

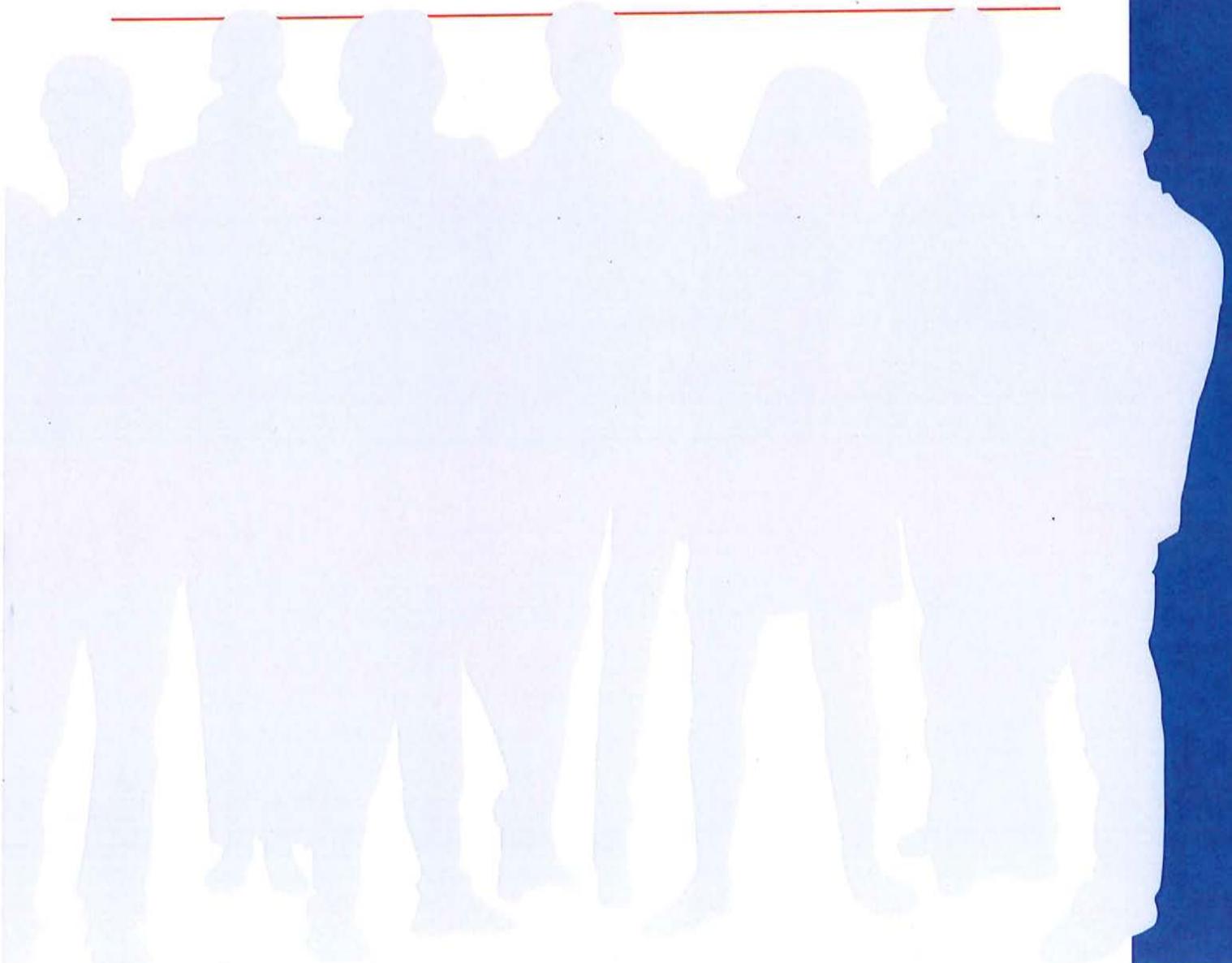
CITY OF CLEVELAND | Office of the Council
Public Safety Committee



