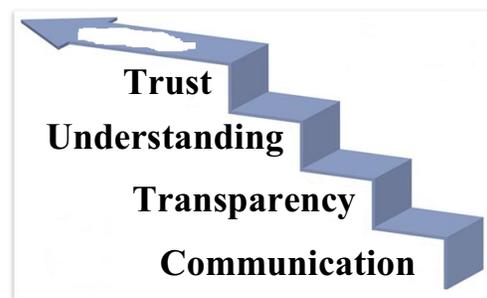
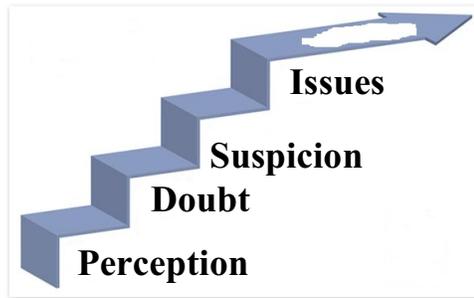


# African American Leadership



**Issues**

**&**

**Recommendations**

*A city cannot be measured  
by the height or the number of structures.  
Rather,  
it is measured by the quality of human relations  
between  
the government and the community.*

*In Pursuit of Equality*

*Virginia Beach African American Leadership*

In wake of high-profile incidents involving officers and civilians, City Management must ensure focus on transparency, accountability, and community trust within the law enforcement community.

Across the nation, there can be seen a directed law enforcement effort toward community policing the effort to increase two-way transparency and instill not only accountability but a condition of trust.

It is known that Virginia Beach has a highly rated law enforcement organization, however, that rating is based mostly on the crime rate, arrest and citation record. Because there was no mandatory requirement to report some enforcement tactics and resultant actions to the Justice Department, other issues which would have a negative impact are kept quiet with suspicious withholding of findings.

In conjunction with the following (included) Action Plan, it is requested that policy be initiated at the State level requiring police departments to have a written policy on officer-involved deaths. Civilian deaths that occur prior to arrest, during arrest attempt and while in custody must be included. As part of that policy, at least two outside investigating entities must be brought in to handle these cases. Additionally, although Internal investigations will still be conducted, they cannot interfere with the work of the outside investigations.

The policy would also provide for clearer assistance to victims' families: They must be informed of their legal rights, and be told how to file complaints and pursue charges if they don't agree with the decision of a local commonwealth/district attorney.

Lastly, the investigation of an officer-involved death must be publicly reported if it does not lead to the prosecution of that officer.

With the advent of body cameras, the utilization is believed to lessen the chance of violent encounters between police and civilians. Their use might also enhance investigations and help improve public trust in police.

However, the use of body cameras raises a number of other policy questions — above and beyond whether they are worth the investment. For example, which law enforcement officers, if any, should be required to wear body cameras? When do the cameras have to be turned on? When can an officer turn off the body camera during or after an incident and on whose authority? How long do police agencies have to retain audio and video from body camera recordings? Who has access to the recordings? Who pays for the cameras and for the data storage?

This body believes that leadership at the State level is needed for conformity at all law enforcement levels statewide. Legislation is needed with regard to use of body cameras that direct every law enforcement entity, state, county and municipal law-enforcement officers, to wear body cameras while performing their duties interacting with members of the community.

While it is the attitude, of some, to point the finger outside, such as in the case of “Black Lives

Matter,” also any others that oppose blatant tactics that cause the problem in which there is rise for protest. There is no room for blind trust or “one way street” trust. It must go both ways and be stated in the policy and enforcement of that policy. Such policy and enforcement of such must also be transparent publicly.

Simply, no amount of public meetings, church gatherings, or protests can solve the problem. The problem is internal. In that regard, internal police politics must attack the problem and that must be transparent and open to outside scrutiny. That outside [civilian review board] scrutiny must not only have City Management selection and the City Council approval but also a fair balance of selection by the public with sufficient diversity of persons and some relative experience to look beyond the apparent to see what’s underlying.

## Recommended Action Plan

**Goal 1:** Increase recruitment, retention and promotion of African American police officers in order to reflect the demographics of Virginia Beach which is currently over 20% African American

<b>Steps To Take</b>	<b>Who Is Responsible</b>	<b>Date to Accomplish</b>
1. Make African American recruitment and promotion of African American police officers in order to reflect the demographics of Virginia Beach which is currently over 20% African American	City Manager / Deputy City Manager	Immediately
2. Change the decision making process for all officer promotions, Lieutenant and above, so that the City Manager and Deputy City Manager are accountable and active participants along with the Chief.	Mayor / City Manager / Dep. City Manager	Immediately
3. Create and fund a full time paid cadet program focused on hiring African American High School graduates. Maintain program until VBPD staff reflects the demographics of the city.	Mayor/ City Manager / Dep. City Manager/ Chief	End of 2017 calendar year
4. Insure that nepotism policies are in place that prevent hiring and promotion of family members of existing officers.	Dep. City Manager / Chief	End of calendar year 2016

**Goal 2:** Improve reporting and data collection by the VBPD in order to create and foster transparent relationship with African American communities in Virginia Beach and eliminate racial profiling.

