



Donald Weaver

CPRB / REP51-24 / 8-5-24 Council Meeting

Donald Weaver

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To: mayor@como.gov

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Greetings,

I am writing to share some information and perspective from the Columbia Police Officers Association regarding REP51-24 (a report from the CPRB and suggested ordinance changes) which will be considered at tomorrow's Council meeting.

First, CPOA asks that you not remove the ride along requirement for CPRB members.

The draft ordinance language accompanying REP51-24, seemingly without much discussion, seeks to remove the requirement that CPRB members ride along with police officers (see ordinance sections 21-48(c) and 21-48(d)). CPOA believes it is imperative that those who would review officers' actions have at least some minimal exposure to the job. CPOA believes that the existing ride along requirements are woefully inadequate and should be increased -- not eliminated as City staff is recommending.

Second, CPOA asks that you not expand the mission of the CPRB.

Over 15 years ago, the City assembled a diverse and well-qualified committee to explore various models of police oversight (including autonomous auditor and investigative based models). Over the objections of those on the fringes who sought vastly greater power and authority, the Council decided on a model that heard appeals of complaints of police misconduct. The City codified the mission of the CPRB in ordinance (21-44):

The purpose of this article is to provide an external and independent process for review of actual or perceived misconduct by police officers thereby increasing the police department's accountability to the community and community trust in the police department.

Over time, agenda-driven activists and others (including some within City government) have been successful in expanding the CPRB's role beyond its actual mission.

Just as we predicted, and just as we pointed out in our July 13 letter to Council (attached), it is clear from the Council Memo accompanying REP51-24 that some are using the recent change in state law (SB 754 /590.653, RSMo) as yet another opportunity to suggest greatly expanding the mission of the CPRB to an investigative model. Please note that the change to state law does not in any way impact the CPRB's ability to carry out its actual mission.

Our City is dealing with rampant lawlessness and a catastrophic inability to attract qualified people to serve as Columbia Police Officers. Expanding the mission of the CPRB, or creating a second Board to oversee the police, would send a clear message that Council does not actually support law enforcement officers actually enforcing the law.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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