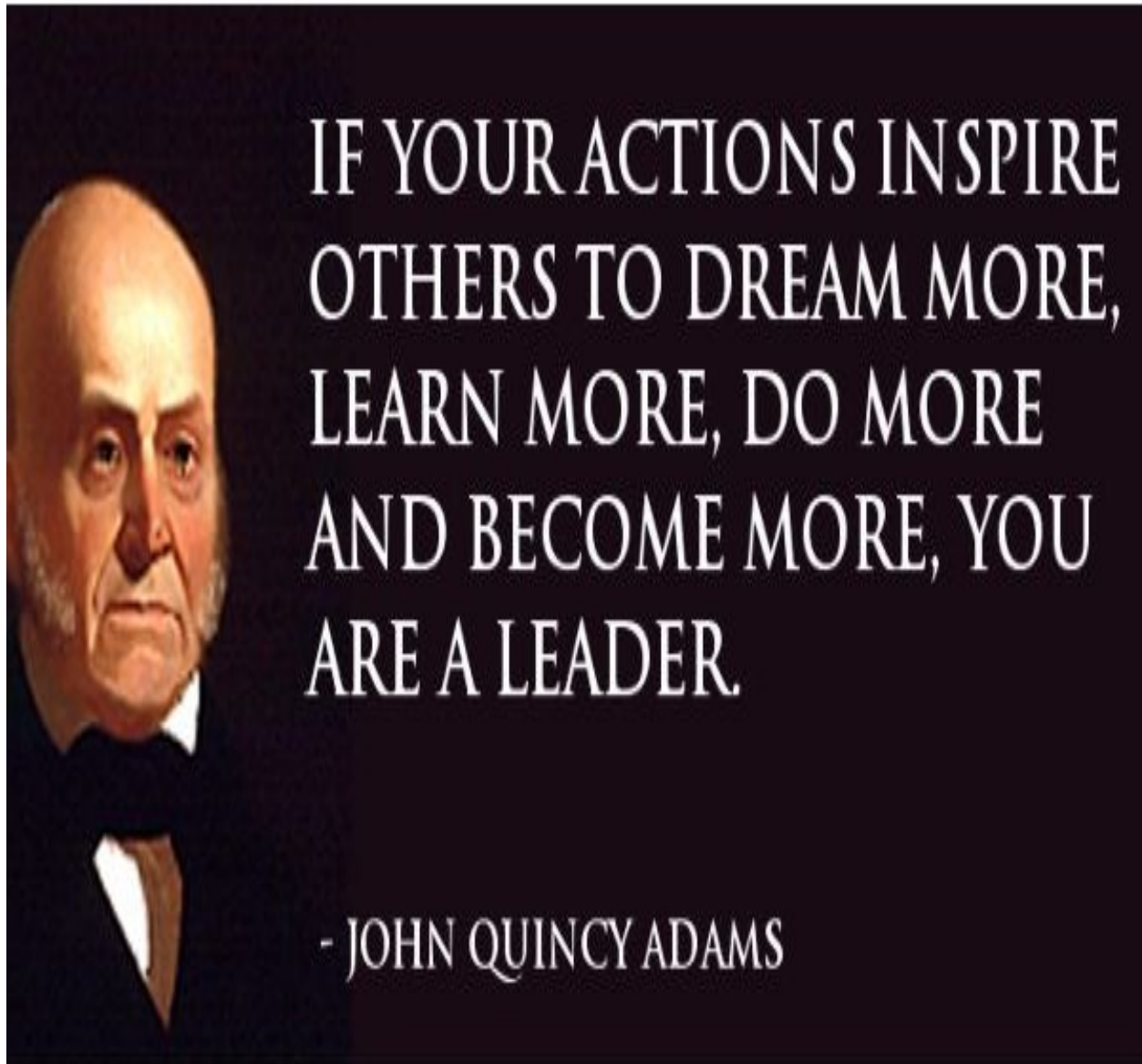
1. Update the (critical) software needs of CID
2. Upgrade Wi-Fi network to allow officers to complete reports from any location in the City as soon as possible and provide or improve networking capabilities to officers off-site.
3. Explore options available with Dragon Law Enforcement, i.e. Speed Incident Reporting by Voice.
4. Encourage the use of more security cameras in strategic areas around the city.
5. Hire a grant writer to focus on the needs of CPD.
6. Prepare to seek accreditation in the near future through MSLEAC.

F. Training

1. Officers should continue to receive training on officer safety, mental illness, sexual harassment, equality and diversity, implicit bias policing, and front line supervision (for those eligible).
2. All investigators should receive the minimally required certifications and advanced training as soon as possible.
3. Allow interested citizens to participate in police training exercises.
4. Require all future police recruits to begin in the pre-academy at the Department

prior to attending the basic training academy.

