

**BYLAWS
OF THE ST. MARY'S COUNTY
POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD**

Article I

NAME

The name of this organization as established by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County shall be the St. Mary's County Police Accountability Board (hereinafter "Body").

Article II

PURPOSE OF THE BODY

The purpose of the Body is to forward complaints of police misconduct to the appropriate law enforcement agency, to advise the Commissioners of St. Mary's on all matters relating to local law enforcement and matters of policing, to appoint civilian members to charging committees and trial boards, to review outcomes of disciplinary matters considered by charging committees, and, on a yearly basis, to identify trends in the disciplinary process of police officers in the county and to make recommendations on changes to policy that would improve police accountability in the county.

Article III

FUNCTIONS OF THE BODY

To accomplish its purpose, the Body shall meet regularly, consider and advise on the following related:

1. Any duty or responsibility assigned to the Body by statute, public local law or ordinance;
2. Local police matters in St. Mary's County;
3. Community perceptions of law enforcement in St. Mary's County;
4. Disciplinary trends within St. Mary's County local law enforcement;
5. Ways of fostering better community relations with local law enforcement;
6. Identification of needs and the best interests of the citizens of St. Mary's County;

The Body shall report annually to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

Additionally, the Body shall be responsible for appointing two (2) civilian members of the St. Mary's County Administrative Charging Committee and appointing one member to any trial board which may be formed in St. Mary's County. Nominations may be proposed individually or as a slate, and a nomination must receive the vote of a majority of those members voting before the nomination can pass. A member of the Board may not nominate himself or herself if nominated, and shall recuse themselves from any vote in which they are a candidate.

Article IV

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Members.

Membership shall be in accordance with the legal authority governing the Body.

Section 2. Appointment.

All Body members shall be appointed by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County unless otherwise provided by the legal authority governing the Body.

Section 3. Tenure and Term of Office.

Terms of office shall be in accordance with the legal authority governing the Body.

Section 4. Voting.

Each voting member, including the Chairperson, shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote.

Section 5. Attendance at meetings.

Members are expected to attend all meetings. If any appointed member fails to attend three (3) consecutive regular meetings, with or without reasonable cause, or is absent from 50% of the regularly scheduled meetings during any calendar year, the Chairperson shall notify the County Administrator of the absences, for appropriate action pursuant to paragraph 7 below.

Section 6. Removal of Body Members

A member may be removed with or without cause by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

Section 7. Resignation.

Any member desiring to resign shall submit a resignation in writing to the County Administrator.

Section 8. Vacancies.

A vacancy, because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or otherwise, shall be filled at the pleasure of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

Section 9. Compensation.

Members of the Body shall serve without compensation, excepting any stipend which may be appropriated by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County for that year's budget.

Section 10. Confidentiality.

A member of the Body must sign an agreement to maintain the confidentiality of Body matters related to individual complaints until final disposition of said complaint.

Section 11. Ethics Ordinance.

All members must adhere to the provisions of the St. Mary's County Public Ethics Ordinance.

**Article V
OFFICERS**

Section 1. Officers.

The Officers of the Body shall be a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

Section 2. Chairperson of the Body.

Except as otherwise provided by law or direction of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, the Chairperson shall (1) preside at all meetings; (2) set the agenda for the meetings; (3) appoint all committees and subcommittees authorized by the members; (4) sign any document or instrument which the members have authorized to be executed; and (5) in general shall perform all duties as may be prescribed by the members from time to time.

Section 3. Vice-Chairperson.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall perform all of the duties of the Chairperson and when so acting, shall have all the powers of, and be subject to, all the restrictions upon the Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the Chairperson or, in the alternative, requested by a majority vote of the members.

Section 5. Election of Officers.

The members shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from its membership every year, and it may also elect such other officers as may be necessary from its membership. Election of officers shall take place at an annual meeting to be held in the month of January.

Section 6. Term of Office.

The term of office shall be for a period of one year. Each officer shall hold office until his/her successor has been duly elected.

Section 7. Removal.

Any officer elected by the members may be removed from office by a vote of two-thirds of the members.

Section 8. Vacancies.

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or otherwise, may be filled by a majority vote of the members for the unexpired portion of the term.

