

The City of St. Petersburg
CIVILIAN POLICE REVIEW
COMMITTEE

Established
November 21, 1991

CIVILIAN POLICE REVIEW COMMITTEE
of St. Petersburg, Florida

The Committee has the following characteristics:

- * Established by City Council
- * 23 members appointed by the Mayor
- * Reports to the Mayor via Community Affairs Director
- * Racially diverse, gender-based membership that approximates the population in the community
- * Dual chairpersons (racially diverse), elected from among members for three-year terms
- * Committee reviews cases after adjudication
- * Committee has no disciplinary powers
- * Committee has no subpoena authority
- * Committee does not hold hearings
- * Subcommittees will be established for case review on a rotational basis
- * Subcommittees will report to full committee with comments and conclusions on cases reviewed

The specific goal, objectives, membership and general operating rules are outlined as follows:

GOAL

To provide a forum for discussing police issues that are important to the community and the Police Department and to serve as a means of informing the Mayor, City Council, Chief of Police and the citizens of St. Petersburg with its views as to the quality and fairness of the police services being delivered.

OBJECTIVES

- To publicly review cases that have been investigated by the Police Department as a result of citizen complaint or have otherwise received a high level of community interest.
- To provide a means of making recommendations on improving police policies in St. Petersburg.
- To hold monthly meetings to receive public input related to community feelings regarding the police, provide for a full committee vote on the investigations and incorporate those results into its annual reports.

- To serve as a forum for discussing the policies of the Police Department as they relate directly to community service.
- To provide information to the community on the services and activities of the Police Department.
- To make, at a minimum, activity reports to the Mayor, City Council, the Police chief and the director of Community Affairs. More frequent reports will be encouraged if deemed necessary and appropriate by the membership or if requested by the Mayor. The report shall include, at a minimum, information concerning the results of case reviews as well as the general feeling concerning the delivery of police service to the citizens of St. Petersburg.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. Must be a resident of St. Petersburg
2. Must be 18 years of age or older
3. Must be willing to make a three-year commitment
4. Must be willing to attend a minimum of thirty-five hours of training
5. Must be willing to spend the necessary time to review cases and attend meetings
6. Must not have any prior felony convictions nor any violation of a city ordinance involving moral turpitude (*background check completed before interview*)
7. Must not hold any political office
8. Must not be a City of St. Petersburg employee
9. Must not work for any law enforcement agency
10. Must not be related to members of the St. Petersburg Police Department

Citizens who feel they meet these requirements are invited to submit a letter stating why they wish to become members and attach a resumé. The resumé must include the citizen's date of birth, social security number, race and driver's license number in order to

conduct a background check.

The letter and resumé must be sent to the following address:

Debra Bynum, Staff Coordinator
Civilian Police Review Committee
Post Office Box 2842
St. Petersburg, FL 33731

(Please note: Sending this information gives the staff coordinator automatic permission to conduct the background check.)

Interviews will be conducted with those candidates who successfully complete the background check.

MEMBERSHIP

- Shall be appointed by the Mayor.
- Shall make recommendations to the Mayor for membership as vacancies occur.
- Shall be ethnically diverse, gender-based and shall approximate the make-up of the community.
- Membership, including the co-chairs, shall be 23 and include as a minimum, but not limited to, representatives of the following organizations or categories:
 - Coalition of African American Organizations
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Clergy
 - Community Alliance
 - Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA)
 - Federation of Inner City Organizations (FICO)
 - NAACP
 - School Administration
 - Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)
 - Urban League
 - General Community

GENERAL

- Committee shall adopt its own Rules of Order.
- Meetings shall be open to the public with minutes kept and available to the public.
- Case review meetings, scheduled on the first, second and third Mondays of the month, shall be held in Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 175 Fifth Street North.
- Monthly meetings (each fourth Monday of the month), shall be aired “**live**” over WSPF Channel 35 and Cable Channel 15 and shall be chaired alternately by the co-chairs.
- Subcommittees shall be assigned cases for review and shall be rotated bi-annually. The subcommittee shall report, with their comments and conclusions on reviewed cases, to the entire committee at the monthly meetings.
- Staff support shall be provided by the Community Affairs office.

