



DeKalb County Government

Manuel J. Maloof Center
1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Agenda Item

File #: 2025-0390

Substitute

12/9/2025

File Status:

Public Hearing: YES ☐ NO ☒

Department: Board of Commissioners - District 6

SUBJECT:

Commission District(s): All Commission Districts

A Resolution to Establish a Community Advisory Board for the DeKalb County Police Department.

Information Contact: Commissioner Edward C. "Ted" Terry

Phone Number: 404-371-4909

PURPOSE:

To establish a Community Advisory Board for the DeKalb County Police Department. This Community Advisory Board's (CAB) purpose is to serve as a collaborative, non-enforcement-oriented sounding board, providing constructive feedback on community concerns, policies, and engagement strategies to the police department, thus enhancing the relationship between the DeKalb County Police Department and the communities it serves.

NEED/IMPACT:

DeKalb County is committed to fostering positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), through its certification process, includes civilian panels to review police department performance on community engagement, which is widely recognized as a best practice for promoting transparency, accountability, and community trust in law enforcement. The establishment of a year-round, full-time Community Advisory Board (CAB) for the DeKalb County Police Department would align with CALEA best practices and provide a consistent platform for ongoing community input, supporting a long-term framework for transparency and accountability that transcends changes in leadership, whether at the level of the Chief of Police or the Chief Executive Officer.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Unknown at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the resolution and authorize the Chief Executive Officer to execute all necessary documents....

A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD FOR THE DEKALB COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

WHEREAS, DeKalb County is committed to fostering positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), through its certification process, includes civilian panels to review police department performance on community engagement, which is widely recognized as a best practice for promoting transparency, accountability, and community trust in law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has established various advisory and oversight boards, such as the Watershed Billing Advisory Board, the Parks and Recreation Board, the Community Councils, and the SPLOST Oversight Committee, to enhance transparency, accountability, and public trust in county operations; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a year-round, full-time Community Advisory Board (CAB) for the DeKalb County Police Department would align with CALEA best practices and provide a consistent platform for ongoing community input, supporting a long-term framework for transparency and accountability that transcends changes in leadership, whether at the level of the Chief of Police or the Chief Executive Officer; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Community Advisory Board is to serve as a collaborative, non-enforcement-oriented sounding board, providing constructive feedback on community concerns, policies, and engagement strategies to the police department, thus enhancing the relationship between the DeKalb County Police Department and the communities it serves; and

WHEREAS, the Community Advisory Board will operate in an advisory capacity only, without investigative or disciplinary powers, and will focus on fostering communication, mutual understanding, and engagement between the police department and the community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners hereby establishes a Community Advisory Board (CAB) for the DeKalb County Police Department, with the following provisions aligned with the appointment processes and structure of other county advisory boards:

- 1. Establishment and Purpose:** The Community Advisory Board is hereby created to serve as a structured forum for continuous community input on police department policies, engagement initiatives, and public safety practices, ensuring long-term accountability and promoting trust in DeKalb County policing.

2. **Appointments:** The CAB shall comprise members appointed through the same process used for the SPLOST Oversight Committee and other county advisory boards, with appointments made by the Board of Commissioners and the CEO. One additional appointment shall be made by the DeKalb Chiefs Association to ensure alignment with regional public safety coordination. All appointees to the CAB shall be required to have graduated from the DeKalb Citizens Police Academy prior to the commencement of their term. Appointees shall represent a diverse cross-section of DeKalb County's communities and bring knowledge, experience, and commitment to fostering constructive community relations.

3. **Meetings and Structure:** The CAB shall convene regularly with police department leadership to discuss relevant issues, review engagement strategies, and provide non-binding feedback and recommendations. Meetings shall be open to the public to promote transparency and inclusivity.

4. **Reporting and Feedback:** The CAB shall report periodically to the Employee Relations and Public Safety (ERPS) Committee of the Board of Commissioners, summarizing discussions, community concerns, and any recommendations for consideration. Reports will also be made publicly available to enhance community awareness and involvement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners directs the Law Department to develop the specific structure, membership criteria, and operational guidelines for the Community Advisory Board and to present this implementation plan for final approval by the Board of Commissioners.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Community Advisory Board shall receive recurring training and regular briefings from the DeKalb County Police Department's Real Time Crime Center (RTCC) regarding the capabilities, policies, and community impacts of surveillance technologies, including video monitoring and license plate recognition systems. The intent of this provision is to provide a transparent forum for public concerns about privacy and ensure that the expanded use of surveillance tools is subject to informed civilian oversight to guard against potential misuse or overreach.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 20__ by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners.

Michelle Long Spears
Presiding Officer
Board of Commissioners
DeKalb County, Georgia

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer, this ____ day of _____, 20__

Lorraine Cochran-Johnson
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Barbara Sanders-Norwood
County Clerk
Board of Commissioners and
Chief Executive Officer

Terry Phillips
Interim County Attorney
DeKalb County, Georgia