


		SUMTER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE		
		<b>GENERAL ORDER</b>		
<b>Subject</b> Citizen Community Relations Advisory Board		<b>Number</b> 108	<b>Type</b>	
<b>Effective Date</b> January 24, 2017	<b>Amends/ Rescinds</b>	<b>Pages</b>	<b>Re-evaluation</b>	
<b>References</b>			<b>Notes</b>	

I. **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish an outline and guidelines for the establishment and role of the Sumter County Sheriff's Office Citizen Community Relations Advisory Board (hereinafter, "the Board").

II. **Policy**

It is the policy of the Sumter County Sheriff's Office to provide for transparency in its operations, maintain a positive rapport with the citizens of Sumter County and continue being proactive in community relations efforts as the Sheriff's Office carries out its mission of partnering with the citizens of Sumter County to deter criminal activity, protect life and property, maintaining order to provide the highest quality service and improve the quality of life for the citizens of this County.

III. **Procedures**

A. Board Membership - The Board shall consist of ten volunteer (10) members, who shall serve without remuneration, appointed by the Sheriff as follows:

- 1) One person serving in the educational community;
- 2) One liaison person from Shaw Air Force Base;
- 3) One person representing the faith-based community;
- 4) One person employed by or serving on the board of the

## Citizen Community Relations Advisory Board

Chamber of Commerce or Development Board;

- 5) Five (5) citizens-at-large, residing in various geographic regions of the county, so as to provide representation and input from a broad cross-section of the Sumter County community (including not more than one member who resides within the municipal limits of the City of Sumter).
- 6) One high-school student from a high school within Sumter County, who must be a junior at the time he/she is recommended, who will be a rising senior at the beginning of the next academic year. Notwithstanding any other provisions herein, the student board member appointed under this item shall only serve one term on the board.
- 7) All members must meet the following qualifications prior to being appointed:
  - At least eighteen (18) years of age (except the high school student appointed under item 6, who must be 17 or older at the time of his/her appointment)
  - A resident of Sumter County for at least one year prior to appointment (this requirement may be waived for the Shaw AFB appointment under item 2).
  - No outstanding criminal warrants.
  - Must pass a criminal background check showing the prospective member does not have a record of criminal convictions for any felony, any crime of violence, or any crime of moral turpitude as that term has been defined by the South Carolina courts. Petit misdemeanors and minor traffic violations will not necessarily disqualify a prospective member from being appointed, particularly if such offenses are remote in time.

### B. Terms of Office

- 1) The initial terms of office for persons listed in items 1 through 4 of Section III A shall be two years, after which time the Sheriff shall appoint their successors for two-year terms.
- 2) The initial terms of office for the at-large citizen members described in item 5 of Section III A shall be one year, after which

## Citizen Community Relations Advisory Board

time the Sheriff shall appoint their successors for two-year terms.

- 3) In order to provide for increased participation from a broad range of the community, no at-large citizen shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.
- 4) In the event of a vacancy in any seat, the Sheriff may appoint another person to serve out the remaining term of the member whose seat was vacated. Service by any portion of a vacant seat shall be counted as a full term for purposes of determining the two consecutive terms restriction.

### C. Training

- 1) The Sheriff's Office shall develop an initial training curriculum consisting of not less than twenty (20) hours to familiarize prospective board members with Sheriff's Office policy and procedure; state, federal and local laws and regulations applying to the Sheriff's Office; and general law enforcement operations. Training formats may include classroom presentations, departmental overviews, participation in a ride-along, and other matters deemed to be helpful in apprising non-law enforcement persons of various requirements and conditions under which law enforcement personnel attend to their duties.
- 2) Upon accepting an appointment to the Board, each member must commit to attending the required training sessions. Failure to attend at least fifteen (15) hours of the required initial training shall result in the prospective member forfeiting his/her seat on the Board.
- 3) In addition to the required initial training, the Sheriff's Office shall provide additional recommended training from time to time in an effort to familiarize the Board with legal changes and changes in policy and procedure.
- 4) Persons appointed to fill an unexpired term of a previous Board

## Citizen Community Relations Advisory Board

member shall be provided with appropriate training materials, and to the extent practicable shall be provided opportunities for individualized training by Sheriff's Office staff.

