



## **2023 Annual Report of the Citizens Public Safety Review and Appeal Board (kalamazoocpsrab.org)**

The Citizens Public Safety Review and Appeal Board (CPSRAB) provides community oversight of the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety (KDPS). CPSRAB hears community complaints that are appealed after they have been investigated by the Office of Professional Standards. The Board also serves in an advisory role to improve public safety service and policies, and works to build community trust, credibility, and confidence.

As noted in the Policies and Procedures of Operation, the CPSRAB has the responsibility to provide an annual update regarding the number and types of complaints brought before the Board and to assess the complaint process. The Board may also report on other areas such as police/community relations, effectiveness of policies and community climate.

During 2023, 10 citizens served on the CPSRAB and included Chair Vernon Payne, Vice Chair Luis Garcia and members Jason Allen, Christopher Caldwell, Wally Ferrara, Curtis Gardner, Ebony Hemphill, Barbara Miller, Susan Stapleton, and Larry Tolbert. The Board worked with two city staff members, Patricia Vargas, Executive Assistant to the City Manager and Shelly Dusek, Director of Human Resources. KDPS Assistant Chief Green and Inspector Mason were available to the Board to address questions.

The Board attended KDPS orientation sessions to become informed on KDPS policies and community initiatives. The Board appreciated the openness of KDPS during these orientation sessions. The Office of Professional Standards investigated 33 complaints against officers in 2023, down from 51 in 2022. The top three allegations were profiling and harassment, improper investigation, and improper force. Two of the complaints after findings were determined by the Chief of Police were scheduled for appeal hearings in 2023, however only one was heard by the board as the complainant for the other did not appear.

During 2023, under the guidance of Chair Payne, the Board was very active in review of KDPS data and reporting. Subcommittees examined outcomes from both the Traffic Stop Data Analysis Project as completed by Lamberth Consulting, LLC in September of 2013 and the OIR Report which was commissioned by the city to look at the use of force that occurred in two incidences in 2020.

The Traffic Stop Data Analysis Project report recommended that a change in KDPS culture was needed and that the policies and procedures of the department must be carefully reviewed and assessed for bias. While no follow up report has been commissioned or generated to help the public understand if positive changes have been made as a result of the recommendations, the

monthly posting of the [Kalamazoo Public Safety Police-Citizen Relation \(PCR\) Complaints](#) on the KDPS transparency page does provide real time data that can be curated to help understand if profiling still exists. A recent initiative now used by KDPS, the [MY90 Citizen Survey](#), is also a tool that collects feedback to improve outcomes after service and is helping to inform where if any improvements can be made.

The OIR report generated numerous recommendations regarding policy and procedure and KDPS had been actively involved in addressing the recommendations which included policy and training changes. At two community wide meetings in 2023, the community voted to approve the training plan and status updates from the OIR report. Continued review of policy and training opportunities should remain a focus for KDPS to ensure quality and fair service to our community.

Additionally, members of the Board have been active in outreach in the community, helping to inform citizens about the role of CPSRAB and to gather input regarding effectiveness of or concerns with KDPS. Events attended by Board members include Community Conversation Forums, National Night Out, neighborhood association meetings, community festivals, annual Bike Rodeo and Shop with a Senior. Members have also engaged in learning opportunities by attending the Kalamazoo Regional Citizens Academy, participating in ride-alongs and public safety officer candidate interviews and engaging in conversation with the Kalamazoo Defender's Office.