In St. Petersburg, the 23 members are broken down as follows:

- 2 serve as Co-chairs
- 18 serve as regular members; are assigned 6 to each of three subcommittees;
- 3 serve as alternate members; serve in the absence of primary members when a quorum is not present; fills the uncompleted terms of departing primary members

TRAINING

In the capacity as a reviewer of previously decided cases, members will be familiarized with the work and day-to-day responsibilities of the St. Petersburg police officer. To accomplish this, a minimum of five weeks of instruction in a classroom setting is presented. City employees and police personnel will familiarize the members with their areas of expertise. The training syllabus contains, at a minimum, the following topics:

- * Introduction to the Civilian Police Review Committee

- * City of St. Petersburg Rules and Regulations of the Personnel Management System
- * City Charter and State Statutes
- * Police Department Written Directives
- * Police Department Discipline Philosophy and Law Enforcement Ethics
- * Recruiting, Selection and Training of Police Officers
- * Policy on Use of Force
 - Philosophy
 - Non-deadly force
 - Deadly Force (Firearms)
- * Selected General Orders Discussion
- * Internal Affairs' Complaint Processing
 - Reception
 - Classification
 - Investigative Procedures
 - Confidentiality
 - Internal Affairs Cases and Bureau Investigation Cases
 - Time Constraints
 - Findings
- * Appeal, Grievance and Arbitration Procedures
- * Public Information
- * Civilian Police Review Committee's Review Process
 - Reception
 - Review Procedures - Internal Affairs and Bureau Investigation Cases
 - Recommendations
- * Mock Case Reviews
(Participants will apply classroom instruction to actual case reviews; discussed at the end of the training session)

The training staff makes an intensive use of handouts, texts and other instructional materials.

There is a mandatory ride-along requirement and a meeting requirement. The City of St. Petersburg is divided into three patrol districts. New members must ride along with an officer in each district for an entire eight-hour shift. New members must also attend one case review meeting and one full committee meeting. Classroom instruction, the ride-alongs and the required meetings must be completed **prior to July 1, 2005**.

CASE REVIEWS

As citizen complaint cases are completed* by the police department, they are sent to the Staff Coordinator of the committee. The Staff Coordinator reviews each file for completeness. Copies of each case are made, assigned to the appropriate subcommittee and mailed one month prior to review. Included in the case file is the officer's Internal Affairs history beginning with the date of the current complaint and going back eighteen months. This is the same information the Chief of Police or the investigating supervisor gets to review prior to determining what discipline an officer is to receive should the complaint be *sustained* against him/her.

The City of St. Petersburg operates under a progressive discipline process whereby employees are subjected to increasingly severe levels of discipline for each successive instance of related misconduct.

Each subcommittee is given four (4) weeks to prepare for its case review. Within three days after receipt of the case file, members who are related to or who are personal friends of either the complainant or the accused officer must declare a Conflict of Interest and return the case to the coordinator for reassignment. Prior to the review, members may request information referenced in a file which is not physically located in the file.

A public case review meeting is scheduled (barring any City-observed holidays) where the allegation is discussed and a determination is made on the adequacy and appropriateness of the investigation, the finding and the discipline meted out, if any. The members may vote to:

Agree with the case findings, with or without comment;

Disagree with the case findings with comment;

Forward the case to the Full Committee for a vote (in cases of a tie vote or

*Completed = police department's (Internal Affairs or bureau) investigation has been completed; absent any criminal investigations, State Attorney investigations, appeal and grievance rights imposed by the officer or arbitration process.

absence of a quorum vote)

The results of the case reviews are compiled and lists the case number, complainant, accused officer, nature of the allegation, summary, the department's findings and the Committee's findings to include its comments, questions, and any recommendations it had regarding any of the cases. This report is sent to the Chief of Police via the Mayor.

The chief or his designee then has to provide replies to the questions asked and where appropriate, outline the steps to be taken to implement any recommendations. If the chief chooses not to act on a recommendation, a justification for that decision or alternative measures must be provided.

The cases that have been reviewed on the previous three Mondays are then voted on by the Full Committee in order for each case to receive a total affirmation by all members. This meeting is televised and is scheduled for the fourth Monday of each month, barring any City-observed holidays. The recommendations and the Chief's actions on those recommendations are presented at this time to the Full Committee and the public.