5. Locate a suitable venue to provide required and recommended training.



E) RECOMMENDATION ON LEADERSHIP

Throughout the entire evaluation period, the Consultant spoke consistently about the importance of community involvement with the CPD in securing public safety. All recommendations advanced by the Consultant were done in the best interest of the community. There was no consideration given for any type of relationships including those related to race, gender, political affiliation, socio-economic status, religion, or the neighborhood where one resides. All recommendations were based on what was best for the overall community. The community comes first.

The Chief seemingly has an aversion toward holding community meetings on a regular basis. One source indicated that he describes these meetings as “gripe sessions” and he is not willing to participate. Research has shown that meetings of this nature pose opportunities to meet, greet, and to become visible to the citizenry he/she is sworn to protect and serve. It is likely that amongst the “gripping” (spirited debates) something meaningful can be accomplished.

The number of officers has dropped approximately by one-third since the Chief was appointed in 2016. Although the decrease in staffing was regrettable, his actions that followed are equally regrettable and inexcusable. It took the hiring of a consultant to successfully recruit new officers and return the Department to an acceptable staffing level.

There was no sense of urgency regarding the necessity to increase the complement of police officers. It appeared that the Chief showed little concern that citizens were being served and protected with one-third fewer officers than the number employed when he was first appointed to the position. The Department was in a state of crisis and the Chief was seemingly apathetic toward the recruitment of officers and the safety of the citizenry. In fact, there should have been a profound sense of urgency as the Department was in a state of crisis!

On at least one or two occasions during the evaluation period, the Consultant was in Columbus when there were only four officers on patrol. On one of those days, which was raining, the Consultant observed two police cars on an accident scene thereby leaving only two patrol officers to cover the city. This is dangerous and unacceptable and should not happen again.

During the recruitment and hiring process, the Consultant was informed that the Chief was uncooperative and did not act upon the applications in a timely fashion which resulted in some applicants accepting positions elsewhere.

Though the Chief has been encouraged by the Consultant to exercise more discretion, objectivity, and flexibility, particularly during the hiring process, he has been resistant and unyielding in his views regarding the Department. It is expected that a chief of police would like to hire the perfect applicant. However, hiring a perfect police applicant is rather remote. Furthermore, very few current officers

have completely blemish-free backgrounds. Today's chief must recognize that minor offenses that are discovered during a background check should not automatically eliminate that applicant.

As this Department is poised to have approximately 30 new officers by the end of 2017, it is imperative that the CPD has a leader with strong leadership skills. In many regards, this will be a new department. The leader must be able to effectively articulate a vision for the Department to officers and citizens. The Consultant is unconvinced, based on the evaluation over the past six months, the Chief is prepared to adequately lead this new department. Moreover, the Chief did not project an attitude of encouragement, nor was he initially amenable to the current academy recruits. During one meeting, he told them that if they failed the academy, "there would be no second chances" from him. Consequently, this attitude toward individuals who are willing to become public servants is punitive at best.

The continuous mantra among several interviewed officers is that they lack confidence in him as a competent leader. The lack of confidence in his leadership skills, decision-making and tendency to engage in micromanagement has resulted in low morale among officers.

One inexplicable shortcoming from the perspective of officers is that the Chief has made no meaningful effort to build relationships with them. It was

revealed to the Consultant that his first actions as Chief were to secure his parking space and tell officers to not park in it. According to officers, the Chief was more engrossed with the up-front parking space which was reserved for him rather than the well-being of the officers who worked for him. Several additional officers shared with the Consultant the Chief installed GPS devices under the auspices of officer safety to monitor their movement. The officers believed the Chief was obsessed with watching their every move and disciplining them if they stayed in one place too long, even for their lunch break. Rather than focusing on issues that affect community safety, according to numerous allegations, the Chief focused on monitoring the officers' time spent for lunch breaks. This misuse of a safety tool via GPS designed to protect officers on the street has been reduced to a discipline process. Though time is essential to the job, there are far greater concerns such as having a recruitment and retention plan for officers.

A Columbus police chief's attitude should be synonymous with the slogan of the "Friendly City". In a department the size of Columbus, a chief should always endeavor to build and maintain rapport with employees and their families. This has not been the case. Though building rapport with the officers and their families may seem trivial, it is also important that leaders realize they are servant leaders and should establish relationships with those who follow them. They share a bond that is evidenced through their dedication and commitment to the job. Great

leaders know the importance that family life plays in the success of its employees and particularly law enforcement officers who serve in a sometimes “thankless” role; yet, they are charged with the responsibility to protect. As chief, it is imperative that he/she demonstrate a level of concern for the officers as well as their families. Law enforcement is one of the most dangerous public servant occupations. Trust and concern for one’s co-worker is valuable and means a great deal to the profession. This trickle-down effect begins at the top with the chief and should be strongly modeled and emphasized throughout the department.

The staffing issue, which was at crisis level, and posed a significant safety threat for citizens and officers, as well as poor interaction with officers, and community perception of ineffective leadership led the Consultant to recommend that a change at the helm of the of the CPD was necessary.

