



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

Kevin Davis
Interim Police Commissioner

October 16, 2015

Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
Room 400, City Hall
100 N. Holliday Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202



Attention: Natawna Austin, Executive Secretary

**Re: City Council Bill No. 15-0231R
Informational Hearing – Community Policing – Officer Friendly**

Dear Council President Young and Members of the City Council:

The Baltimore Police Department (BPD or the Department) has reviewed Council Bill 15-0231R. The Department understands this hearing is intended to discuss strategies and actions that will improve the relationship between the Police Department and the youth of Baltimore. The Department shares in this goal and will eagerly participate in these discussions.

As announced by Interim Commissioner Davis during his confirmation hearing before the Executive Appointments Committee on October 14, 2015, the Department will be reviving an “Officer Friendly” program under the command of Lt. Colonel Melvin Russell. The Department looks forward to discussing the potential parameters of this program at this hearing.

In addition to a revived “Officer Friendly” program, BPD has expanded or launched a number of initiatives that create opportunities for youth and police officers to interact in a non-law enforcement setting. The goal of these initiatives is to build a relationship of mutual understanding and trust that will persist as youth transition to adult members of the community. These initiatives include:

- **Police Explorers Program.** The Police Explorer’s Program is a program designed to introduce Baltimore high school students to law enforcement and public safety. The Explorer program provides positive exposure to police and law enforcement in hopes that Baltimore’s youth will choose a career as a BPD police officer. Earlier this month, TD Bank made a \$25,000 donation to the Explorers program that will be used fund a program in one high school in each of the City’s nine police districts.
- **Police Commissioner’s Summer Camp.** Throughout this summer, the Department hosted a series of two-day Summer Camps for children ages 11-14. The Summer Camp series allowed children to engage in a number of activities alongside police officers, including sports, games, and arts and crafts.
- **Police Commissioner’s Youth Basketball League.** This summer, the Department organized and ran the Youth Basketball League. Sergeant Michael Jones Sr., Sergeant Phil Dixon, and

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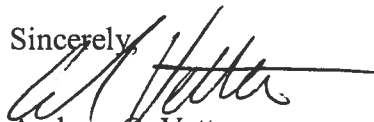
Detective Tavon McCoy organized the league to create an opportunity to promote recreation, sportsmanship, and mentorship with Baltimore's youth.

- **Reading Partners.** Last school year, BPD partnered with Reading Partners, a program in which community volunteers partner with local schools to help kids master basic reading skills. This partnership creates a positive interaction between young students and uniformed police officers inside of the City's public schools. The Department has renewed this partnership for the 2015-2016 school year and hopes to increase the number of BPD employees participating in the program.

In addition to these initiatives, the Department is planning a number of changes to improve community policing in the BPD. One such change is to re-establish posts within the Department's staffing models. Posts will allow officers to work the same "beat" each shift, so that they have the opportunity to build a relationship with the communities they serve. The Department is also developing new curriculums to be taught to police trainees at the BPD Academy. First, a "History of Baltimore" curriculum is in development to create a unique way of learning about the culture of Baltimore. Recruits will be hearing from leaders representing all of the diverse communities and institutions of Baltimore. The Department is also developing a "Foot Patrol" curriculum. Foot Patrol is the bedrock of effective community policing. Instructors will teach the "art" of foot patrol, emphasizing concepts and skills such as interpersonal communication and emotional intelligence.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The Department looks forward to working with the City Council on this matter.

Sincerely,



Andrew G. Vetter

Director of Government Affairs