### D. Meetings

- 1) The Board shall meet at least once each calendar quarter.
- 2) At its first meeting of each calendar year, the Board shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership and shall decide upon and publish their meeting dates for the year.
- 3) Meetings of the Board may be called by the Sheriff or his designee, upon reasonable notice to the Chairman, or by the Chairman, upon reasonable notice to the Sheriff. Agendas for meetings shall be set by either the Chairman or the Sheriff, with notice posted as required by law not later than twenty-four (24) hours before the start of the meeting.
- 4) Meetings of the Board shall be conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act set forth at S.C. Code Sec. 30-4-10, *et seq.*
- 5) To the extent not inconsistent with this policy, the conduct of all meetings should be in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order.
- 6) At least one meeting per year shall be conducted at the Sumter County Sheriff's Office at 1281 North Main Street. Every effort shall be made to rotate other meetings to different locations around Sumter County in an effort to provide ease of access to persons from different geographic locations within the county.
- 7) No meeting shall be held at which a quorum of the membership is not physically present (proxy or electronic presence shall not suffice). For purposes of this policy a quorum is defined as a simple majority of the sitting board members at the time of any regularly scheduled or called meeting.
- 8) Each member of the Board shall have one vote on any matters to be acted upon by the Board. Business shall be conducted by

simple majority of those present and voting.

E. Resignation/Termination of Board Member(s) – Any Board member may resign in good standing by providing reasonable written notice to the Chairman and the Sheriff. The Sheriff may terminate and replace a sitting Board member for reasons including, but not limited to, conviction of any felony or any crime of moral turpitude; if the member becomes a suspect in any criminal investigation initiated and/or conducted by the Sheriff's Office; if the member is arrested by the Sumter Sheriff's Office or any other law enforcement agency or is the subject of any outstanding arrest warrant; for failure to attend three (3) or more consecutive meetings of the Board, whether such meetings are regularly scheduled or specially called meetings; for conflicts of interest or other activities which are deemed, in the Sheriff's sole discretion, to be in contravention of the mission and policies of the Sumter County Sheriff's Office; for other cause upon the vote and recommendation of a simple majority of the sitting Board members. For the purpose of this section "arrest" does not include citations or courtesy summonses for minor traffic violations.

F. Role, Responsibilities and Authority of Board

- 1) The primary role of the Board shall be to assist the Sumter County Sheriff's Office in providing outreach to, as well as receiving commentary from, all segments of the Sumter County Community in an ongoing effort to increase public confidence that all persons in Sumter County are treated justly by law enforcement and that all persons in Sumter County have a voice and a forum in which to be heard concerning law enforcement and public safety policies in their community.
- 2) Board members are encouraged to seek input from throughout the county, as well as from the specific functional segment or geographic segment of the community which they represent and to share that input during regular or called board meetings.
- 3) Board members are encouraged to share information regarding policing and public safety freely, credibly and reasonably in an effort to promote transparency and enhance harmony and understanding between law enforcement and the community

## Citizen Community Relations Advisory Board

they serve.

- a. Provided, however, individual board members shall not be authorized to speak on behalf of the Board or the Sheriff, nor in any manner bind the Board or the Sheriff. Official statements from the Board shall come only through the Chairman or Vice-chairman after majority action by the board.
  - b. Should the Board at any time, whether individual members or as a body, become privy to confidential law enforcement information the release of which could impede or harm an ongoing investigation, result in an unreasonable invasion of personal privacy, or otherwise not be appropriate for public disclosure to the extent provided by law, the Board shall not release such information to any individual or entity outside the Sumter County Sheriff's Office. Unauthorized release could subject the releasing board member(s) to appropriate sanctions, including but not limited to, immediate removal.
- 4) The Board shall keep the Sheriff informed regarding public perception and law enforcement relationships within the county at large, as well as within specific communities or areas of the county, and shall make recommendations to the Sheriff with regard to modifying and/or or implementing policies and procedures and practices in an effort to improve and enhances those relationships.
  - 5) The Board shall act as a conduit for communicating citizen suggestions and concerns to the Sheriff's Office in an effort to assist in furthering communication between the Sumter citizenry and the Sheriff's Office.
  - 6) Based upon its interaction with citizens throughout the county and its experiences and observations while interacting with the Sheriff's Office, the Board shall, from time to time, make assessments concerning the overall efficacy of the Sheriff's Office with regard to perceptions and relationships with the community, as well as make recommendations to the Sheriff's Office for improving and expanding harmonious community relationships.
  - 7) The Board shall designate at least one member to attend and

## Citizen Community Relations Advisory Board

take part in various activities throughout the year sponsored or endorsed by the Sheriff's Office, including but not limited to, youth conferences, community parades, charitable efforts and the like.

- 8) While the Sheriff or his designee shall make every effort to keep the Board advised regarding high profile or controversial law enforcement issues that may arise in the community, the Board shall not interject itself into any ongoing investigation, case or other proceeding.
- 9) Nothing herein shall be deemed to create any contractual right, property right, entitlement or expectation of any kind with regards to receiving any compensation, privilege, or other benefit whatsoever. Service on the Board shall be strictly on a volunteer basis and at the pleasure of the Sheriff.



---

Anthony Dennis, Sheriff

January 24, 2017