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# CITY OF BALTIMORE

Brandon M. Scott – Mayor  
Zeke Cohen – Council President



## Office of Council Services

Nancy Mead – Director  
100 Holliday Street, Room 415  
Baltimore, MD 21202

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## PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Honorable Mark Conway  
CHAIR

### HEARING NOTES

*LO25-0005*

*Crime Reduction and Violence Prevention*

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**Hearing Date:** 12/9/2025

**Hearing Start Time:** 1:00 PM

**Hearing End Time:** 3:00 PM

**Location:** Du Burns Council Chamber / Webex

**Total Estimated Attendance:** 75

**Committee Members in Attendance:**

- **Chair** Mark Conway
- Phylicia Porter
- Antonio Glover
- **Vice Chair** Zac Blanchard
- Paris Gray

**Additional Members in Attendance:**

- Odette Ramos
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### **MAJOR SPEAKERS**

*(This is NOT an attendance record.)*

- Stefanie Mavronis – Director, MONSE
  - Chief Richard Worley - BPD
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### **NOTES**

- Chair Conway began the hearing by introducing the topic
  - This will be the last oversight hearing for BPD and MONSE for the year and is reflective over the past year
  - This has been a successful year
  - Thank those in the room who have done the work to drive down crime and violence
    - We have turned a page for the City and we can now engage in different conversations
  - Will be looking for those represented to address what the future looks like
    - There will be shifts in funding and other potential changes
- Commissioner Worley shared BPD's presentation
  - We began tracking homicide numbers in 1970

- Lowest ever 171, currently 127
  - 24% reduction in shootings
- Only in 3 years
  - 2022 – over 1,000 victims of shootings
  - Today – just over 300
- We have been able to do this because of the hard work of the men and women of the BPD
  - Despite being 500 cops short
- Clearance rates
  - Homicides - 64% vs. 34% two years ago
- Significant reductions in homicides across every district – notes the western district
- Dramatic reduction in non-fatal shootings
- Robberies - down in every single district
- Rapes – down
- Burglaries – will be focus over the coming years, like the attention paid to others previously
- Auto-theft - down
- Larcenies – will get more attention with improvements in more dangerous crimes
- Reviewed entertainment district unit
- Recruitment
  - Changed advertising company and it has been a success
  - Currently 166 individuals in the academy who should become officers within the next 6 months
- Compliance
  - Significant progress in complying with the Consent Decree
  - Almost 50% of the decree is in initial compliance
    - Anticipate 50% in full and effective compliance
- Youth and Community
  - Juvenile arrests increased relative to last year
  - Youth advisory board
    - First meeting in November
  - Currently accepting applications for LGBTQ advisory board
- Director Mavronis shared MONSE's presentation
  - 3-years of sustained reductions in violence
  - Must continue to build on the work
  - Guided by 5-year comprehensive violence prevention plan
    - MONSE is inter-agency partner
  - Prevention – intervention – enforcement – re-entry
    - Group violence reduction strategy (GVRS) is notable throughout
  - MONSE reduces the burden on law enforcement and the justice system
  - GVRS
    - Studied and evidence-based
    - Goal is to expand the strategy to the remaining districts
  - Since starting in the Western District
    - Connected 335 high-risk people with services
    - Significant recidivism rates among those enrolled
  - Community violence intervention
    - safe streets – 1652 mediations

- 302 community events
- Victim services
  - Case management assists victims in accessing services
- Intimate partner violence
  - Helps victims navigate protective order process
  - Staff participates in engagement activities about signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Anti-human trafficking
  - Disburses funding to community partners
- Re-entry services
  - Take referrals for support services
- MONSE priorities
  - Release of 5-year violence reduction plan
  - GVRS expansion
  - Strengthen community violence intervention ecosystem
  - Advance and enhance youth public safety coordination
  - Partnerships with DPSCS around safe return planning
  - Foster and establish the Office of Returning Citizens
  - Sustain reductions in violence
- Questions
  - Chair Conway
    - We often engage in difficult conversations
    - We have been receiving ARPA funds to sustain MONSE
      - We know that is ending at the end of the year, how are we thinking about continuing those efforts?
        - What has gone to the agencies here?
    - MONSE
      - The initial ARPA funds were largely dedicated to community partners and staffing of the new agency
        - That has always been treated as a one-time funding source
      - FY26 will be the last year that ARPA funding is part of the agency's funding
      - Endeavor to be specific about what move forward
        - Not necessarily everything will be picked up by the general fund
        - Some positions started under ARPA were deemed inessential
    - Continue to press on this topic to assist the Council in determining what we need vs. don't need to keep
      - How are ARPA funded partners affected by the end of funds
    - Are there any BPD efforts funded by ARPA
      - BPD operations will continue regardless
      - Some was used for the take-home vehicle program
    - Priority is that State's Attorney and MONSE/Administration "figure it out"
      - Wants to ensure our programs are efficient and effective
      - Asks for an explainer about the issue is but if they cannot do that in this forum, would be happy to do so offline
      - The break implicates concerns for the City's progress