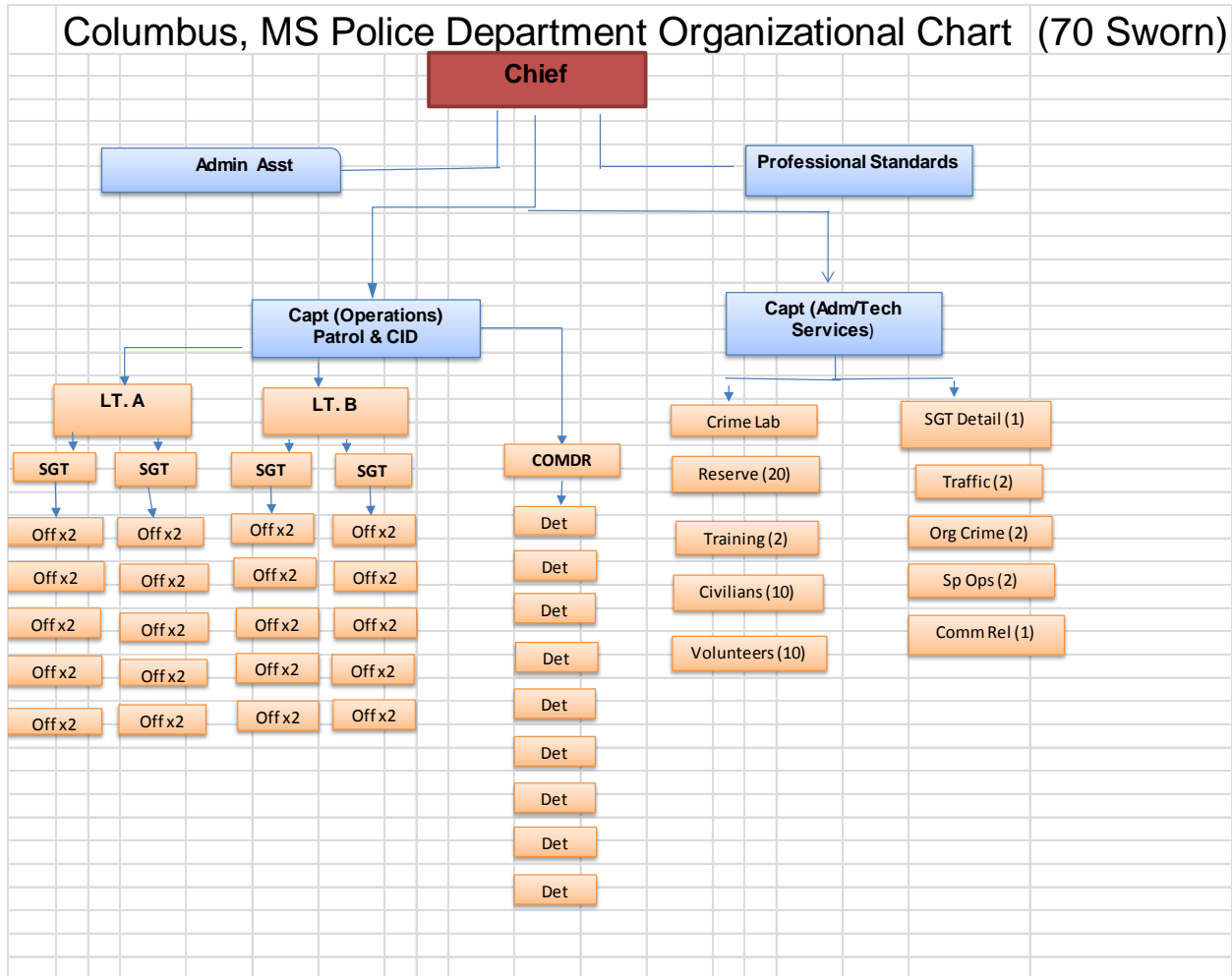
Unfortunately, Chief Oscar Lewis has unwittingly placed this community in a precarious situation as a result of his inability or failure to maintain an acceptable staffing level for public safety. The community deserves a more effective leader at the Department. The research conducted for this evaluation indicates a change in leadership at the helm is needed to achieve a more efficient, effective, and responsive Columbus Police Department.

IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

There are several recommendations that need to be implemented. The community must be involved with their police department. Hence, a CPD Recommendations Implementation Committee (RIC) should be established by the Mayor and City Council. The committee should be comprised of sworn officers and citizens. As part of the RIC, subcommittees can be created to work toward certain specific recommendations.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Future Proposed Columbus, Mississippi Police Department Organizational Chart Representing 70 Sworn Police Officers.



