

# Detroit Board of Police Commissioners COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Accountability Through Civilian Oversight Since 1974

Fall Winter  
**2017**



Board of Police Commissioners

## FROM THE CHAIR



### Hall Advances Women And Detroiters in National Policing

*The City of Dallas made a smart, bold move in selecting native Detroit & high-ranking DPD commander U. Renee Hall as its new police chief this summer.*



Hall was an exemplary police officer & law enforcement executive throughout her 18-year career in our city. Most recently, she commanded the Neighborhood Policing Bureau-East, the department's largest bureau and a key reason our city continued to experience reductions in crime. She created community policing and mentor programs that strengthened bridges with stakeholders and earned recognition by the U.S. Department of Justice for Community & Justice Awards nomination. She understood and embraced the need for transparent, effective policing and strong community-police relations.

In Dallas, Hall becomes the first female chief of police in that city's long and storied history of rugged machoism, exemplified from cowboys to oilmen. Clearly, her skills and abilities earned her the job to command 3,640 sworn officers and 556 civilians in the ninth's largest city in the U.S. It is still worth noting – and celebrating – that her gender makes her a groundbreaker and puts a big city police chief who happens to be female on the national stage during a pivotal time in law enforcement, race relations and democracy in America. Hall embodies a unique leadership style and voice that will have a wide and much-needed impact.

We Detroiters also are fortunate that Dallas Chief of Police Hall is one of us. Our City helped shape her as a person and a leader. She walked these blocks as a child and adult. Every child in Detroit can see a product of public education in Renee Hall, who always attended Detroit Public Schools and graduated from Kettering High School. She is an inspiration to all and will continue to be part of our city's and police department's success.

*Lisa Carter, a retired Wayne County deputy sheriff, has served as the Police Commissioner for District 6 since 2012. She currently serves as chair of the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners and works as an administrator with the AmeriCorps Urban Safety Program at the Center for Urban Studies at Wayne State University.*

**Richard C. Shelby** District 1  
**Edgar L. Vann II** District 2  
**Reginald Crawford** District 3  
**Willie E. Bell** District 4  
**Willie E. Burton** District 5  
**Lisa A. Carter** District 6  
**Vacant** District 7

**At Large Members**  
**Elizabeth W. Brooks**  
**Eva Garza Dewaelsche**  
**Conrad L. Mallet Jr.**  
**Derrick B. Sanders**

### About the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners

The BOPC is comprised of 11 members. Detroiters elect seven by districts like City Council members, and four are at-large mayoral appointees approved by the Council. All 11 Board members serve without compensation as a vital civilian board to help ensure police powers and practices comply with Constitutional protections and community policing standards. The 1974 City Charter first established a civilian oversight board in Detroit. The BOPC derives its current powers and duties from the 2012 Charter, which strengthened independent, citizen oversight.

### The Movie, the Rebellion, and Civilian Oversight of Detroit Police

*Six years after the 1967 Detroit Rebellion, community action led to a revised city charter to establish a civilian review board to monitor the police department. That Police Commission first met in 1974.*

"Detroit the Movie" presented a snapshot from those tumultuous days by focusing on the Algiers Motel killings of three black male teenagers were beaten and killed by white police officers. After the movie's summer premiere in Detroit, the Board of Police Commissioners discussed where they were 50 years ago and how they viewed the movie, city history, and current conditions. Their comments are condensed here. Both the meeting video and full transcript are available on the BOPC website.



**Willie Bell, District 4:** It must be remembered who the state representative representing Detroit at this time was: Coleman A. Young, Democrat from Detroit. (He) was outraged at the latest phase of a step-by-step white-wash of a police slaying, demonstrating once again that law and order is a one-way street. There is no law and order when black people are involved, especially when they are involved with the police. Young stands to play an important role 18 years later when he fired two police officers...for beating black a motorist who eventually died; that was the Malice Green incident. His quick response was dictated by the Algiers Motel incident... The movie highlights the concerns we have today, and we have to recognize it because of a tendency of history of repeating itself across this country.



