

## NACOLE CANDIDATE ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Candidates are encouraged to fill out the following questionnaire, to give NACOLE members relevant information when voting for Board members.

Name: Nicolle Barton

- 1) Position Sought: Board Member at-large
- 2) Geographic Location: St. Louis, Missouri
- 3) Current Oversight Position and Organization: Consent Decree Coordinator, City of Ferguson, Missouri
- 4) Number of Years as a NACOLE Member: Four years
- 5) Please list Annual Conferences or training opportunities in which you have attended:
  - NACOLE Annual Conference in Detroit, MI, 2019
  - NACOLE Regional Training, Nashville, TN, 2019
  - NACOLE Annual Conference in St. Petersburg, FL 2018
  - NACOLE webinar series: Investigating Search & Seizure Allegations, 2018
  - NACOLE webinar series: Policing our Classrooms: Safety, Discipline, Bias, 2018
  - NACOLE Regional Conference in Indianapolis, IN, 2017
  - NACOLE webinar series: Justice Based Policing, 2017
  - NACOLE webinar: Strategies for Successful Mediation, 2017
  - NACOLE Annual Conference in Spokane, WA, 2017
  - NACOLE Annual Conference in Albuquerque, NM, 2016
  - NACOLE webinar: Policing the Police, Nov, 2016
  - NACOLE Regional Conference in St. Louis, MO, 2016
  - NACOLE Regional Conference in San Juan, PR 2016

- 6) Are you currently a member of the NACOLE Board? No

If so, in what capacity:

- President
- Vice President
- Board Member At-Large

**For the following questions, please respond in no more than 200 words.**

- 1) Why do you want to serve on the NACOLE Board?

In 2015, St. Louis City passed an Ordinance approving the first ever Civilian Oversight Board in this region. When I was hired as the first Executive Director of the Civilian Oversight Board there was no one to train me in this position as in every other position I had ever held before. There was only an Ordinance to guide me and my seven volunteer Board members. I had no employees, no policies, no procedures, no bi-laws, no standard operating manual, nothing! I began researching other Boards and found NACOLE! When I first contacted NACOLE they immediately placed me in contact with other Members who guided me, mentored me, and helped me through this process. When I attended the first NACOLE Annual conference I was met by the most amazing people in this field who continued to educate and train me in the capacity of this Oversight field. I want to serve on the NACOLE Board because I believe in the Mission, Values, and the leadership of this wonderful team of people. I would like to serve on the Board so that I could offer the same mentoring and leadership skills to other new Oversight Professionals that I received as a new member. In recent years there has been an increasing need to establish Oversight Agencies in both rural and urban areas. I would like to help other Cities who need guidance on establishing effective Oversight Boards. I also enjoy teaching and training others in this capacity as well. I am Proud to be a member of NACOLE and I would love to have the opportunity to serve as a Board Member. I believe I have the commitment needed to bring about change, transparency, support, and best practice standards to an ever changing field.

2) What skills/experience/qualities do you bring to the NACOLE Board?

I have over 19 years of both law enforcement and community outreach experience. I have had the distinct pleasure and opportunity to help establish two functioning Civilian Oversight Boards and I am currently consulting a third city at this time. As the previous Executive Director of a new Oversight Agency, I have written and developed policy and procedures. I work collectively with local activist, faith based community leaders, civic leaders, and legislators to bring about effective change that has continued to build a bridge between law enforcement and the community. I have assisted in developing and improving training in our local police departments. As the Consent Decree Coordinator for the City of Ferguson, I have been working closely with the Department of Justice on writing and implementing new policies and procedures to improve police practices.

3) What challenges does NACOLE face as a rapidly growing membership organization?

Due to the current climate in our Nation in which police misconduct and racism is a forefront in news and media outlets there is a greater awareness and need to bring about change in policing. Community members are recognizing the need to establish effective oversight agencies in their own communities. Therefore, I believe it is important to hire additional staff to meet these demands. I believe it is important to have NACOLE Board members who can also dedicate time to membership issues and/or concerns, help in providing mentors to new organizations, and even provide advocates who can assist in reform efforts.

- 4) How have you contributed to NACOLE's work? Please include all committees you have served on or led, as well as any other NACOLE volunteer efforts.

In my first year as a new Oversight Practitioner, I co-hosted a Regional Training with NACOLE entitled: Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement: A Road to Building Trust in St. Louis, Mo in 2016.

I was honored to serve as a panel speaker at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual NACOLE conference in Spokane, Washington in 2017. This panel was titled: "Building an Oversight Agency: Lessons Learned from Campaign to Launch".

In 2018, I served on the Member Support and Development Committee for NACOLE. This committee is responsible for supporting NACOLE's current members, increasing membership, and receives and responds to inquiries regarding new memberships and oversees the mentoring program.

In 2019, I was a panel speaker at the Regional Training in Nashville, Tennessee after Nashville passed legislation to begin an Oversight agency in their city.

- 5) Please share highlights of your background/experience in law enforcement oversight.

I spent 16 years in law enforcement with the Missouri Board of Probation and Parole. During my time there I helped write and implement programs for chronically unemployed offenders to overcome barriers to employment. I sat on various pilot projects to establish guidelines and correct misconduct of Correctional Officer employees.

I have had the pleasure of helping to establish two Oversight Agencies. I helped develop, write, and implement the policies, procedures, and operating manuals that currently govern these agencies. One of the first accomplishments gained as a newly formed Board was winning a law suit against our local police union after they filed an injunction preventing my office from requesting and obtaining *Garrity* statements as part of the investigation process.

In 2017, the City of St. Louis faced weeks of protesting after the acquittal of a former St. Louis police officer, Jason Stockley for the 2011 shooting death of Anthony Lamar Smith. During the protests, I requested the St. Louis City Civilian Oversight Board be given subpoena power, and with the support from the Mayor and Board of Alderman we were granted subpoena power with an amendment to the Ordinance. This was a major accomplishment for our Region.

In my current position as the Consent Decree Coordinator for the City of Ferguson, I am proud to say that since the date of my hire there has been substantial progress on Consent Decree requirements. We have maintained all deadline dates set by the Monitoring Team; we have finalized several policies including our Use of Force policies, de-escalation, and warrantless search and seizures. I have been working with our Neighborhood Police Steering Committee and our Community Engagement Committee to finalize our

Community Policing and Engagement plan, our Training plan, and problem-solving policing techniques within the community at large.

- 6) If elected/re-elected, what would you most like to accomplish as a Board member?

I would like to help develop a peer support group that would enhance the relationship between NACOLE members across the nation. I would like Members and Directors of Oversight Agencies from across the Nations to have a “sounding board” that we could bounce ideas off of, gain insight from each other, and work collectively when any city is having a major crisis event. I would like to help the team fight for new legislation that would help transparency and accountability for all Civilian Oversight Agencies.

- 7) Additional information for voters to consider:

I have attained my Bachelor Degree in Criminal Justice and have also earned my Master’s Degree in Legal Studies as well as a Master’s Degree in Paralegal. I am a longtime advocate for both criminal justice and social justice reform. I am a Certified Fraud Examiner and Member of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners.

I would like to thank everyone in advance for their time and consideration. This is a time that our Nation needs healing and support. We have a long road ahead of us but I do believe we can improve police practices, transparency, and accountability of the police in the communities we serve.

I believe that I have a duty to fight against injustice and racism. I believe I have a duty to ensure the rights of others are protected and to be a voice for those that have been oppressed and discriminated against. I would be honored if you would consider me as a Board Member of NACOLE.

Thank you,

*Nicolle Barton*