- State's Attorney's Office
  - Out of respect for State's Attorney and Mayor, the office will not weigh in on that today
- We hope that the two offices find some common ground
  - There are significant pressures that will be a challenge over the coming year and a lack of coordination could be damaging
  - If there is anything that the Chair can do, he offers his help
- MOGR
  - Mayor and State's Attorney will be meeting and hope to resume the partnership
- Vice Chair Blanchard
  - The drop between this year, last year, and the year before is clear
  - On MONSE, the Lexington market workgroup has been incredibly helpful
  - The clearance rates are far higher in last year than every category
    - You are more likely to be charged for a major crime in Baltimore city than nationwide as a whole
  - On recruitment – how are we so increasing new officers
    - BPD – the new advertising company has been effective
      - We also have attention at events (Ravens, etc)
      - Talk to every single recruitment class
  - On potential change to shifts
    - BPD – still need additional staffing
      - Working with FOP
      - Would allow the department to reduce average staff in patrol
      - Will only change schedules if they can do it correctly
      - Would like to eliminate drafting (requiring officers to stay over)
  - On the entertainment district
    - How is BPD assessing that the strategy is working
      - BPD – based on complaints in the area
        - The shift to districts had an impact
        - Building towards adding more people to the entertainment specific district
    - With bigger recruitment classes, do we have an estimate for full staffing
      - BPD – will not build into that unit until we have numbers for 12 hour shift change
  - On open container
    - In the future, can we get a breakdown on those stops moving forward?
    - BPD – there are very little documented specifically that way but will share
- CM Schleifer
  - Safe streets and BPD were working together with BPD conducting background checks for safe streets
    - What would need to be on that check to prevent safe streets from hiring an employee
      - MONSE

- BPD gets a list of names with prospective candidates and BPD gives a recommendation if someone is a firm NO
  - From there, before someone would be hired, they need to go through a community vetting process
  - Then, they sit for an interview with a representative from catholic charities, MONSE, community, and district BPD command
- So if BPD says don't hire someone, they aren't hired?
  - MONSE – no
- As safe streets employees are not city employees, who is paying BPD for the background checks?
  - MONSE – does not pay BPD
- So any third-party city partner can ask BPD for a background check for free?
  - MONSE – MONSE is a partner with BPD
- When city agencies provide services to one another, there is a compensation process, it is concerning that non-city employees can get services for free
- BPD knows who all safe streets employees are
- Thanks Commissioner Worley for leadership
  - We have spoken countless times about clearance rates and appreciates your attention to that
  - Believes one of the top reasons for crime reduction is the solving of crimes
  - Clearance allows you to target frequent offenders
  - When the clearance rate is low, violence is high, when clearance is high, violence has been low
- On Crime lab – where are we in terms of making sure they have the necessary resources?
  - Backlog is now almost nonexistent – crime lab has been very effective with hiring
  - It is also incredibly important that we get cooperation from the community
  - Crime lab just won an award for efficiency
- CM Gray
  - Thank you to all partners, including SAO
  - On School-based violence mediation
    - What indicators do you use to decide whether the program should be scaled further? And, how does school-centered support reduce burden on BPD?
      - MONSE
        - Starting an evaluation with the Baltimore City Health Department and the University of Maryland
      - BPD
        - Looking at metrics like increased school attendance and decreases in complaints from businesses in that immediate area
  - On safe streets – what has contributed most to stabilizing staffing and how are you measuring the quality of mediation
    - Largely due to collaboration

- On quality of mediation
    - Liaisons who ensure that data is accurate
- When people are looking at the numbers and seeing that we have been safer, we have to remember that this is about the people
  - This is not about elections, this is about the people of Baltimore
  - If we are seeing numbers continue to decline, we have to keep that going
  - Squabbles need to stop – we do not need them at a time like this
- CM Ramos
  - So glad GVRS is coming to the northern district
    - Very confident the strategy works
  - Victim services team at MONSE – grateful for responsiveness
  - On GVRS arrests – 581 all time – how many were prosecuted
    - Not only an arrest but also a charge
      - 251 were indictments
  - The partnership has clearly been very effective
  - Human trafficking
    - Was BPD bringing in referrals on blue dot program?
      - BPD – blue dot is more specific to fire/medical-related efforts but BPD is very involved in trafficking efforts
        - And all eventually go to BPD
  - Work that GVRS/MONSE is doing is vitally important and we need everyone
- Chair Conway
  - Did receive a response from the Mayor on open air drug markets
    - Want to resolve that specific issue
    - Needs more targeting
  - MOGR
    - This is a part of the comprehensive violence prevention and opioid response strategic plan
  - We may take on addiction and may even take down specific distribution centers
    - But they return
  - The letter shared with the Chair suggests there are comprehensive violence prevention plans, MONSE community intervention, and GVRS but those are about violence
    - This is not a specific plan to target open air drug markets
    - Agrees that they are related
    - The letter is a good outline and it is not something easy to do but it is a worthwhile endeavor
  - Wants a concerted, focused effort on exactly that
  - GVRS
    - Tasked to develop a comprehensive plan to take on addiction and drug dealing
    - Developed a collaboration with various agencies and outside partners to ensure services are there
    - When criminal activity does not cease, those partners help to enhance enforcement