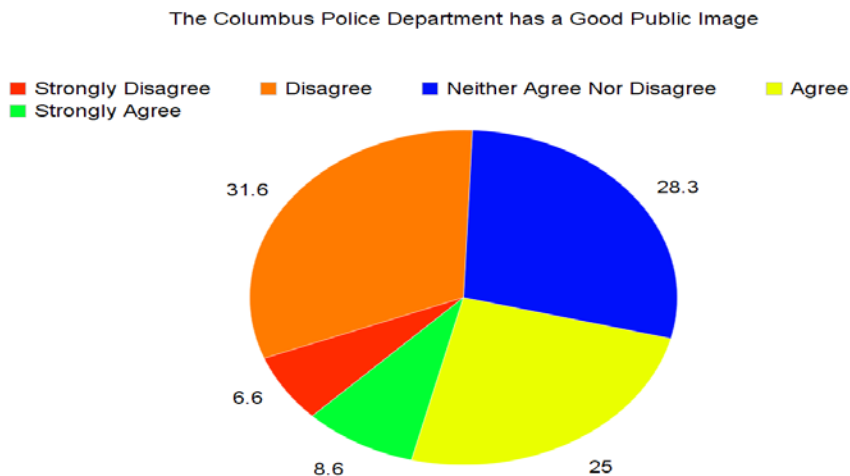
<u>Position</u>	<u>Number assigned</u>
Chief	1
Captain	2
Lieutenant	3
Sergeant	5
Commander	1
Patrol officer	40
Traffic officer	2
Investigator	9
Community officer	1
Organized crime officer	2
Special operations officer	2
Training	2
Total	70

Appendix B: Survey Results from Public Questionnaires

As part of the evaluation, the Consultant distributed questionnaires to the attendees for the six separate Public Safety Meetings. Analyses were conducted on the 139 returned and usable surveys. Police officers were also given questionnaires to complete. There were 49 officers employed with the CPD during the time frame the questionnaires were completed; 24 responded. Several others did not desire to complete a questionnaire but rather spoke privately with the Consultant, which was allowed. The results of the analyses are in the following section.

Public Perception of Columbus Police Department

The overall public perception of the Columbus Police Department is concerning. Of respondents, 33.6% gave a positive view of CPD's public image with only 45.6% expressing a belief that CPD was doing a good job.

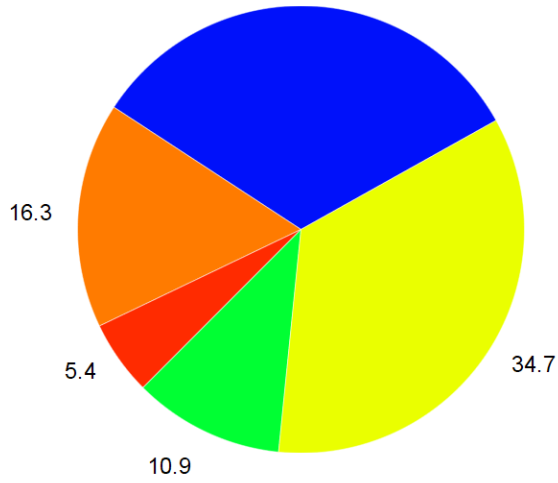


The Columbus Police Department has a Good Public Image

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Ward 1	2	7	4	4	0	17
Ward 2	0	1	1	3	1	6
Ward 3	2	11	12	9	3	37
Ward 4	2	11	3	5	4	25
Ward 5	2	10	9	9	3	33
Ward 6	2	6	5	7	1	21
Total	10	46	34	37	12	139

The Columbus Police Department is Doing a Good Job

■ Strongly Disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 ■ Agree
■ Strongly Agree

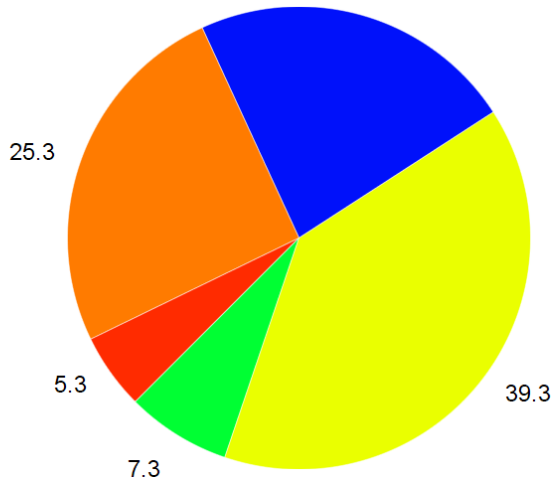


		The Columbus Police Department is doing a good job					
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Ward 1		1	7	3	4	0	15
Ward 2		0	1	3	2	1	7
Ward 3		2	5	9	16	4	36
Ward 4		3	3	7	8	3	24
Ward 5		1	3	15	12	3	34
Ward 6		0	5	5	6	2	18
Total		7	24	42	48	13	134

Only 46.3% of respondents felt positive about the CPD. Just slightly over half (50.6%) of respondents showed confidence in CPD leadership.

