

Town of Purcellville Community Policing Advisory Committee

The Town Council of Purcellville (TC)—as the elected body representing and answerable to Purcellville's citizens—will establish the Community Policing Advisory Committee (CPAC) to enhance communication between the TC, the Police Department and Purcellville's residents, businesses and visitors, on all issues related to ~~how Purcellville enforces its laws~~ public safety. CPAC will identify and focus on public safety issues and collaborate with community leaders, community organizations, and the full spectrum of stakeholders in ~~nurturing the health~~ supporting the public safety of the community and enhancing public trust in law enforcement, as well as crafting solutions to multi-faceted community concerns.

CPAC will provide insights and recommendations related to public safety and public trust in law enforcement to the TC and Chief of Police to better foster community engagement and alignment on issues and opportunities.

Mission Purpose

To represent the Purcellville community in its full diversity—as advisors to TC and the Police Department based on strategic oversight—in matters related to police-community relations, planning, law enforcement training, programming, and public education to include promoting awareness of racial injustices.

To improve public trust of the police, deter police misconduct, and increase transparency.

To promote equal and fair treatment of all citizens by town law enforcement and public safety.

Duties

CPAC's duties shall include, but not be limited to, advising and making recommendations regarding issues concerning public safety and law enforcement services in the town, such as:

- Enhancing police-community relations;
- Providing a community perspective and recommendations concerning the procedures, programs, policies, training, use of technology, and effectiveness of law enforcement;
- Increasing public awareness of Purcellville's law enforcement services and programs including business, residential, visitor safety, crime prevention, and general law enforcement activities;
- Holding of regular meetings to solicit public input regarding law enforcement services and programs;
- Providing multiple easily accessible platforms through which suggestions, comments, questions, or complaints can be submitted to the CPAC by the community (e.g. website, email, etc.);
- Serving as a liaison between the full diversity of the Purcellville community and Police Department;
- Reviewing significant community issues and making recommendations on potential resolutions;

Commented [1]: Limiting "enhanced communication" to only the "enforcement of laws" may be too narrow a focus.

Commented [2]: "nurturing the health" of the community may be too broad. Could be reworded to "enhancing public safety and public trust in law enforcement"?

Commented [3]: Good clear purpose, so long as the problems for which the solutions are being crafted are clearly identified first

Commented [4]: Good clear purpose, but should specify that the "insights and recommendations" are related to public safety and public trust in law enforcement.

Commented [5]: Phrase: "better foster community engagement and alignment" – is the phrase intended to summarize/describe the purposes outlined in the paragraph above? Is it different from the purposes of: (i) "enhance communication" (ii) "identify public safety issues" and (iii) "collaborate to craft solutions to concerns"? If its meaning is the same as the 3 purposes outlined above, then I would delete the phrase and the sentence it is contained in, here, since these points are covered above.

Commented [6]: I recommend extracting more clearly the three missions of CPAC as identified in this section, as follows:

Mission

The mission of the Community Policing Advisory Committee (CPAC) is to: (i) enhance open communication and trust between Purcellville's residents, businesses, and visitors, and the Purcellville police department; (ii) identify public safety issues and communicate those issues to the police department and Town Council, and (iii) craft solutions to multi-faceted community safety concerns in collaboration with community leaders, community organizations, and the full spectrum of stakeholders.

Commented [7]: We think that this rewording removes some important phrasing.

Commented [8]: I think that this "mission" statement should be retitled "purpose." I think the purpose would be more clear if written as follows:

Purpose

To represent the Purcellville community in its full diversity as advisors to the Town Council and Police on matters related to police-community relations, police training, and police protocols. To improve public trust of police by increasing communication and transparency. To raise awareness about racial injustices in policing. To promote public education on policing matters. To promote the fair and equal treatment of all citizens by the police.