Article VI

COMMITTEES

The members may, from time to time, establish subcommittees to study specific matters and report to the full forum.

Article VII

MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular Meetings.

Regular meetings of the members shall meet as often as necessary but at least quarterly per calendar year. A schedule of regular meetings for each calendar year shall be adopted prior to the commencement of the calendar year.

Section 2. Special Meetings.

Special meetings may be scheduled by a majority vote of the members or called by the Chairperson, and shall be called by the Chairperson upon the written request of a majority of the members of the Body.

Section 3. Notice

Written or electronic notice of all meetings shall be provided to each member at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the date set for such meeting.

Section 4. Recessed Meetings.

Any regular or special meeting may be recessed upon a majority vote of the members and may be reconvened without additional notice provided that the date, time and place at which the meeting shall be reconvened is determined and announced in open session at the time of the recess.

Section 5. Open Meetings Act.

All meetings, including meetings of committees and subcommittees, shall be scheduled and conducted in accordance with the St. Mary's County Open Meetings Act. No executive session may take place except upon the advice of the Office of the County Attorney.

Section 6. Agenda.

The Chairperson shall ensure an agenda is prepared for each regular and special meeting and the agenda shall, in general, be as follows:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll call to determine the presence of a quorum
3. Presentation of minutes from the previous meeting
4. Presentation of Officers' and Committee Reports
5. Discussion of Old Business
6. Discussion of New Business
7. Adjournment

Section 7. Quorum and Voting.

Except as otherwise provided by law or direction of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, a majority of the members established in accordance with the legal authority governing the Body shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting. All decisions shall be made by majority vote of the members present, including the Chairperson, at any meeting where a quorum is present and able to participate in the decision.

Article VIII

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The “Rules of Order for St. Mary County Boards and Commissions,” as amended from time to time, shall govern meetings unless inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order. If such rules are not in force and effect, and except as otherwise provided by law or direction of the Commissioners of St. Mary’s County, the rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, including the provisions of §49 entitled “Procedure in Small Boards,” shall govern; provided, however, that all motions must be stated and shall require a second. The Chairperson shall rule on all parliamentary matters. No proceeding or action shall be deemed invalid on the sole basis that the proceeding occurred or the action was taken without compliance with rules of order.

Article IX

APPOINTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Body is responsible for appointing two (2) members of the Administrative Charging Committee. Before any appointment, the Body shall publicly invite applications for at least thirty (30) days prior. A majority of the Body must vote to appoint a member to the Administrative Charging Committee before such appointment is effective.

Article X

COMPLAINTS OF MISCONDUCT

The Body is responsible for receiving complaints of misconduct of a police officer employed by a local law enforcement agency. No complaint shall be accepted unless it contains the following information: (1) the name of the police officer accused of misconduct, (2) a description of the facts on which the complaint is based, and (3) contact information of the complainant or the person filing on behalf of the complainant for investigative follow-up, including a verified mailing address. Upon receipt of a complaint containing all required information shall be forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agency within three days of its receipt. The Body may delegate any and all clerical aspects of this function to County staff.

Article XI

TRAINING AND ORIENTATION

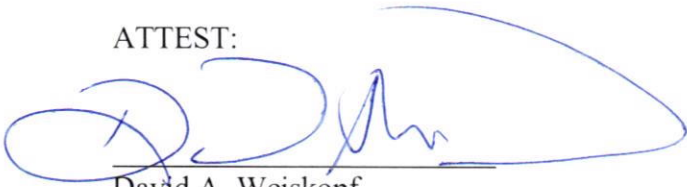
No member of the Body shall serve without first receiving any and all training which may be required by the Maryland Police Standards and Training Commission, or any supplemental training which the Body may elect to require on its own initiative.

Article XII
AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Body.

ADOPTED by the St. Mary's County Police Accountability Board this 13th day of July, 2022, to be effective on July 13th, 2022.

ATTEST:



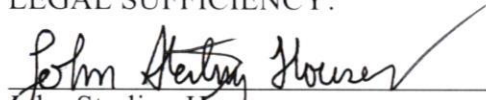
David A. Weiskopf
Interim County Administrator

By:



Nickolas Cromwell, Chairperson

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:


John Sterling Houser
Assistant County Attorney