



STAFF REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

DATE: Regular Meeting of May 26th, 2026

TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council

VIA: Patrick Tang, Interim City Manager

SUBMITTED BY: Joseph Vasquez, Chief of Police

SUBJECT: Update on the Chief's Advisory Board (CAB)

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Receive an update on the Chief's Advisory Board (CAB)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Chief's Advisory Board was created in May of 2021 by then Chief of Police William Imboden. The intent behind the CAB was to have representation throughout various communities in the city with two-year terms to prevent discussions from going stale and allowing others in the city an opportunity to participate on the board. These members were to serve as a direct conduit between the Police Department and the community and provide invaluable information on how to provide better public safety services. Eight community members were selected from various neighborhoods, ethnic backgrounds, and personal experiences with public safety. Out of the original eight members, only four remain on the board as many of the original members were unable to fulfill the attendance requirement. Chief of Police Joseph Vasquez took over the CAB in October 2022 after Chief Imboden retired. Over the last three years, the CAB included a student from Hercules High School, and a college student which brought a unique and youthful perspective. Both have since moved on, but we hope to include more youth in the future.

Some of the accomplishments this group has achieved include helping the Chief develop a mission and vision statement as well as the core values that guide all personnel in the police department. The CAB has also helped navigate the department through difficult incidents and develop new policies and procedures.

During the Council Meeting of October 14, 2025, it was agreed that a summary of discussions held during CAB meetings would be periodically provided by the Chief of Police to the City Council. Below is a summary of discussions and actions taken from 2025 monthly CAB meetings.

ANALYSIS:

This report captures a synopsis of discussions from the first quarter of the 2026 calendar year. Due to scheduling conflicts, the CAB only met three times during the first quarter of 2026. Some of our discussions included our DUI check point on Willow Ave, the freeway shutdown on I-80 resulting from an outside agency officer-involved shooting, a possible homicide investigation in Hercules that was posted on social media, and allegations of an ICE kidnapping in Hercules at the Creek Side Shopping Center. We also discussed community engagement events such as Breakfast With a Badge, Coffee with a Cop, and upcoming events including the 3rd Annual Public Safety Fundraising Golf Tournament, School Supply Giveaway, and our first Cops and Cars Car Show on Bayfront Boulevard. Former City Manager Dante Hall also attended a meeting and discussed the state of the city including his departure and issues related to long-term financial sustainability for the city.

Social Media: A post on Nextdoor alleged that there was a homicide investigation in Hercules in the month of January. This post was determined to be false; there was only one reported firearm discharge in all West Contra Costa County during this time, and it was in El Sobrante and resulted in no injuries. There was another post on social media alleging a kidnapping in Hercules by ICE officers somewhere in the Creek Side Shopping Center. This post was also determined to be false, and the CAB discussed the dangers of inaccurate and unsubstantiated information that is often disseminated on social media.

Community Awareness: An anti-ICE protest was conducted near the Shell gas station at the intersection of Sycamore Ave and Willow Ave. This protest was not well attended and there were no issues reported. A “No-Kings” protest was initially scheduled to take place at San Pablo Ave and Sycamore which is now being referred to as “The Four Corners.” This protest was later moved to Pinole and only minimally impacted the Hercules community. In January, an off-duty Richmond Police Officer was involved in a fatal shooting on westbound I-80 in Hercules causing a major traffic jam for a large portion of the day. We discussed how these incidents are investigated and that in 2020, AB 1506 was enacted and the California Department of Justice now conducts an independent investigation of all fatal law enforcement incidents regarding “unarmed” subjects. In this situation, even though the suspect swung a tire iron and hit the officer, according to this Assembly Bill, he is considered unarmed. This independent investigation is in addition to the County Protocol investigation conducted by the Contra Costa District Attorney’s Office, the venue agency (CHP), and the “actor’s” department (Richmond PD) who conduct an administrative investigation of policy violation. The DOJ investigation extends

the duration of the overall investigation. The city also eradicated two homeless encampments during this period while offering resources including food and shelter.

Community Events: CAB members attended events such as Breakfast with a Badge and helped serve and converse with members of our senior community. Many of our members also attended Coffee with a Cop at HOM Coffee and helped welcome the new local business to our community.

PD Staffing and Succession Planning: The police department lost one probationary officer earlier this year who voluntarily resigned. In addition, the department is preparing for the impending retirement of our current longest tenured personnel, Detective Sergeant Ezra Tafesse. The police department will need to hire two officers to backfill the current vacant position, and the eventual officer vacancy after an Officer is promoted to Sergeant. A current Patrol Sergeant will also be reassigned to a Detective Sergeant position. As a department, we continue to struggle recruiting lateral police officers. A recent lateral police officer interview was conducted to no avail. We are now looking at entry level applicants, but the turnaround time for hiring, training, and having a solo competent Officer is more than two years. In addition, we will be conducting testing for two potential Sergeant positions while also reassigning a current Sergeant to the Investigations Division. This is all part of our future succession planning. Chief Vasquez will also be out on extended medical leave during the summer. Both Commanders have begun attending CAB meetings and will keep the meetings moving forward in Chief Vasquez's absence.

CAB Concerns and Comments: There continues to be a concern regarding e-bikes/scooters and the associated dangers to the riders and the public. HPD is looking at conducting educational enforcement for e-bike/scooter riders. Members of the CAB are looking into different bike groups to talk with the younger kids about the associated dangers of these modes of transportation. There also appears to be an increase of people riding dirtbikes in the "bowl" area behind the Powder Keg restaurant. CAB members were encouraged to call HPD when they observe these riders in the area.

The items listed above are a small summary of discussion items and actions taken from current monthly CAB meetings.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving this report.

ATTACHMENTS:

None