- Reviewing ~~investigations into police~~ complaints ~~against the police as submitted by members of the public~~ and referring those complaints ~~back~~ to internal investigators if necessary;
- Assisting in community outreach efforts;
- Encouraging individuals and community groups to assist in the ~~lawful~~ implementation of our community's law enforcement and public safety programs and services;
- When warranted and as a task force of the Town of Purcellville, reviewing Town of Purcellville police actions with regards to bias and use of deadly force, making recommendations regarding accountability and policy change;
- Producing public reports at least yearly on CPAC's activities;
- Assisting with the budget process for law enforcement through an in-depth review of the budget, carrying out program evaluation, and providing recommendations for reprioritizing distribution of funding within the police department;
- Providing recommendations to the TC for redirection of police funding to other community-based programs to support public safety and well-being;
- Reviewing and recommending policies on other matters related to how Purcellville citizens want their laws to be enforced

Committee members are expected to;

- Listen carefully to all community opinions, attitudes, needs and discuss these with the TC and Police Department;
- Study programs and services, analyzing problems and needs;
- Offer new proposals and recommend changes in programs, policies, and standards;
- Adhere to a code of ethics;¹
- Assist in providing community members with information about Purcellville's law enforcement policies and programs.
- Hold town officials accountable to the community when town officials adopt or reject law enforcement policies based on CPAC's advice by explaining or amplifying explanations through diverse media on why the town officials adopted or rejected the policy recommendation.

Authority

CPAC relies on the authority of the citizens of Purcellville through their elected body, the Town Council, ~~in to performance itself an advisory role on how Purcellville wants to enforce its laws~~. CPAC recommendations are not binding on the Mayor, Town Council, Town Manager, or Chief of Police, but CPAC can and should hold town officials accountable to the community by broadcasting clearly its recommendations and continuously seeking community input. The Chief of Police answers to the Town Manager and is accountable to the TC and community for how the town ~~enforces its laws~~ and promotes and improves public safety.

CPAC may review, at a strategic level, ~~incidents citizen-initiated complaints~~ related to law enforcement and provide advice to TC and town officials related to law enforcement in light of community expectations. CPAC should have access to any data, documents, and records

Commented [9]: This is a sensitive personnel area. If CPAC can review internal affairs investigations, it would require the Town disclose certain personnel records and the identities of witnesses, and the content of their testimony. Generally, these types of records are not shared in this manner. If the intention of this provision was, instead, to review any complaint against the police as submitted by a member of the public, then I think there could be room for that.

Commented [10]: I am not sure what this means. We would want to avoid "vigilante" approaches to law enforcement. How would the general public "implement" a law enforcement program or service?

Commented [11]: I recommend against CPAC reviewing/opining on police actions with regard to bias or deadly force. The CPAC could recommend "bias" and "deadly force" training opportunities, could ensure that the public is aware of how the police are trained in those areas, and could assist in establishing the framework for how "bias" and "deadly force" cases are investigated/reviewed. But the review/investigation itself should be conducted by trained professionals.

Commented [12]: We think there's a significant difference between review and investigation, and this statement does not preclude review by other groups or professionals – it just provides the Town with another potential source of recommendations and insights

Commented [13]: I recommend that this be reworded since the scope of CPAC goes beyond the methodology of "how laws are enforced." Since the scope of CPAC's advisory role was already described in the mission, purpose, and duties sections, perhaps this sentence could state, "CPAC relies on the authority of the citizens of Purcellville through their elected body, the Town Council, to perform its advisory role."

Commented [14]: Suggest adding to the end of this sentence:

".... and promotes and preserves public safety."

I think that policing goes beyond "enforcing written laws." It encompasses community engagement, cursory investigations of oddities that don't rise to the level of enforcing a law, and encompasses responding to many many many calls concerning domestic disputes (sometimes involving children) that also do not rise to the level, per se, of enforcing a written law.

Commented [15]: This needs to be fleshed out more. I am not sure what this is intended to include, but it should not include review of the contents of an administrative investigation. What does "incident" mean in this context?

