



Grand Rapids Civilian Appeal Board Biennial Report 2024 - 2025



CITY OF
GRAND
RAPIDS

Oversight & Public
Accountability

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Letter from the 2025 Chair of the Civilian Appeal Board

To the Grand Rapids Community, Commissioners, Mayor, City Manager, and Police Chief,

The Grand Rapids Civilian Appeal Board (CAB) holds a unique position not only in Michigan but across the nation. While a handful of Michigan municipalities—including Detroit, Ann Arbor, Kalamazoo, and Muskegon—have established citizen-run committees to review allegations of police misconduct, Grand Rapids stands apart for the significant authority it has vested in its citizen appointees.

Unlike most oversight bodies, which are limited to making recommendations that the city and police department can choose to disregard, the CAB is empowered to make binding determinations. These decisions become the official finding of the City of Grand Rapids. We recognize that this level of authority carries inherent risks, such as potential conflicts with city code or established contracts. To mitigate these risks, Board members undergo extensive training on policy, procedure, and labor law. Furthermore, we are guided by the expert counsel of the City Attorney's office throughout our deliberations.

The benefit of this model is profound: it ensures that Grand Rapids has true, independent, citizen-led police oversight. Residents who feel they have been wronged and are unsatisfied with the outcome of an internal investigation have a meaningful recourse: an appeal to a board of their peers. This structure holds the Grand Rapids Police Department accountable in a direct and tangible way, requiring it to explain the conduct of its officers to an independent panel of community members, who are beholden not to the police department, but to the principles of fairness and the community they serve.

The trust between our community and its police department is foundational to public safety. The Civilian Appeal Board is dedicated to strengthening that trust through fair, impartial, and transparent oversight. I want to extend my deepest gratitude to my fellow Board members for their diligence, thoughtful deliberation, and unwavering commitment to this difficult but essential work.

On behalf of the Civilian Appeal Board, I am pleased to present our Biennial Report for 2024 - 2025. This report offers a comprehensive summary of the appeals heard by the Board, an overview of the complaint and appeal process, an analysis of complaint data, and a discussion of the challenges we faced. It also includes perspectives from our members on how this vital work can be improved.

We present this report to the community and to our city's leaders not just as a record of our activities, but as an invitation to a continued dialogue about how we can collectively improve public safety and accountability in Grand Rapids. We look forward to working with all of you to build a safer and more just city for everyone.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Osbourn

2024/2025 Chair, Civilian Appeal Board

Looking Forward – Board Insights and Reflections

The Board extends its sincere appreciation to our partners in public service: the Grand Rapids Police Department, the Office of Oversight and Public Accountability, and the City Commission. We recognize that cities around the country, including Grand Rapids, face unprecedented challenges in policing. These agencies are in the difficult position of balancing public safety with public accountability in an intensely polarized environment. It is a testament to the foresight of the people of Grand Rapids that this Board was created and empowered to help strike that crucial balance.

It is in this spirit of collaboration and with a shared commitment to strengthening public trust that we respectfully offer the following recommendations for procedural improvement.

The first recommendation is related to the implementation of policies designed to record and preserve police interactions. In 2023, the Board observed an issue where video evidence relevant to an appeal was lost, or inaccurately tagged and not preserved. While no system is perfect, the absence of complete evidence can negatively impact the Board's thorough review of a case. We fear this could erode public trust in our police and oversight systems. We urge the department to ensure that all policies for the recording and preservation of evidence are strictly followed.

The second recommendation pertains to interactions with citizens making complaints. The Board was concerned to learn that a complainant was reportedly cautioned by an internal affairs investigator that filing a false report of police misconduct could lead to criminal prosecution. Discouraging complaints—even if a claim is ultimately determined to be false—only serves to breed distrust. This Board is the proper venue for determining the merits of an appeal, and our work is most effective when citizens feel safe bringing their concerns forward. We urge the department to support all citizens seeking to make complaints to feel comfortable utilizing the process.