- MONSE
  - The efforts in Lexington Market are important and exemplary of the administration's plan(s)
  - They are also standing up efforts in Pigtown area
- This is a team effort and we need to be able to talk about that effort, and would like to discuss with the relevant actors what it takes to resolve these issues
  - We have some components but there is not a specific targeted effort on this problem
- CM Ramos
  - We have resolved open-air drug markets in my district with MONSE, BPD, and the community
  - Sometimes people wake up and say that they need to pay rent, and they need to eat
- Chair
  - Those incentives will all continue to exist
  - What is our response when the activity does return?
- CM Ramos
  - Drug sales in my district are always hidden and need to address that as well
- Chair
  - Agrees but the open air-markets affect the broader economy
    - People won't buy homes, etc.
- CM Glover
  - The open-air markets in my district are improved from what they were in the past
  - This is an all-hands on deck approach
  - There is also homelessness in the district
    - MONSE helps but they aren't the responsible office
    - We need to get all agencies responsible
  - We are on the right path – the trajectory of the neighborhood is genuinely changing
  - Would like to see additional engagement from GVRs
    - Some earlier notice on community engagement would be helpful
  - Need to maintain the all-hands on deck approach to keep the work going
- Chair
  - Lowest crime rates ever across the board
  - Amazing work, people want more and they are not wrong to ask for it
  - The work is not done
  - Pressing on issues are only looking for more
  - Consent decree compliance
    - About halfway towards compliance – what is the timeline and what are we expecting in the coming year
      - BPD
        - We don't determine when the consent decree is done – the Court and monitoring team does
        - Have been pushing the monitoring team to conduct more assessments
        - We expect continued improvements
    - What sort of outstanding things still need to be implemented
      - BPD – in the department's opinion, we are there

- Up to the monitoring teams, who need to complete the necessary assessments
- CM Gray
  - On open-air drug markets – for public record, this has been an issue for my entire life
    - This is not a 5-year issue
  - We definitely need to solve it
  - MONSE provides a wholistic approach
  - We need systems that ensure families are whole and stable
    - Without that there will be criminal elements
- Chair
  - Acknowledges this has been a longtime issue
  - That is why it warrants a plan to address it
  - We also had crime at historic highs and, as a result, we put forward a plan to address it
  - People don't come to us so we can tell them – this has always been a problem
- CM Glover
  - It takes time to address these issues
  - We have hit a historical low
  - Right now we have an administration who is 100% behind addressing these problems
  - We certainly still have work to do
  - We should not be pointing fingers – we are headed in the right direction
- Chair
  - We do not disagree
  - Asking those agencies to continue in the great work they are doing
- CM Glover
  - Once up on a time we were very critical of squeegee kids
  - And it came to a halt
- Chair
  - With a plan!
- CM Glover
  - We should continue to work together as a team
- Chair
  - The onus of this committee is to press on the issues
  - We are expected to figure it out and have answers
- BPD
  - There is accountability for district commanders in areas with open air drug markets
  - Been clear what is expected of those responsible
  - Accountability is sometimes uncomfortable, that is okay
  - Every district is up in felony and misdemeanor arrests
- Chair
  - Put those responses in one place and let everyone know what the plan is to let people know what we are doing
  - We are not going to arrest our way out of this problem
    - Though it will be part of the solution – not the measurement

- CM Gray
  - This next hearing should have everyone here, including health department, DJS, DSS, if we are looking for an all hands approach
- Chair
  - We have had several of those agencies here at prior hearings
  - A committee hearing is not the place where we come up with a plan
  - It is where we review and hold those agencies accountable
  - Somebody needs to steer the ship
- CM Glover
  - Should also endeavor to include the sheriff's office
- Chair
  - Thanks everyone for their hard work
  - We have made tremendous progress as a city
  - We all have a job and people are counting on us
  - Continue doing this work
  - Despite being tough, we appreciate you

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***FURTHER STUDY REQUESTED***

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Hearing Packet in bill file? -----	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Attendance Sheet in bill file? -----	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Agency reports read? -----	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Hearing televised or audio-digitally recorded? -----	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the bill file? -----	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Evidence of notification to property owners in bill file? -----	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

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Notes by: Ethan Navarre  
 Notes Date: 12/9/2025

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