"Listening Tour"

REVIEW

A Report on the concerns and suggestions voiced by Cleveland residents' during
citywide public safety forums hosted by Cleveland City Council



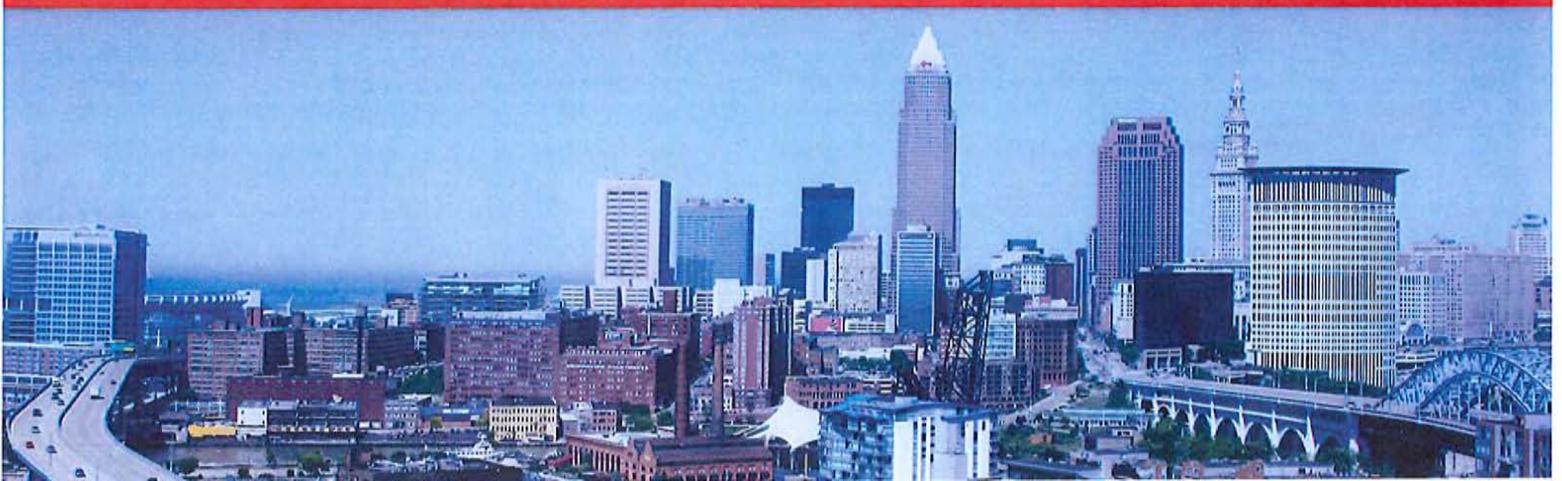
In November, 2012, Cleveland Police engaged in a high-speed car chase that began in downtown Cleveland and ended in a hail of gunfire on the grounds of an East Cleveland elementary school.

When the car in pursuit came to a stop 25 minutes after the chase began, 13 police officers fired 137 shots at the vehicle, killing the two occupants – a man and a woman – both of whom were unarmed.

The incident was a culmination of earlier criticisms against the Cleveland Police Department, alleging abuse of power and unnecessary force. The City's Safety Director Michael McGrath, who at the time was the chief of police, called the incident a "tragedy" and community, religious and civil rights leaders, along with Mayor Frank Jackson, urged the federal government to investigate.

The Department of Justice answered the call and spent two years examining Cleveland's Division of Police. It released its findings in December, stating that the concerns raised are "well-founded."

In the wake of the findings, Cleveland City Council held "Listening Tour" sessions in various neighborhoods to allow citizens to respond. The following is a report on those sessions.