**Conrad Mallett Jr., At-Large:** My father was Chief Executive Assistant to Jerome Cavanagh. I remember coming home. People probably have already heard this story. I was a Free Press paperboy. There were people like that then. Four o'clock in the morning on Sunday and it was safe...for a 13-year-old boy to go out on the streets of Detroit and deliver 150 papers. So it was four o'clock in the morning. I go to 12th and Clairmount and I saw the riot, the rebellion, the uprising in its very, very early stages when it probably was still very much a carnival atmosphere. I sat down on my wagon and eventually a police officer came up to me and said, 'young man you ought to go home,' which I promptly did. I woke my father up and I said, 'Daddy, you know what? I think the riot has started.' He called the Mayor immediately...and there it is. That was the start.



### 8th Precinct Ribbon Cutting

21555 West McNichols Rd. Detroit, MI 48219

Commissioner Richard Shelby, District 1, applauded the new 8th Precinct during the ribbon-cutting and tour. A retired DPD Commander with 30 years of experience, Shelby's tenure included a stint at the old 8th Precinct.

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**2016 vs 2017**  
**658** CCR's Filed  
**672** (+14 (2%))  
**ANNUAL CITIZEN COMPLAINTS**  
January - July

**Board of Police Commissioners**  
CITY OF DETROIT

**Accountability Through Civilian Oversight Since 1974**  
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Detroit Board of Police Commissioners  
FALL / WINTER 2017



# DETROIT

**Mallett:** As much progress as we have made, the damage has been indelible... I thought that we'd be further along. I thought that the result of the recovery would be more widespread and I thought that we would be much further as a cohesive society... So, it's a struggle and that's part of the reason we're all here sitting around this table thankful that most of the issues we deal with, Madam Chairperson, are uncomplicated, thankful that our police department continues to mature and thankful that we will continue to challenge each other and the police department to make it as good as we can. It's a huge responsibility and I know that the men and women around this table take it very, very seriously.

## The Movie, the Rebellion, and Civilian Oversight of Detroit Police *cont.*

**Bell:** If you do your homework in terms of the history of policing, not just in Detroit, then you understand why black lives matter and I know that two police officers and a fireman lost their lives but three young men that were unarmed lost their lives unnecessarily. They had sought sanctuary, in a motel and therefore we have to keep all that in perspective... At the time of this incident, (the few black officers) were somewhat confined to the 10th Precinct because (white leaders) didn't want certain officers, black officers, being involved in the whole process. They didn't trust them... I was in the military getting ready to go over to Vietnam and my hometown was in a rage. And I don't care; you can use that term riot, but it was a civil disturbance—a rebellion to reality.



**Willie Burton, District 5:** There was a large crowd that gathered in District 5, which is the district I'm elected in, where the Algiers Motel was located on the side of Woodward in Virginia Park. And Virginia Park, you know, in honor and remembrance of Carl Cooper, Aubrey Pollard and Fred Temple, we understand that from the 1967 rebellion that we do not have the same police force that we had in 1967 versus what we have today. I just encourage those that go out and see this movie, to look at it as a part of a moment that took place in history, but with oversight that, what is the Board of Police Commissioners was created seven years later in 1974. We're talking about 50 years ago vs. where we are today. We didn't have body cams, dash cams... As I look at community policing today, Detroit actually has raised the bar in community policing. We don't have the same force we had then as we have today.



**Edgar Vann, District 2:** I think for many of us in this city we know the Police Department is not what it used to be, thank God. But many of the conditions in this city are the same as they were 50 years ago. We're still a city with 40% poverty. We're still a city with 60% child poverty. There are housing issues, crime & safety issues, and an education issue... For many people Detroiters who stand on their porch and look down the street, for them things have gotten worse and not better. We know that we've made strides, great strides in a lot of areas, most especially with this Department, and I'm very, very proud of it. I'm proud to sit in this seat that I'm sitting in today and I'm grateful for the opportunity to work with the Department as we have, but we've got to know that the conditions that bring about these rebellions have nothing to do with body cameras, or with some of the great technology that we're using.



**Reginald Crawford, Dist.3:** Commissioner Burton is right about what we didn't have, but what we did have and what brought about this change is the people... the people in this community and across America, the activism and the impact; that's what brought about the change.

There are people in this city who are still suffering, who are still without jobs, who still can't take care of their families, whose children are still miseducated, who live in a culture where they're not clear... I hope we will be just as vigilant as we have been with police oversight and working with the Department on some of the issues that speak to the human condition that brings about these kinds of disturbances. We're blessed in Detroit to have the police department that we have because even 50 years later we see in other departments and other municipalities that this kind of community relations does not exist... The movie disturbed me... It disturbed me because much of the conditions that I saw there still exist in many cities today. There is no national urban agenda to address these issues and there hasn't been for quite some time... We still have a lot of the conditions that existed 50 years ago in this city today and cities throughout America. So our concern, our work, our love for our city, our support of the department and everything else, I think is very timely in view of that.

