



Contact: Harold Folley  
Organizer, The People's Coalition  
Organizer, Legal Aid Justice Center  
434-529-1807  
[harold@justice4all.org](mailto:harold@justice4all.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **CITY RESIDENTS HOLD FIRM IN DEMAND FOR A STRONG AND INDEPENDENT POLICE CIVILIAN REVIEW BOARD**

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA, October 21, 2019—The People's Coalition, joined by local residents and members of the initial Police Civilian Review Board, spoke in front of city hall this evening to demand the Charlottesville City Council create a permanent, independent, fully-funded, and fully-staffed Police Civilian Review Board (CRB) in response to a longstanding history of racist practices and a lack of accountability and transparency in the Charlottesville Police Department (CPD).

They objected to the ordinance and bylaws that City Council released last Wednesday, October 16, 2019, which watered-down and severely weakened the proposal submitted to them by the initial CRB. They also argued that Council's proposal violates the intent and spirit of the resolution Council passed on December 18, 2017, that empaneled the initial CRB. They expressed disappointment that the City's proposal ignored best practices supported by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE), Fairfax County's CRB, and ignored the needs of Council's own constituents.

According to the People's Coalition, City Council's proposal betrays the trust of the community and their own resolution in several important ways. Council's proposal:

1. Eliminates the auditor role and function, which is crucial for a CRB to be a proactive force for addressing systemic policing failures.
2. Fails to allocate a budget for the CRB, which leaves uncertain whether the CRB will be fully-funded at no less than 1% of the police department's budget – a NACOLE standard.
3. Lacks transparency in both the selection of the CRB members and the hiring of its Executive Director.
4. Removes the authority of the CRB to comprehensively review police practices and policies before changes go into effect. True oversight of the police and meaningful policy change recommendations are not possible with Council's proposal.

The People's Coalition demanded a public hearing be held to share community feedback on the City's proposal before a final reading and vote by City Council.

A strong CRB will offer the Charlottesville community a change to impact police misconduct in a proactive – not just reactive- way. The People’s Coalition pointed to the fact that policing failures in Charlottesville have historically had a disproportionate impact on people of color since CPD’s founding, and a proactive approach to change is necessary. Recent police misbehavior, including the targeting of Black and Brown people with “stop and frisk,” the lack of thoroughness in investigating the disappearance of transgender neighbors, the illegitimate use of force on July 8, 2017, and the failure to stop neofascist violence in August 2017, have resulted in complaints that were ignored or minimized.

Concerned Charlottesville resident and mother, Tonya Jackson, said, “In the early morning hours of August 24, 2019, my daughter approached a CPD officer seeking medical help for a victim who had been stabbed six times. Instead of helping, the officer placed his hands around her neck, choking her. My daughter never thought this would happen here in Charlottesville, but now her views on policing in her hometown are changed forever.” Given the lack of transparency in CPD, the Jacksons have little confidence that a fair and honest investigation will occur.

Gloria Beard, member of the initial CRB added, “I strongly support the need for a strong Civilian Review Board for Charlottesville to ensure transparency, positive community relations and justice for all of Charlottesville. A strong Civilian Review Board for Charlottesville will create trust, faith and respect for all of Charlottesville and the Police Department.”

### **About The People’s Coalition**

The People’s Coalition organizes in the Charlottesville/Albemarle area in opposition to our unjust and racist criminal-legal system. We raise our voices in community to combat oppressive criminal justice practices through public education, public pressure, and public action.

The People’s Coalition works toward this mission in a number of ways:

- We advocate for community-driven policy changes at the city and county level.
- We put pressure on governmental bodies to address oppressive practices in their criminal “justice” processes.
- We push for transparency and accountability from local bodies working on criminal justice.

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If you would like more information, please call Harold Folley at 434-529-1807