**Steps To Take**

<b>Steps To Take</b>	<b>Who Is Responsible</b>	<b>Date to Accomplish</b>
<p>1. In addition to arrests, begin collecting and reporting all pedestrian stops/searches even when (especially when) there is no arrest. Data should include racial/gender/ breakout as well as stop location by community.</p>	<p>City Manager / Deputy City Manager / Chief and Deputy Chief (Performance Standards)</p>	<p>End of calendar year 2017</p>
<p>2. Collect and report the number and type of citizen complaints made against officers. Data should include racial/gender breakout of citizens as well as the location (citizen's community).</p>	<p>Chief / Dep. Chief (Performance Standards)</p>	<p>Immediately</p>
<p>3. Create a racially diverse volunteer Citizen's Review Board that will look at all citizen complaints made on officers and seek to resolve the issue and rehabilitate the citizen-officer relationship. Board reports directly to Deputy City Manager.</p>	<p>City Manager / Dep. City Manager / Chief / Dep. Chief</p>	<p>January 2017</p>
<p>4. Ensure Board has access to all data pertinent to the complaint (i.e. video from cell phone, dash-cam, security cameras, etc.).</p>	<p>Dep. City Manager / Chief / Dep. Chief</p>	<p>January 2017</p>
<p>5. Ensure the Board has the authority to recommend various actions such as dismissal of the complaint, mediation, suspension or termination of the officer</p>	<p>City Manager / Dep. City Manager</p>	<p>January 2017</p>
<p>6. Make it mandatory to report to State and FBI on all officer involved shootings, in custody deaths and/or use of deadly force</p>	<p>City Manager / Dep. City Manager / Chief</p>	<p>Immediately</p>

**Goal 3:** Institutionalize the use of body cameras in the VBPD and all other Law Enforcement Agencies within the State.

<b>Steps To Take</b>	<b>Who Is Responsible</b>	<b>Date to Accomplish</b>
1. Deploy body cameras for all VB police officers operating in the field or who have the potential to interact with citizens.	City Council / City Manager / Dep. City Manager / Chief	January 2017
2. Draft and Implement a comprehensive Body Camera policy that outlines mandatory wearing, turn on / off, and punishment for policy violation.	Dep. City Manager / Chief / Dep. Chief	Draft: November 2017 Final: January 2017
3. Insure policy gives authority to Citizens Review Board to review body camera video.	Dep. City Manager / Chief	January 2017

**Goal 4:** Change the culture of the VBPD from a “Code of Blue Silence” to a culture of transparency

1. Implement a whistleblower protection program for officers who report racially insensitive, offensive, abusive, or criminal conduct by other officers.	Chief / Dep. Chief	End of calendar year 2016
2. Establish disciplinary policies that hold officers accountable for on or off duty misconduct to include insensitive or abusive expressions via social media.	Chief / Dep. Chief	End of calendar year 2016
3. End all support and participation in Blue Lives Matter activities. This is a code for ‘We are against Black Lives Matter,’ also it further deteriorates relations with African Americans.	Chief / Dep. Chief	Immediately

**Goal 5:** Improve training and performance review systems for all personnel within the VBPD

<b>Steps To Take</b>	<b>Who Is Responsible</b>	<b>Date to Accomplish</b>
1. Ensure all officers are annually trained on diversity and inclusion.	Dep. City Manager / Chief / Training Head	End of calendar year 2017
2. Ensure all officers, as a result of this training, are capable of consistently demonstrating competence in racial/cultural sensitivity.	Chief / Dep. Chief /	End of calendar year 2017
3. Ensure all officers are capable of interacting with citizens suffering from mental illness.	Chief / Dep. Chief / Training Head	End of calendar year 2017
4. Ensure all officers are trained on how to de-escalate volatile situations and how to use less than lethal tactics/technologies when possible.	Chief / Dep. Chief / Training Head	End of calendar year 2017
5. Ensure all officers' performance reviews include a diversity/inclusion component in the weighting to move the department closer to a community policing model and away from a militaristic model.	Dep. City Manger / Chief / Dep. Chief	End of calendar year 2017
6. Ensure performance review competencies are weighted so that no officer can remain employed if they fail to meet standards for diversity, inclusion and cultural sensitivity.	Dep. City Manager / Chief / Dep. Chief	End of calendar year 2017
7. Ensure stop/search/frisk data, regardless of whether it leads to an arrest, is used in measuring an officer's performance.	Chief / Dep. Chief	End of calendar year 2017