This Board has repeatedly demonstrated its diligence and fairness. We believe that ensuring the integrity of evidence and guaranteeing unimpeded access to the complaint process are foundational to credible oversight. When citizens, law enforcement officers, and public officials are confident that all facts can be presented and reviewed, the entire system is strengthened. We thank you for your attention to these vital matters and look forward to a productive partnership in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

The Civilian Appeal Board

About the Civilian Appeal Board

History

In 1996, the City Commission established the Civilian Appeal Board (“CAB” or the “Board”) through City Commission Policy 800-02. CAB reviews findings from the Grand Rapids Police Department (“GRPD”) Internal Affairs Unit (“IA”) regarding complaints of the use of excessive force; falsification and lying; civil rights violations, and hostility, discourtesy, or other conduct unbecoming an officer when such conduct is committed in a context of racial animosity or prejudice. The Board possesses the unique ability to affirm, modify, or reverse the IA’s findings. City Commission Policy 800-02 (“CCP 800-02”) can be found in the appendix of this report.

Mission

CAB’s mission is to encourage compliance with rules and regulations concerning the conduct of police officers during interactions with citizens; to encourage individuals who believe they have been mistreated by police officers to use the internal complaint process of GRPD; to review the complained of conduct of officers; to create a process that fairly and evenhandedly evaluates and judges the conduct of everyone involved to determine whether or not a breach of departmental rules and regulations occurred; and to afford the community a sense of confidence that the community itself is involved as necessary in reviewing the activities of its police force.

Purpose

CAB’s purpose, according to CCP 800-02, is to act as a review body for finding facts made by IA, concerning complaints made by individuals who believe that they have been mistreated by GRPD. This is a voluntary, independent Board consisting of community members who have a stake in meaningful police accountability, transparency, and systemic change. The Board is focused on reviewing IA investigations and all aspects of the cases to identify any wrongdoing.

Board Structure

CAB consists of nine Grand Rapids residents. The Board members are appointed by the Mayor and City Commission. The Mayor appoints three members and the City Commission appoints six members. Each term is two years and members may only serve for six consecutive years.

Board Members (as of December 31, 2025)	Ward	End of Term
Jason Osbourn - Chairperson	2	5/5/2025
Sophia Brewer	3	5/5/2025
Michelle Williams	2	5/3/2027
Reginald Howard	3	5/5/2025
Russell Olmsted	1	5/5/2025
Dean Pacific	1	5/5/2025
Jordan Cross	2	5/5/2025

The Complaint and Appeal Process

Filing a Complaint

Anyone may file a complaint against an employee of GRPD by calling, visiting, or e-mailing the Office of Oversight and Public Accountability (“**OPA**”) or GRPD, using an online submission form. Once a complaint is received, IA conducts an objective investigation. After a complete investigation, IA renders a disposition, based on the facts and circumstances. The dispositions of complaint investigations are classified as follows:

- Unfounded:** The investigation conclusively proved that the act(s) complained of did not occur. (This finding also applies when the act(s) may have occurred, however, the named employee(s) were not involved.)
- Exonerated:** The act, which provided the basis for the complaint or allegation, occurred; however, the investigation revealed that it was justified, lawful, and proper.
- Not Sustained:** The investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to clearly prove the allegation made in the complaint or to conclusively disprove such an allegation.
- Sustained:** The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to clearly prove the allegation made in the complaint. Violation of policy and/or procedure did occur, and appropriate administrative action will be taken.

The complaint may also be classified as Administratively Closed, which means the complaint was recorded but not investigated, or was withdrawn by the complainant.

Filing an Appeal

After a complaint has been investigated by IA, IA will render a written decision, commonly referred to as a Complaint Disposition Report (“CDR”). If IA concludes that the complaint is not sustained, unfounded or that the officer is exonerated, the complainant may appeal to CAB by filing a written request with the City Attorney’s Office or OPA within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of mailing of the CDR. If a timely appeal is filed, CAB will review the conclusions contained in the CDR and the evidence secured by GRPD during the investigation. If CAB needs additional information to make a decision, OPA and/or Labor Relations will conduct a supplemental investigation.

