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BOPC approves neckhold ban and other immediate reforms for sweeping changes to DPD use of force practices

The City of Detroit Board of Police Commissioners Thursday approved sweeping changes that will bring immediate reforms to use of force by the Police Department.

The reforms approved were part of proposals made by Board in June and submitted to the Department and community amid global protests sparked by the Memorial Day killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police.

“In roughly two months, we have changed, we have reformed,” said Chair Willie Bell. “I want to thank all the Police Commissioners, and especially Police Commissioner Evette Griffie, for showing that Detroit’s 46-year-old civilian oversight process is robust and effective, and that progress happens when the community and police work together.”

Among other things, the new policy directives ban carotid or chokeholds; require a de-escalation continuum and a minimal reliance on force; establish measures for reporting when an officer threatens to use force, and require officers to intervene or intercede and report when others use excessive force. Another set of changes require expanding reports of use of force, discipline, and other types of data available for the public on open data portals.

The Board has continued to support peaceful protests while urging the public to participate with change and civilian oversight through policy reviews, meeting attendance [on zoom.us during public health crisis], participation in precinct police-community relations councils, and feedback and complaints about police encounters to 313-596-2499.

The Board approved on Thursday a resolution against the use of police at voting sites.



Created by the 1974 City Charter, the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners has supervisory authority and oversight over the Police Department. Under the 2012 Charter, the Board is comprised of 11 civilian members; Detroiters elect seven members by district, and the mayor appoints and the city council confirms four at-large members. All board members serve as unpaid volunteers. The current members are Willie E. Bell, Darryl D. Brown, Shirley A. Burch, Willie E. Burton, Lisa Carter, William M. Davis, Evette Griffie, Jesus Hernandez, Jim Holley, Annie Holt and Martin Jones. The Board is holding its weekly meeting each Thursday at 3 p.m. on Zoom.us. due to the coronavirus public health crisis. **For the Board meeting schedule, Zoom.us instructions, video, minutes, and other information, visit the website at detroitmi.gov/bopc.**