

FAQ regarding Flagstaff Police Department Community Liaison Committee

- **Why did it take so long to launch the Flagstaff Police Department Community Liaison Committee?**
 - Members of the executive committee — which include Northern Arizona Institutions for Community Leadership (NAICL), the Northern Arizona Interfaith Council (NAIC), the Coconino Hispanic Advisory Council (CHAC) and the Flagstaff Police Department — have been volunteering their time attending monthly meetings since September 2014 in an effort to develop applications for the liaison committee. Once applications were finalized, they were sent out to a variety of community members and organizations, with the executive committee meeting separately to review and approve this initial group of applicants.
- **How long will members serve and what is the process for future applicants?**
 - The committee will meet during the summer of 2015 to finalize its mission statement and strategic plan during a retreat. It is expected to review a proposal that will have half the members accept two-year terms, with the remaining members accepting four-year terms. If approved, this will allow the full committee to review within two years new applications submitted by members of the community.
- **Why did the executive committee decide on the creation of a Community Liaison Committee as opposed to a Civilian Review Board?**
 - The focus of civilian review boards is limited to specific single issues reactively whereas a community liaison committee proactively addresses a variety of opportunities or areas of concern.
 - The legal standard as set forth by the U.S. Supreme Court on use-of-force issues is the “reasonable officer standard” and civilian review boards are not comprised of officers.
 - The less formal process of a citizen liaison committee allows for a wider representation of the community whereas membership on civilian review boards is often comprised of political appointments.
 - Studies show civilian review boards are generally in place in very large police agencies, typically the product of contentious negotiations with police unions or following consent decrees or mandates in the wake of federal investigation where wrongdoing was found.
 - Currently, there are an estimated 200 civilian review boards in place around the nation. They are very much in the minority as there is a total of approximately 18,000 police agencies in the country.
 - Civilian Review Boards are expensive. Most consist of paid personnel. The estimated cost of the review board in Las Vegas is a quarter million dollars annually.
 - Most civilian review boards are more lenient on their recommendations than police command staff. On average, they recommend less accountability than we do currently; the average civilian review board sustains far fewer complaints than FPD staff has in the recent past.

- Review Boards take far longer resolving complaints than we do. FPD strives to complete our investigations and respond to citizens involved in most cases within 30 days. Civilian review boards often take up to 9 months or longer.
- Review boards are not considered “best practice” and not recommended or endorsed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.
- While there are many varying types of review boards, very few if any really recommend discipline and only review the investigation to determine if a policy was violated.
- Use of force and complaints on FPD have been steadily declining in the past couple of years. Most review boards are put in place when an agency is experiencing significant increases in complaints and use of force.
- Citizen liaison committees allow an opportunity for those not comfortable in coming to the police with their concerns to still have a voice by contacting a member of the committee to bring forth concerns. Civilian review boards typically convene just to review specific incidents, not to forward concerns or recommendations for improvement.
- **What is the history behind the development of the Flagstaff Police Department Community Liaison Committee?**
 - The concept of the liaison committee initially resulted from a discussion held in January 2014 at the Flagstaff Police Department. The City of Flagstaff was in the process of rewriting its law enforcement policy so that it would be aligned with requirements of the state’s immigration enforcement law, Senate Bill 1070, which was signed by then-Gov. Jan Brewer in 2010. During that meeting, a presentation during the Coconino Hispanic Advisory Council meeting on Feb. 5, 2014 and a community meeting at Killip Elementary School on Feb. 6, 2014 discussion continued on the possible creation of the liaison committee. Further discussions were held on April 17, 2014 between representatives the Flagstaff Police Department, the Northern Arizona Institutions for Community Leadership (NAICL) and Arizona Dreamers in Action.
 - In an effort to seek initial funding to create a sustainable and institutionalized organization, the Coconino Hispanic Advisory Council (CHAC) and the Flagstaff Police Department agreed to partner with the Northern Arizona Institutions for Community Leadership (NAICL) in the submission of a grant proposal to the Arizona Community Foundation in June 2014. The partners then participated in the oral grant presentation held at the East Flagstaff Library.
 - The Flagstaff Community Foundation officially notified the Northern Arizona Institutions for Community Leadership on Sept. 3, 2014 that it had been awarded a \$7,073 grant (\$2,073 from the Flagstaff Community Foundation, \$3,000 from the Flagstaff Medical Center Foundation and \$2,000 from the Forest Highlands Foundation) to help in the development and creation of the liaison committee. Funds will be used to professionally train the volunteer members of the committee in the development of a sustainable strategic plan, and used for the creation and presentation of community interactive programs to improve the communications and complaint procedure process between the community and the Flagstaff Police Department.