Investigation of the Cleveland Division of Police



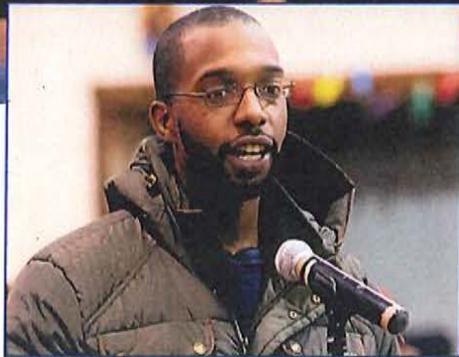
United States Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
U.S. Attorney's Office
District of Ohio

On December 4, 2014,

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder

held a news conference in Cleveland to release results of a two-year investigation by the Department of Justice into the Cleveland Division of Police.

The Justice Department's findings indicated probable cause that Cleveland police officers engage in a pattern of excessive force, in violation of the Fourth Amendment of the Constitution.




Public Safety Committee
"Listening Tour"
Tuesday, December 30, 2014
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm | Sagrada Familia Church
 7219 Detroit Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44102
Cleveland City Council is having listening tour sessions throughout the City in an effort to hear residents' concerns and offer a productive and respectful forum for their voices.

Presented by
Cleveland City Council
 Mayor Michael R. White
 Council President Mark Taylor
 Councilwoman Joyce Bevilacqua
 Councilwoman Rosemary Green
 Councilwoman Patricia Miller
 Councilwoman Patricia Williams

1. Welcome
2. Opening Prayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Introductions
5. Moderator addresses the audience



... local government leaders reached out to residents to **create dialogues** on how police and citizens can restore and build trusting relationships with each other.

Problems in the Police Department were no major shock to Mayor Frank Jackson who, working with City Council, had already been engaged in reforming the Division of Police and who, in fact, had invited the Department of Justice to investigate the force.

Holder's 58-page report alleged 600 cases between 2010 and 2013 in which police excessively and unreasonably used lethal force, including guns, fists, Tasers and chemical sprays.

The report said, "this pattern of excessive force has eroded public confidence in the police." It also said Cleveland police officers were not provided with adequate "training, policy guidance, support, supervision and equipment needed to allow them to do their jobs safely and effectively."

Cases cited in the findings included a November 2012 high-speed car chase in which 13 police officers fired 137 shots at the vehicle, killing both occupants who were unarmed.

The findings, however, did not include **two highly dramatic incidents** that occurred in November, after the report had been completed:

- A police officer's fatal shooting of 12-year-old Tamir Rice who was carrying an Airsoft pellet gun, a replica of a real firearm, at the Cudell Recreation Center.

- And the death of a mentally ill woman, Tanisha Anderson, at the hands of a police officer who used a takedown move on her.

The two deaths, coupled with the findings of the Department of Justice, thrust Cleveland into the glare of national media, along with Ferguson, Mo., and Staten Island, N.Y., -- places where deadly police actions spawned citizen outrage.

For weeks, the nation watched and read news reports of violent protests in Missouri and New York. But in Cleveland, those who took to the streets were much more orderly and peaceful.

That is not to say the citizens of Cleveland were not angry. Groups of protestors disrupted City Council meetings, called for the firings of top police and safety officials and held protests on downtown streets.

But City Hall did not go on the offensive or hunker down in bunker mode. Instead, local government leaders reached out to residents to create dialogues on how police and citizens can restore and build trusting relationships with each other.

Police Chief Calvin Williams talked with protestors one-on-one while walking through the midst of a public demonstration, greeting people and calmly assuring them their voices were being heard.

Immediately following the release of the federal findings, Cleveland City Council held a Public Safety Committee hearing that included testimony from U.S. Attorney Steven Dettelbach of the Northern District of Ohio.

Dettelbach noted that the Division of Police had already taken steps to address concerns detailed in the federal findings.

City Council, beginning in December, then held four more public hearings in various Cleveland neighborhoods, making it convenient for citizens to attend and express their views and concerns regarding police issues.

