



Board of Directors Meeting Report

April 24, 2025

Conference Rm: #2: 3:30 p.m.

Board of Directors chair Ben Adams called the board meeting to order. The January 23<sup>rd</sup> board report was approved.

### **APPROVAL OF NEW BOARD MEMBER**

The Crime Commission board approved the addition of four new members following a formal presentation and vote. Leslie Taylor of Memphis Crime Beat, David May of Regions Bank, Interim U.S. Attorney Joe Murphy, and Jeffrey McNamara of Smith & Nephew were all unanimously approved to join the Board. Ben Adams noted that each brings a unique perspective and professional expertise that will enhance the Commission's ongoing efforts to strengthen public safety and community engagement.

### **UPDATE ON KEY PLAN OUTCOMES/ACTION STEP OUTCOMES**

Bill Gibbons provided an update on the year-end progress of the Safe Community Action Plan's Objectives and Milestones, noting overall positive trends. From January to March 2025, major violent crime declined by 8.8% in Memphis and 9% in Shelby County. Overall crime declined 13.1% in Memphis and 13.2% countywide, while property crime saw a significant decrease of 19.7% in Memphis and 19.5% in Shelby County. Gibbons stated that these reductions are encouraging, especially the 36% drop in vehicle thefts and the first drop in reported aggravated assaults in several years. He also reported a slight decline in the number of incidents involving guns in Memphis compared to the same period last year.

### **UPDATE ON SAFE ACTION PLAN**

**Bill Gibbons** provided an update on the Focused Deterrence Call-Ins as of March 2025, as well as the status of active Neighborhood Watch groups. He explained that the focused deterrence strategy consists of two components targeting serious offenders: "house calls" designed to encourage behavioral change and formal call-in sessions, typically held in churches. At the most recent call-in, 25 individuals were invited, 11 attended, and 9 requested supportive services. Mr. Gibbons emphasized the importance of tracking the number of arrests following these call-ins to assess the long-term impact.

**Mayor Young** addressed the ongoing Violence Prevention Initiative, stressing that while there has been measurable progress, it is not enough. He emphasized the need for greater urgency and a stronger commitment to reducing violent crime. In February, national expert Thomas Abt conducted a Practicum in Memphis, bringing evidence-based guidance to local leaders. The data continues to show that most violent gun crimes are committed by individuals over the age of 18, with a significant presence of retaliatory gang violence.

Mayor Young called for a sharper focus and deeper investment in proven strategies and the professionals driving this work. Key approaches include focused deterrence, enhanced street outreach, expanded use of cognitive behavioral therapy to help change patterns of criminal thinking, and targeted enforcement in high-crime areas through “Code Zero” operations. To support these efforts, Darren Goods has joined the City of Memphis as the new Public Safety Advisor with funding from the Crime Commission.

The mayor also credited the Business Roundtable for its instrumental support in engaging the private sector and securing critical financial resources to advance these violence reduction strategies.

**Colonel Alyssa LeSueur** provided an update on the Neighborhood Watch Program, which is designed to empower residents to share information with the Memphis Police Department, thereby strengthening community-police collaboration.

Currently, nine Neighborhood Watch Coordinators are assigned—one per police precinct—to monitor and support the activity of watch groups within their respective areas. Colonel LeSueur outlined the basic requirements for forming a neighborhood watch group, which include establishing group leadership and clearly defining the boundaries of the watch area.

Additionally, she highlighted the availability of a \$2,500 grant for active neighborhood watch groups. These funds can be used for community safety improvements such as additional lighting or other security-related enhancements tailored to the needs of the neighborhood.

**Dr. James McCutcheon**, representing the University of Memphis Public Safety Institute (PSI), provided an overview of the PSI’s efforts to monitor Neighborhood Watch groups and crime trends within their respective areas.

Dr. McCutcheon noted that the primary goal of the research is to identify opportunities for improvement and to strengthen collaboration between the Memphis Police Department and active Neighborhood Watch groups. The findings will help guide future enhancements to community policing and neighborhood-level crime prevention efforts.

**Mishell Vite** spoke on the Crime Commission’s role in supporting the continued growth and sustainability of Neighborhood Watch groups. She emphasized that the Crime Commission could assist by helping to publicize group activities and events, such as

National Night Out, and by providing speakers to engage residents and reinforce public safety messaging.

Ms. Vite reiterated the importance of the Crime Commission's partnership with law enforcement and community members in strengthening neighborhood engagement and fostering active, informed, and collaborative watch groups across Memphis and Shelby County.

## **UPDATE ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS**

A Legislative Briefing will be held on May 1st at 4:30 PM at the First Horizon – Ron Terry Center. The event will feature remarks from legislative members and an update from the lobbying firm on current legislation supported by the Crime Commission.

Bill Gibbons encouraged board members and stakeholders to attend and participate in the briefing, underscoring the importance of continued advocacy and engagement in advancing the Crime Commission's legislative priorities.

## **FINANCIALS**

Bill Gibbons provided a financial update, noting that the Crime Commission maintains two separate bank accounts—one designated for operating expenses and the other functioning as a savings account. He reported that recent significant withdrawals have been made from the savings account to cover earmarked expenditures, including \$200,000 for surveillance cameras, \$50,000 for the forensic study, and increased costs associated with lobbying efforts.

Mr. Gibbons emphasized that, while the accounts remain in stable condition, the current priority is to rebuild the savings account to ensure continued financial flexibility and sustainability in supporting core initiatives.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

The next Crime Commission Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 24th at 3:00 PM. The meeting will take place at the Memphis Police Training Academy.

Board members are asked to confirm their attendance in advance, as lunch will be provided. Your participation is encouraged and appreciated.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned...

**Presented by:**

**Sharon (Sam) Walker**

**Executive Assistant**

## **Memphis Shelby Crime Commission Board Meeting**

**April 24, 2025**

### **Attendance:**

1. Ben Adams
2. Andrew Bland III
3. Vinessa Brown
4. April Buckner
5. FBI SAC Joe Carrico
6. Com. Charlie Caswell
7. Harold Collins
8. Sgt. Matt Cunningham
9. Chief Jeff Cox
10. Susan Deason
11. John Dudas
12. Chris Fairey
13. Joe Fracchia
14. Jeffrey Higgs
15. Henry Hooper
16. Mr. Jeffrey McNamara
17. Atty. Steve Mulroy
18. Pastor Keith Norman
19. Joseph Saab
20. Stacey Sherley-Muhammad
21. Blair Taylor
22. Leslie Taylor
23. Craig Weiss
24. Council member Janika White
25. Paul Young
26. Dorcas Young Griffin
27. Joe Gurley
28. Michael Rogers
29. Joe Murphy
30. Chief Oakley

- 31.Samuel Hines
- 32.Darren Goods
- 33.Rosi Lara
- 34.Chris Johnson
- 35.Ron Walker
- 36.Veronica Garner
- 37.Melanie Dorsey
- 38.Col. Alyssa LeSueur
- 39.Audra Manhart
- 40.Jeremy Baker
- 41.Mike Fisher
- 42.Chris Young
- 43.David Brown
- 44.DeAndre Brown
- 45.James McCutheon
- 46.Amaia Iratoqui
- 47.James Carson
- 48.Tamika Williams
- 49.Valarie Mathews