



**York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office
Citizens' Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2025**



Minutes Approval by Chair/Committee: Approved

Present: Rob Carpenter, Rebecca Crocker (zoom), Shana Gist, Douglas Hackworth, Linda Hutchinson, Eileen O'Brien, Stephen Roane, D'Shawn Wright

CHAIR: D'Shawn Wright and Rob Carpenter

YPSO: Sheriff Ron Montgomery, Major Tommy West

Secretary: Linda Hutchinson

Bylaws & Membership: David Gorwitz

AGENDA TOPICS:

1. **Call to Order** – Chair D'Shawn Wright called the meeting to order at 6:08pm

1. Chair and Community Updates: D'Shawn Wright

The Chair reported on the roadside trash pickup on Cook Road on April 21, 2025 by David Gorwitz, Douglas Hackworth, Linda Hutchinson, Eileen O'Brien, Stephen Roane, Candi Skinner, Chairman Wright and guest John Hutchinson.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Chairman Wright introduced his guests: Virgil Thornton, candidate for delegate A.C. Cordoza's seat in the 86th district and his campaign manager Lee Washington. Mr. Washington informed the committee that he was involved in the most expensive political campaign in history.

Board of Supervisors Update: Stephen Roane

In June the BOS will discuss the new ordinance addressing requiring removal of overgrown shrubbery and other plants around private dwellings. Mr. Roane is concerned about government intervention in regulating private property, so he will address it as a safety concern.

The Boat Masters building in Yorktown is being rebuilt due to severe plumbing issues. After discussions and review of several building plans at a public forum at the Freight Shed, the citizens in attendance voted on the building plan that replicates the former building. The Second Annual Yorktown Workboat Race will be June 1, 2025. Mr. Roane suggested CAC involvement in exploring the County's role as a Certified Crime Prevention Community.

2. YPSO Updates: Sheriff Ron Montgomery

Chairman Wright asked the Sheriff for input on the drastic increase in crime in Virginia Beach. The sheriff commented on the work of the YPSO in York County to combat crime. The availability to youth of water guns, bb guns, air pistols, etc., that are designed to look identical to real guns, must be addressed. The “game” Senior Assassins is increasing in frequency and danger, due to these simulated weapons. In response to a call, a York County deputy arrested a York High School senior at York Town. Despite the decision of the young man to approach the deputy with a weapon looking exactly like a real firearm, the deputy chose to arrest him. Although gun thefts have been drastically reduced, many authentic firearms are still being stolen from unlocked vehicles.

On Friday, May 16 the YPSO responded to a call concerning phone threats made to Grafton Bethel Elementary School. Upon thorough investigation a suspect was identified. He is incarcerated in a local jail in Georgia where he is currently serving time for an assault charge. The threats were made from a cell phone smuggled into the facility and not from a phone at the facility. That cell phone is being shipped to the YPSO to examine.

In May of 2025 Kristen Graham was sentenced to 10 years in prison after being arrested in September of 2023 and charged in the deaths of an 11-month-old child and a dog left in her locked car for six hours. An additional 10 years was suspended.

Sheriff Montgomery discussed the new law concerning the use of Flock cameras. The new law limits the amount of time the data is stored to 21 days from 30 days. The effect on York County is minimal. York County has 28 cameras that have successfully led to the arrests of several individuals. Although there is a great deal of misinformation about the data captured by the cameras, the data is identical to that obtained by traffic deputies - pictures of license plates, the make and model of the vehicle and the date and time of the offense. Additionally, specific requests must be made online to obtain the data. The Sheriff described several cases in which this information led to the arrest of individuals responsible for the deaths of others and for breaking and entering of businesses.

Virginia Delegate Chad Green visited the CAC meeting and emphasized the value of Flock Cameras. He says the use of Flock cameras is not an issue affecting privacy. While the new law restricts keeping the data to 21 days, the public has strongly requested that body cam data be kept for one year. Delegate Green recently visited the Virginia Fusion Center where he observed the work of state and federal agencies to identify and prevent terrorist and criminal activity.

Sheriff Montgomery responded to a question about installation of Flock cameras in communities of color. The Sheriff emphasized that he doesn't pick neighborhoods; he picks areas – exits and entryways to York County and prime areas such as shopping areas. If a person breaks the law, the Sheriff will have that person arrested and post the information and the individual's picture on social media. That is behind the reputation of the YPSO that “arrests are up and crime is down”.

Sheriff Montgomery also discussed primary and secondary traffic laws and the difficulties that presents to law enforcement. The Commonwealth of Virginia has the highest number of traffic deaths from failure to wear seat belts. That is a result of the law that makes the failure to wear seat belts a secondary offence thus prohibiting stopping a vehicle for that infraction.

3. Membership and Bylaws: David Gorwitz

Due to time constraints the discussion of appropriate meeting days, the selection of two new members and the importance of attendance will be delayed until the June meeting.

6. Adjournment –Chairman Wright adjourned the meeting at 7:30

The next CAC meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2025.