CAB meets as necessary to consider all appeals referred to it in a timely fashion. Appeal hearings are attended by OPA’s Director, who has served as staff liaison to the CAB since August 2019; GRPD and/or IA, who provide information regarding the scope of the investigation; and the Deputy City Attorney, who answers legal questions.

Appeal Eligibility

There are specific criteria outlined in CCP 800-02 that allow for a complaint to be appealed. Although anyone can file a complaint with OPA or IA (complainant(s), witness(es), concerned or interested party, etc.), an appeal may only be filed by an individual who believes they have been mistreated by the police. Complaints are categorized by IA as Class 1, Class 2, Class 3, Administrative Documentation, or Department Complaint. As explained below, only Class 1 and 2 complaints can be appealed.

Aftermath of CAB’s Decision

After reaching a decision, the Board reduces its opinion to a written statement affirming, reversing, or modifying the conclusion(s) contained in the CDR. If the Board reverses or modifies the conclusion(s) in the CDR, the written decision must contain sufficient detail to explain the reason for the reversal or modification. The Board has no jurisdiction to impose or recommend that discipline and its decision does not address or recommend potential disciplinary action.

The CDR (as affirmed, modified, or reversed by the decision of the Board) constitutes the City’s final disposition regarding the complaint.

CAB’s decision is submitted to the City Manager and a copy of the decision is provided to the complainant(s), the officer(s) involved, the City Attorney, and the Chief of Police. If CAB concludes that the involved officer(s) violated GRPD’s rules and/or regulations, then the City Manager determines the disciplinary or other action to be taken. Per collective bargaining agreements, sworn police officers and civilian employees may appeal written reprimands, suspensions, and discharges through arbitration. Arbitration is a form of dispute resolution commonly used in labor disputes.

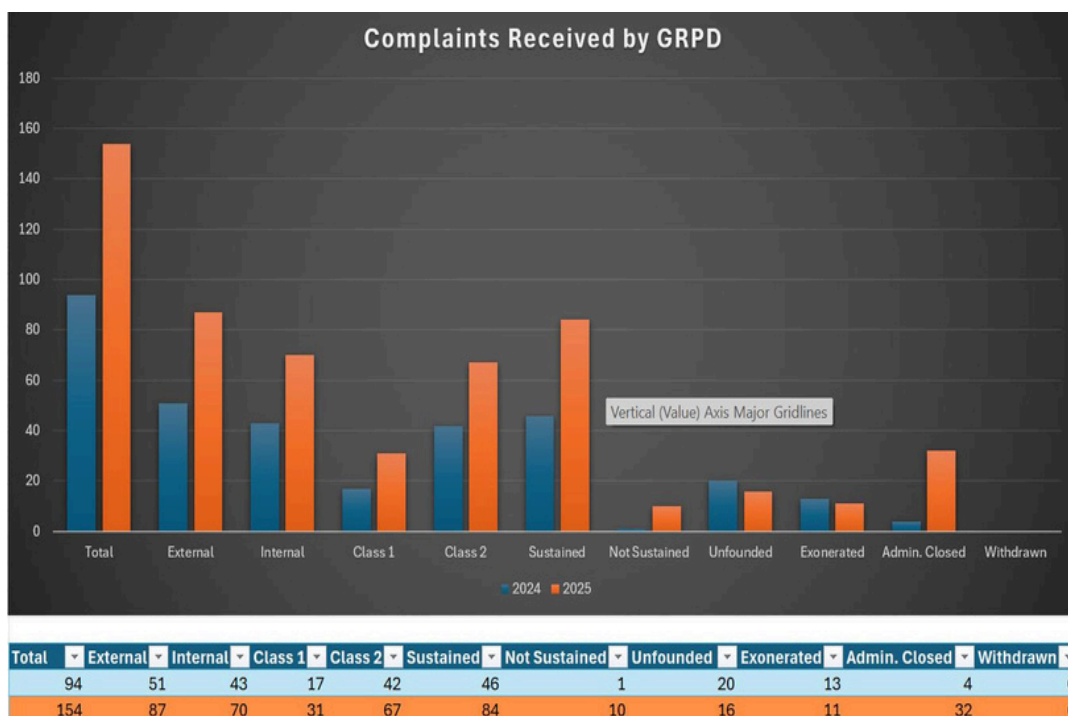
GRPD Complaints & IA Findings – 2024 vs. 2025