**If it wasn't for the people engaging in activism and creating the various movements and getting involved, we wouldn't have had this change. Yes, we've come a long way but there's still a long way to go.**



As chair of the BOPC subcommittee on the budget, Derrick Sanders decided to take action to see police funds at work. He arranged to ride along with a patrol car during a shift in each of the city's 12 precincts. It became an audit in action.

"Going into each precinct gives me a chance to talk to the officers and to hear directly from them about how things are going," he said. "I learn a lot each time."

## Sanders finds ride-alongs in each of Detroit's 12 precincts effective for tracking budget and equipment.

Sanders, a trustee with the Operating Engineers Local 324, is accustomed to interacting with workers in the field and making sure employees have the tools and resources needed to perform their best.

During his precinct visits, Sanders took along a schedule that showed delivery dates for new patrol cars and other equipment for police officers. He always checked to see if the equipment had arrived as promised by Police Department officials. If the cars or other equipment such as body-worn cameras had not arrived by the expected date, Sanders sought answers from the Chief of Police and his team.

"We know the officers show up each day willing to sacrifice themselves to protect and serve us," he said. "We need to make sure their cars work and that they have the equipment they need to do their jobs."

Sanders says the process is helping him better perform as an at-large Police Commissioner, a volunteer post he has held since Mayor Mike Duggan appointed him in 2016. "I get to see first-hand the challenges and successes police officers experience in serving us," he said.

## THE BOPC TAKES ON

### Trump

**April 2017** Approved a Resolution supporting the use of federal consent decrees to help reform unconstitutional police procedures and practices.

**August 2017** Approved a Resolution condemning President Donald Trump's support for illegal police actions, including his call to "rough" up suspects in custody during a speech to law enforcement in New York. "Our Board and other oversight bodies have worked diligently to modernize law enforcement policies and procedures for greater effectiveness in identifying, arresting and securing the conviction of criminals. We cannot let one person, even the President of the United States, undo the progress stemming from the work and often sacrifice of countless police officers, community leaders, activists, and others who together ensure the profession of law enforcement is elevated to the highest excellence."

### Unfit Police Officers

**July 2017** Approved a Resolution supporting Senate Bill 223 to establish a new process to help keep unfit officers from moving from city to city to join other police agencies. The Law Enforcement Officer Separation of Service Record Act requires all law enforcement agencies to establish and maintain a record that states the reasons an officer resigns, retires or is fired from service. As the resolution stated, "The Detroit Board of Police Commissioners exercises its role of civilian oversight through several charter-mandated functions, including the appointment of the Director of Human Resources for the Detroit Police Department and the administration and operation of the Office of the Chief Investigator, which receives and independently investigates citizen complaints against any employee of the Detroit Police Department, and strives through its appointment of an HR director to ensure that the best candidates are recruited, trained and deployed for service as sworn and civilian members of the Police Department."

### Bad Public Safety Policy

**June 2017** Approved a Resolution opposing House Bills 4416-4419 as extremely detrimental to public safety because, among other things, the bills sought to eliminate permits, training and other common sense requirements of responsible gun ownership. "They make law enforcement a bigger target not only for criminals but also for armed, untrained masses. These bills simply create a huge danger zone for everyone."

## Upcoming Meeting Topics

- 1 Drug Abuse, Addiction & Trafficking:** Fighting Illegal Drugs, Opiates & Overdoses
- 2 Mental Health & Law Enforcement:** Are Jails The New Mental Hospitals?
- 3 Medical Marihuana Facility Licensing**

The public will get updates about the status of facilities in Detroit and the impact of the September announcement by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) that it intends to submit emergency rules necessary for the initial implementation of the Medical Marihuana Facility Licensing Act. The emergency rules – expected to be submitted in November – will further establish regulatory policies, including the application and licensing process and the fee structure. LARA is currently working with the state Medical Marihuana Licensing Board to develop permanent rules. LARA set December 15, 2017 as the date when it expects to begin accepting license applications for all facilities, an approach it says will allow existing operations to wind down while also giving adequate time for patients to establish connections to caregivers to help ensure continuity of access.