The "Listening Tours," attended by a majority of council members and conducted by Councilman Matt Zone, chairman of Council's Safety Committee, were **held at four**

locations over a four-week period:

- Harvard Community Services Center, 18240, Harvard Ave.
- Sagrada Familia Catholic Church, 7719 Detroit Ave.
- Elizabeth Baptist Church, 6114 East 61st St.
- Greater Abyssinia Baptist Church, 1161 East 105th St.

A head count of all four sessions totaled more than 600, with some citizens attending all four. Each session lasted more than two hours as residents lined up behind a microphone,



**"I understand that
there are good o
I just wan
- Listening 7**

waiting for a turn to speak.

All testimonies heard during the listening sessions were accounts and opinions of citizen speakers. None of the accounts have been verified or otherwise scrutinized. Likewise, none of the broad assertions were challenged by council. Thus, the concerns listed below are solely a summary of what was said during the sessions.

Major concerns included:

- Lack of community policing
- Fear of police



Officers out there... to see them."

Participant

- Lack of police training and equipment
- Lack of trust in department leadership to reform and correct problems
- Abuse of police power
- Effectiveness of the Civilian Police Review Board
- Disparity between police and citizens in how their cases are handled in the justice system

Many residents called for the return of neighborhood police mini-stations which were closed by former Mayor Jane Campbell because of budget restraints.

The stations were part of a community policing program that brought officers and neighborhood activists together to fight crime. Residents recalled that beat cops and neighbors knew each other's names, but that's no longer the case, they said, bemoaning police are barely visible today.

"I understand that there are good officers out there," one woman told the Listening Tour. "I just want to see them."

Another woman said, "The Police used to be respected. We need to bring back that respect."

But that respect, some residents claimed, has been replaced by fear of police. "When police see me, they don't see a man," a resident told the Listening Tour. "They see a black man. They see a criminal."

Many called for bias-free policing and demanded that patrol officers receive sensitivity training.

They also called for training police in first aid, CPR, dealing with mental health issues and how to de-escalate volatile incidents without putting officers in danger.

Many who spoke believe police officers are rarely held accountable for bad actions

or breaking rules and when they are held accountable, there is a lack of transparency in the disciplinary process.

They called for a stronger Civilian Police Review Board and public disclosure of how it operates. "The police can't police the police," one woman exclaimed.

Another resident noted that police abuse of power is not just a problem in Cleveland. It is nationwide and unless offending officers are prosecuted and convicted, which seldom occurs, police violence will continue.

Councilman Zone noted much has been written about how criminal justice systems are lenient on police who break laws, while

several hearings with city, county and state officials on this issue."

The purpose of the Listening Tours was to let citizens talk while council members listened and noted concerns within the community.

Council has no authority to hire, fire or discipline police officers. That authority belongs to the Jackson administration.

But council can take legislative initiatives towards addressing some of the troubling findings by the Department of Justice.

For example, in October, 2013, council adopted legislation to purchase body cameras to be worn by police so that their



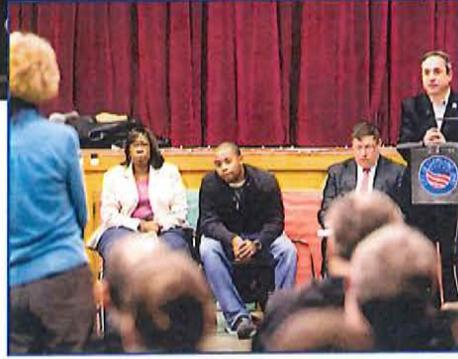
citizens, especially African Americans and other minorities, face heavy-handed prosecutions when arrested.

"The Safety Committee will be spending a considerable amount of time in 2015 looking into the disparity of how police and citizens are treated in our criminal justice system," said Councilman Zone. "We will be hosting

actions can be monitored when making arrests, or performing other policing duties.

The city has cameras and is using them in some police districts. By the end of this year, all officers will have been trained and fitted with cameras.

Meanwhile, Mayor Jackson's administration



The police can't police the police."
– Listening Tour participant



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Council President

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City Clerk, Clerk of Council

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