Overall, I Fell Very Positive About the Columbus Police Department

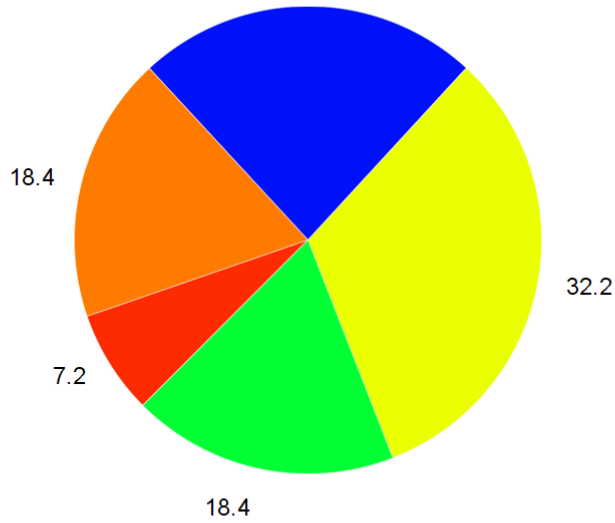
■ Strongly Disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 ■ Agree
■ Strongly Agree



Overall, I feel very positive about the Columbus Police Department						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Ward 1	3	5	3	5	0	16
Ward 2	0	1	1	4	1	7
Ward 3	1	8	9	17	1	36
Ward 4	3	6	4	8	3	24
Ward 5	1	7	10	13	3	34
Ward 6	0	9	3	9	0	21
Total	8	36	30	56	8	138

I Have Confidence in the Current Police Leadership

■ Strongly Disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 ■ Agree
■ Strongly Agree



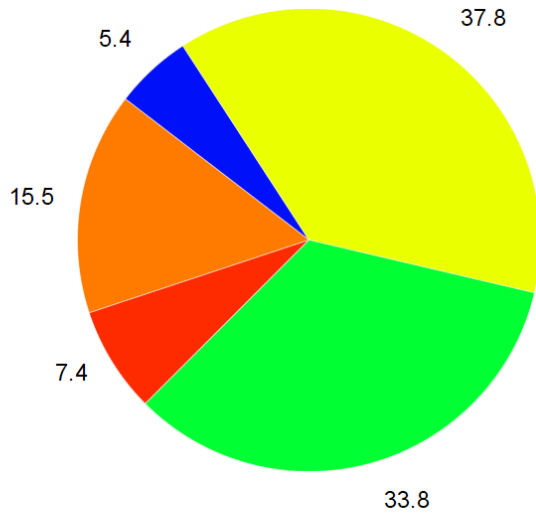
I have confidence in the current Columbus Police Department leadership

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Ward 1	2	3	5	4	1	15
Ward 2	0	1	1	3	2	7
Ward 3	2	6	7	15	7	37
Ward 4	2	5	5	6	7	25
Ward 5	3	5	9	12	5	34
Ward 6	2	5	6	6	2	21
Total	11	25	33	46	24	139

However, when citizens have come into contact with CPD officers, the majority (71.6%) expressed an opinion that the CPD officers were very professional.

The Last Time I Had Contact with Columbus PD, the Officers were Very Professional

■ Strongly Disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Neither Agree Nor Disagree
 ■ Agree
■ Strongly Agree



The last time I had contact with Columbus PD, the officers were very professional

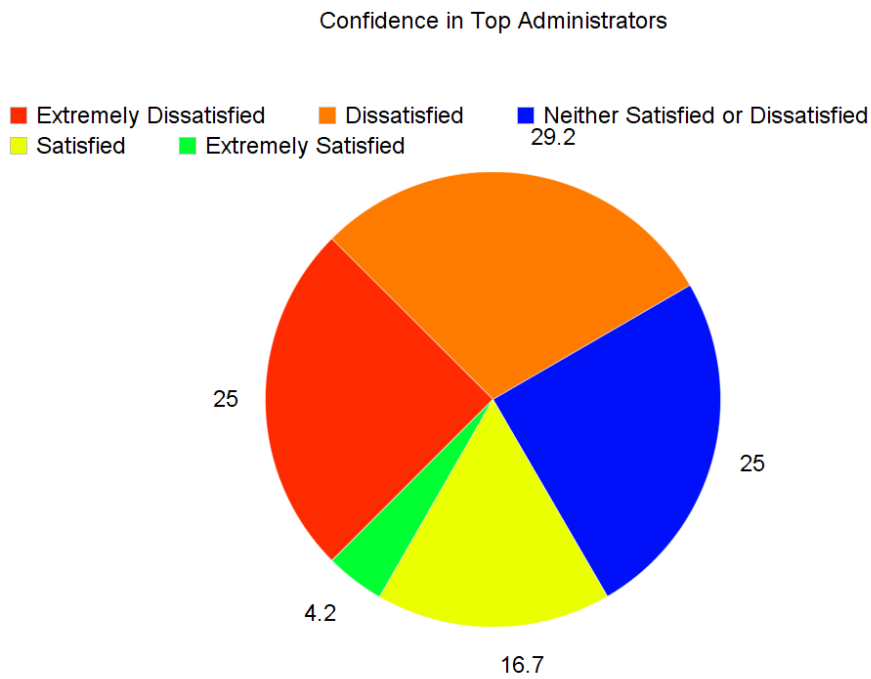
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Ward 1	3	6	1	5	1	16
Ward 2	1	0	0	3	2	6
Ward 3	1	3	2	15	16	37
Ward 4	2	4	1	10	8	25
Ward 5	2	4	1	13	12	32
Ward 6	1	5	0	6	7	19
Total	10	22	5	52	46	135

Conclusion: The majority of citizens look positively upon their encounters with CPD officers but do not hold positive views of the CPD leadership, CPD public image, or the overall job the CPD is doing. This does not seem to extend to the officers themselves, which respondents overwhelmingly report as being positive. It does however, suggest that citizens have concerns with the CPD administration and its public image, rather than a systematic issue with officers or officer conduct within the Department.

