



**Proposed Community Oversight Board (COB)**



# **Community Oversight Now Public Informational Meeting**

*Sponsored by:* **NOAH - Christian Churches (DOC)**  
Alameda, Eastwood, and New Covenant

*Date / Time.:* **08/20/17 3:00-4:00 pm**

*Place.....:* **Alameda Christian Church (DOC)**  
**4006 Ashland City Highway, Nashville, TN 37218**

*Presenters.....:* **NOAH (Nashville Organized for Action and Hope)**  
**Jane Boram, Arnold Hayes, Bob Johnson, and  
Kyle Mothershead**

*Event Planners:* **Sue Caudill, Dara Oglesby, and Kelly Sanders**

**For more information contact:**

***Community Oversight Now:***

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# Proposed Community Oversight Board (COB)



## Overview

- The **Community Oversight Board** would be a new Metro agency governed by a community-representative board and staffed with professionals. The COB would be charged with investigating community allegations of police misconduct and conducting policy review for the entire Davidson County Criminal Justice system. Currently, Nashville has no COB – community complaints of police misconduct are resolved by the police, who are entrusted to police themselves.
- Most products and services in modern society are regulated, and have some degree of external oversight. Restaurants, medical providers, and even barbers and cosmetologists are subjected to oversight by outside agencies. Yet, unless one has the financial means and time to pursue a lawsuit in court, there is no venue to file a complaint about police misconduct other than the police department itself. **A COB provides oversight to help protect citizens from police misconduct.**
- **A COB is the only idea presented to address officer misconduct complaints and policy review needs.** The city supports cameras, body armor, and the hiring of more police officers, but none of these provide direct solutions for addressing community complaints of police misconduct. Neither do they address the need for community involvement in policy review.
- A COB is the closest instrument to an honest broker, which if implemented properly, can review and assess complaints, as well as research police accountability measures.

## Policing With No Oversight

- On average there are about **700 citizen complaints** each year against MNP. Of the complaints for serious misconduct such as civil rights violations, excessive force, and race discrimination, MNP rules against the citizen **98.5%** of the time.
- The “Driving While Black” report assessing 2 million MNP stops from 2011-2015 found that blacks are disproportionately the targets of police stops and roadside searches.
- Statements from the **District Attorney and Tennessee Bureau of Investigation** offices have noted institutional bias in the action of the MNP.
- The **Department of Justice’s Conciliation Division** met with community leaders and public officials in the Spring and Summer 2017, and then recommended that Nashville create a citizen’s advisory board to address concerns with policing.



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## Historical and Discussion

- COBs or some version of community and civilian review boards have been implemented in over 100 cities in the United States. The effectiveness depends on funding, investigative powers, and the independence of the board.
- A COB is one of the flagship and most important proposals embraced by all civil rights groups for the last three decades. In fact, Martin Luther King, Jr. first publicly advocated for a civilian review board in 1964.
- Barack Obama's *Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing* (p. 26), led by former Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia police chief Charles Ramsey embraced community oversight as a measure to guarantee police accountability.

## Proposed Legislation

- **Community Oversight Board Legislation** is being proposed by *Community Oversight Now*, a coalition of community organizations. Mayor Barry and Police Chief Anderson have both voiced their opposition to a COB for Nashville. Some Metro Council Members are open to the idea, but need to be engaged. The public needs to be more informed on the subject.
- The Proposed COB Legislation includes a majority board of community organization representatives, with the proper funding, staff, board oversight, and authority.
- The proposed Nashville COB will have primary jurisdiction to fairly resolve allegations of MNPD officer misconduct involving members of the public, and authority to study Nashville's criminal justice system and make advisory recommendations to improve its functioning and fairness.
- The legislation is not asking for the COB to have direct subpoena authority. As prescribed by the Metro Charter, but asking that the COB be authorized to seek a "compulsion order" from the Chancery Court if it becomes necessary to compel the attendance of witnesses or production of evidence. It is anticipated that the majority of cases can be resolved without recourse to the Chancery Court's compulsion authority.



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## NASHVILLE COMMUNITY OVERSIGHT BOARD: STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION

### COMMUNITY OVERSIGHT BOARD



COUNCIL NOMINEES



COMMUNITY NOMINEES



MAYORAL NOMINEES

### COMMUNITY OVERSIGHT BOARD STAFF

#### EXECUTIVE AND ASSISTANT DIRECTORS



COMMUNITY LIAISONS



LEGAL COUNSEL



RESEARCH ANALYSTS



#### INVESTIGATORS



#### ASSISTANTS