¹ To be based on the code of ethics developed by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement: https://www.nacole.org/nacole_code_of_ethics_2

necessary to perform this function. However, CPAC shall have no authority to investigate or otherwise participate in personnel matters involving specific law enforcement personnel. CPAC will not play a role in civil or criminal litigation.

CPAC's mission as a representative advisory committee on issues of law enforcement warrants a degree of independence from the Town Council and Police Department that is reinforced through membership rules that the TC-liaison to the committee will not have a voting role and no active Purcellville law enforcement officers or other town employees may serve on CPAC.

Membership

CPAC shall be made up of nine representatives plus a non-voting TC liaison. All members should be residents. Members may not be current Purcellville police officers or other town employees. Members must disclose any affiliations that could be sources of bias which would affect their ability to carry out their duties on CPAC. Members should receive training on relevant topics to their duties and all aspects of our community, including police practices, civilian oversight, and community diversity.

TC, which shall be the appointing authority, should make selections based on principles of inclusivity and diversity. TC should reach out to community organizations that are dedicated to promoting diversity and inclusion to nominate members for the committee. Members could serve a staggered, two-year term and should provide a balance of viewpoints. The terms will be staggered by giving four of the initial representatives a one-year term.

TC may choose to require members to attend community policing or other law enforcement policy courses to gain further knowledge about law enforcement practices and philosophies. These trainings necessitate the creation of a budget for this committee, which should be tied to the police department budget as a percentage of that budget in order to account for necessary growth of the committee if the police department grows or reduction if the police department decreases in size.

Members should develop a relationship with town law enforcement and participate in ride-alongs when possible in order to better understand their duties.

~~Members should receive training on relevant topics to their duties and all aspects of our community, including police practices, civilian oversight, and community diversity.~~

Bylaws and Rules of Procedure

CPAC shall ~~be responsible for~~ draft ing bylaws and rules of procedure.

Bylaws shall include a procedure to make a record of meeting minutes and these minutes shall be forwarded to the TC in a timely manner.

Commented [16]: This policy is tied closely to the first paragraph and should be incorporated into the first sentence of the first paragraph.

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Commented [18]: This policy is tied closely to the first paragraph and should be incorporated into the first sentence of the first paragraph.

Commented [19]:

Commented [20]: Delete "be responsible for" so it reads, "CPAC shall draft bylaws and rules of procedure."

TC should establish some boundaries for these bylaws and rules of procedure.

Meeting Schedule

CPAC shall have at least four regular meetings each year. Special meetings may be held as often as CPAC deems necessary so long as they are noticed to the public through the Town Clerk in accordance with state law. All CPAC meetings shall be open to the public, except as required by law.

Commented [21]: Add: "... so long as they are noticed to the public through the Town Clerk in accordance with state law."

Review and Evaluation

The TC shall periodically review CPAC's function and activities to determine whether CPAC is fulfilling the purpose for which it was established.

Staff Resources

CPAC may require staff support to record and prepare minutes and perform additional tasks as assigned.

Commented [22]: I expect that CPAC will create a significant time commitment for one or members of the police department, since a significant level of communication/teaching will be needed.

Terms of Reference

This document defines the following terms to hold the expressed, specific meanings as applied to the Community Policing Advisory Committee.

Commented [23]: Ideally, this will save police time and resources in the long run.

Oversight - one of the primary responsibilities of this advisory committee is to provide both the Town's elected officials and its police department advice based on citizen input to ensure that law enforcement practices align with citizen values. To fulfill this advisory function, the CPAC must have the ability to review and monitor law enforcement programs, activities, and policy implementation at a strategic level independently of the Town Council and the Police Department. Oversight in this context includes strategic review and monitoring capabilities but not supervisory or investigative authorities.

Strategic - The focus of independent oversight of the CPAC will relate exclusively to advising the Town's elected officials and Police Department on the long-term or overall aims and interests on how citizens of the town want their laws enforced and the means of achieving these long-term or overall aims and interests.