Appendix C: Survey Results from CPD Officers Questionnaire

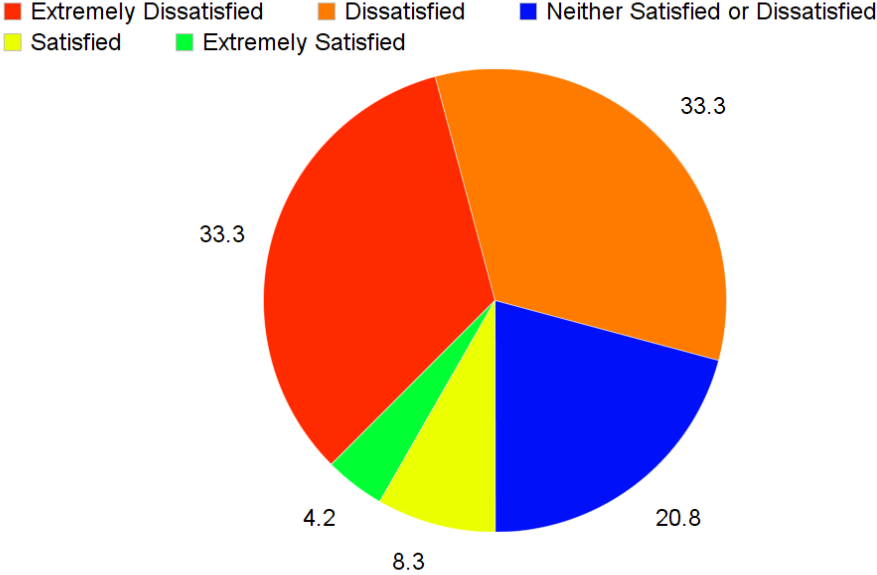
Officer Perception of CPD Administration

Most concerning is the perception of the CPD administration by the current police personnel. When asked if personnel have confidence in top administrators, 25% responded that they are highly dissatisfied, with 54.2% responding negatively. Only 4.2% of police had high confidence in top administrators, with 20.9% overall responding that they were neither satisfied or dissatisfied with the level of confidence in top administrators.

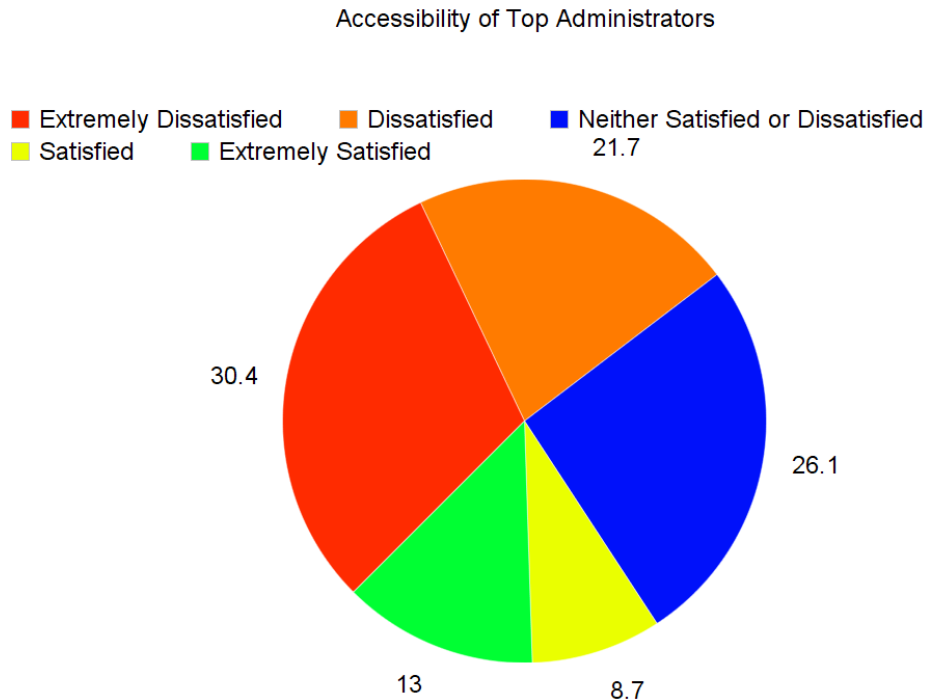


Of even greater concern is the response by police personnel of the level of trust in top administrators. 33.3% responded strongly negative, with only 4.2% responding strongly positive. Moreover, 66.6% of respondents answered that they have a negative level of trust in top administrators.

Level of Trust in Top Police Administrators



When asked about accessibility of top administrators, 52.9% responded negatively and only 17.6% responded positively.



Overall, police officers responded very negatively toward top administration. Most troubling is the lack of trust and confidence in top administrators by police personnel. Additionally, survey results suggest that top administrators are not available to staff.

Respondents' comments regarding the Chief include, "cops on the force do not know him," "he did not tell us his goals," that administration needs "better relationship with officers," and what is needed is "communication to be better from the top down."

Respondents also expressed concerns regarding promotion/hiring of individuals, feeling that the Chief "plays favorites," that promotion is about "who you know," and that people were not given "due process." This is especially

troubling, as the police department has lost a large percentage of officers since the current Chief took his position; this includes supervisors. According to respondents, positions were not filled properly, or with a selection process that helps promote those with experience. One of the greatest complaints is that supervisors lack training, were promoted due to favoritism, and that officers with more experience were not allowed to apply for positions.

Another area of concern is the level of micromanaging the administration seems to be engaged in. According to respondents, officers were followed home on break, and monitored by GPS by administrators. This is problematic, as this shows a lack of prioritization of issues in the police department. This close monitoring of officers, who are trained to have discretion in their jobs, promotes a culture of mistrust of the administration and fear of discipline for minor issues.

Appendix D: Suggested CPD Online Community Survey

One of the recommendations offered by the Consultant was to create a survey that will allow citizens to share their concerns regarding the CPD. The survey in this section is offered as a suggestion.

Columbus Police Department Community Survey



Striving for Efficiency, Effectiveness and Responsiveness

The Columbus Police Department is always interested in knowing what citizens are thinking and how well the CPD is performing. We believe in striving for efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness to the community. We need your help. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey and tell us what your thoughts are. You are free to leave your name and contact information, but it is not required. If you would rather complete a paper survey, they are available at the Columbus Police Department. Thank you in advance and we look forward to hearing from you.

Name: (optional)

Address: (optional)

Telephone: (optional)

E-mail address: (optional)

The following questions are designed to obtain basic information about the person responding to this survey.

Age Group

- 14-17
- 18-25
- 25-36
- 37-47
- 48-59
- 60-69
- Over 69

Gender

- Male
- Female

Ethnicity

- Asian
- American Indian
- Black
- Hispanic
- White
- Other

Number of people in Household:

Number of years in community:

Council ward where you reside:

- One
- Two
- Three
- Four
- Five
- Six

The following questions are designed to obtain information about resident perception of the community.

1. How safe do you feel walking in your neighborhood during the daytime?

- Very Safe
- Somewhat Safe
- Somewhat Unsafe
- Very Unsafe

2. How safe do you feel walking in your neighborhood at night?

- Very Safe
- Somewhat Safe
- Somewhat Unsafe
- Very Unsafe

3. How would you rate your fear of becoming a victim of crime in your neighborhood?

- High
- Medium
- Low
- None

4. Were you a victim of a crime within the last year?

- Yes
- No

5. Describe your areas of concern in your neighborhood. For each item listed, please indicate whether or not you believe the stated problem is a “major problem,” a “minor problem,” or “no problem.”

Public drinking

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Youths hanging out:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Gang activity:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Neighborhood Disputes:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Property maintenance:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Graffiti:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Vandalism:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Abandoned vehicles:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Home burglary:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Theft:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Motor vehicle theft:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Violent street crime:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Drug use:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Drug dealing:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Traffic violations:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Unsupervised Children:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Loud music/disturbance:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

Domestic violence:

- Major Problem
- Minor Problem
- No Problem

6. How would you rate the frequency of crime in your neighborhood?

- High
- Medium
- Low
- None

7. In the last year, do you feel that crime in your neighborhood has:

- Increased
- Stayed the Same
- Decreased

8. What kind of interaction have you had with the Columbus Police Department? (Check all that apply)

- Traffic Enforcement
- Traffic Accident
- Crime/Victim Report
- Witness
- D.A.R.E.* Program
- Neighborhood Watch
- Disabled Vehicle
- Bike Patrol
- Arrested
- Observed from distance
- None
- Other

9. How do you rate the attitude and behavior of police officers in Columbus?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Don't Know

10. How do you rate the leadership of the police department in its ability to address the needs of the community?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Don't Know

11. What is your opinion of the relationship between the citizens of Columbus and the Police Department?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor
- Don't Know

12. Are you satisfied with the amount of police presence in your neighborhood?

- Yes
- No

13. How do you rate the overall performance of the Columbus Police Department?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

Briefly, tell us what are the public safety issues that concern you the most? Please add any additional comments and/or suggestions, criticisms, etc., you may wish to share with us. Thank you.

Thank you very much for your participation!

If you wish to be contacted regarding any of the above issues, please provide us with your name, address, and telephone number.

Appendix E: Actual CPD Officer Surveys

Columbus Police Department (CPD) Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

Officer, I am interested in your perceptions of job satisfaction at Columbus Police Department (CPD). I need to understand how you feel, so I hope you will answer all the questions, but you can leave any question blank or stop answering at any time. **DO NOT PLACE YOUR NAME ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE.** Your responses are anonymous and can be connected to you. Your individual responses **WILL NOT** be seen by your superiors. I thank you for your cooperation!

Please indicate your level of job satisfaction by ranking your responses and by placing a check mark (✓) in the appropriate box:

1 = extremely dissatisfied

2 = dissatisfied

3 = neither satisfied or dissatisfied

4 = satisfied

5 = extremely satisfied

Section 1: Questions About Crime and Law Enforcement

How satisfied are you with

	1	2	3	4	5
1. the current retirement program					
2. the written promotional exam system					
3. the process and selection for job assignments and transfers					
4. supervisory support/backing					
5. availability of your immediate supervisor for (on call) guidance					
6. the willingness of your immediate supervisor to help in you obtaining goals					
7. the current appeal and grievance procedures					
8. departmental/community relations					
9. current base pay and salary increases					
10. current benefits: holidays, personal days, vacation time, etc.					
11. current insurance coverage					

12. compensation received for overtime, court time					
13. the approved off-duty job policy					
14. current educational incentives					
15. the availability of in-service training or outside schools					
16. the current method for filing reports					
17. your present assignment					
18. the general job description/duties of your present position					
19. disciplinary action for officers found to have knowingly provided false information					
20. confidence in top administrators					
21. level of trust in top police administrators					
22. accessibility of top police administrators					
23. the current patrol shifts/times					
24. the current ward boundaries					
25. the opportunities for advancement					

Appendix F: Actual Public Safety Survey

Columbus, Mississippi Community Public Safety Questionnaire

We are interested in your perceptions of crime and law enforcement. Section 1 includes questions about your neighborhood, Section 2 includes questions about you, and Section 3 asks you to write out your responses to some general questions. We need to understand how you feel, so we hope you will answer all the questions, but you can leave any question blank or stop answering at any time. Your responses are anonymous so none of your responses can be connected to you. We thank you for your cooperation!

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of these statements regarding public safety by placing a check mark (√) in the appropriate box.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
1. I feel safe in my neighborhood during the daytime.						
2. I feel safe in my neighborhood at night.						
3. There is proper lighting on my block after dark.						
4. I know most of my neighbors.						
5. I am concerned about drugs in my neighborhood.						
6. I am concerned about gangs in my neighborhood.						
7. I am satisfied with the police presence in my neighborhood.						
8. The Columbus Police Department is doing a good job.						
9. The Columbus Police Department is responsive to the needs of citizens.						

10. The last time I had contact with Columbus PD, the officers were very professional.						
11. I have confidence in the current Columbus Police Department leadership.						
12. The Columbus Police Department has a good public image.						
13. Overall, I feel very positive about the Columbus Police Department.						

Section 1: Questions About Crime and Law Enforcement

Section 2: Questions About You

1. Would you volunteer to help the Columbus Police Department? YES ____ NO ____
2. How many years have you lived in your neighborhood? _____
3. Have you been the victim of a burglary or vandalism in the last 12 months? YES ____ NO ____
4. Have you been the victim of a violent crime in the last 12 months? YES ____ NO ____
5. How long have you lived in the neighborhood? _____
6. What is your current age? _____
7. Are you male _____ or female _____ ?
8. What is your marital status?
Never married ____ Married ____ Separated ____ Widowed ____ Divorced ____
9. What is your race/ethnicity?
Black, not Hispanic ____ White, not Hispanic ____ Hispanic (any race) ____ Other ____
10. What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?
Less than high school ____ High school or GED ____ Some college, no degree ____
Associate's degree ____ Bachelor's degree ____ Graduate degree ____
Professional degree (e.g., J.D.) ____ Ph.D. ____
11. What is your employment status?
Unemployed and not looking ____ Unemployed but looking ____
Working part-time ____ Working full-time ____ Retired or disabled ____
12. What is your household's gross annual income?
Under \$15,000 ____ \$15,000 - \$24,999 ____ \$25,000 - \$34,999 ____

\$35,000 - \$44,999 _____ \$45,000 - \$54,999 _____ \$60,000 - \$74,999 _____
\$75,000 or more _____

13. In which neighborhood do you live?

Ward 1 (Taylor) _____ Ward 2 (Mickens) _____ Ward 3 (Box) _____
Ward 4 (Turner) _____ Ward 5 (Jones) _____ Ward 6 (Gavin) _____

Section 3: General Questions

4. What I like best about the Columbus Police Department is:

5. What I would most like to see improved at the Columbus Police Department is:

6. Please add any additional comments and/or suggestions, criticisms, etc. you may wish to share:

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ENDNOTES

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