This section provides insights and comparisons into the complaints received by IA in 2024 and 2025. This includes a breakdown of total complaints, details surrounding Class 1 and Class 2 complaints, and dispositions. This complaint information was provided by IA.

A **Class 1 Complaint** is one in which one or more of the allegations presented by a complainant is severe and constitutes a Civil Rights and/or criminal law violation if sustained. Examples of Class 1 violations include the excessive use of force, racial profiling, improper searches, and seizures. If a Class 1 violation is sustained against an employee, it could include discipline up to, and including, termination.

A **Class 2 Complaint** is one in which the allegations presented by the complainant, while serious, do not constitute a Civil Rights and/or criminal law violation. Examples of Class 2 violations include employee-involved at-fault crashes, insubordination, and repeated violations of minor offenses. If a Class 2 violation is sustained against a GRPD employee, the corrective action with that employee could include discipline up to, and including, termination.

Complaints Received by GRPD



In 2024, IA received a total of 94 complaints – 51 external and 43 internal. Of the total, 17 were Class 1 complaints and 42 were Class 2. As to complaint findings and outcomes, 46 were sustained, 1 was not sustained, 20 were unfounded, 13 were exonerated, 4 were administratively closed, and none were withdrawn.

During 2024, OPA received a total of 13 external complaints, 10 cases were opened by IA and were included in the total amount of complaints. The remaining 3 complaints were either resolved directly with the complainant(s) or were not investigated because IA found that no articulable violation of GRPD policy, state law, or federal law was identified as being at issue.

In 2025, the total amount of complaints received by IA rose to 154 – 87 external and 70 internal. Of those complaints, 31 were class 1 complaints and 67 were Class 2. As to complaint findings and outcomes, 84 were sustained, 10 were not sustained, 16 were unfounded, 11 were exonerated, 32 were administratively closed, and none were withdrawn.

During 2025, OPA received a total of 28 external complaints, 19 cases were opened by IA and were included in the total amount of complaints. Three of the remaining cases were unopened because IA determined there was no articulable violation of GRPD policy, state law, or federal law was identified as being at issue. There were four additional complaints that did not get investigated by Internal Affairs based on the following reasons:

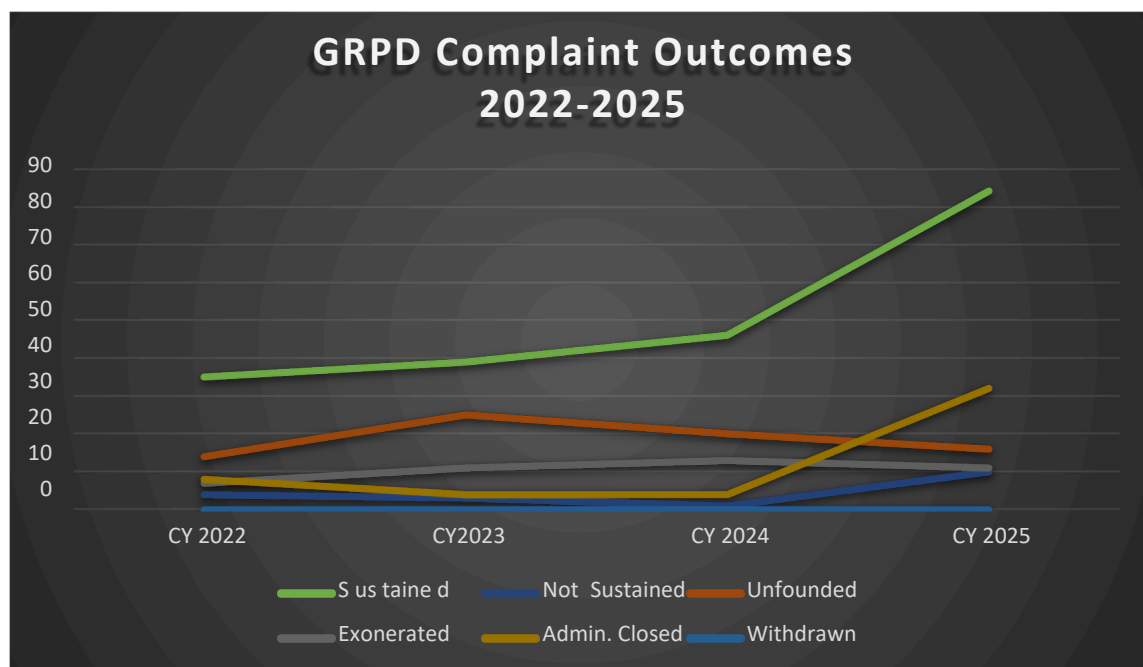
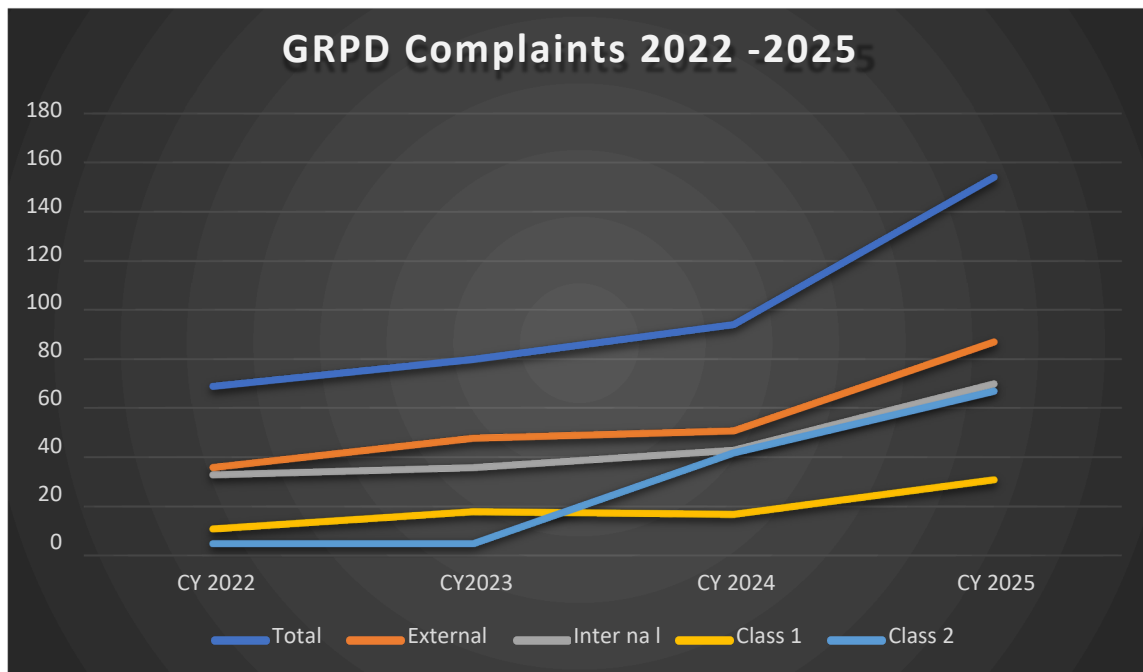
- In one case, IAU denied the investigation because the complainant had filed a parallel complaint with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, which was later dismissed.
- In another case, the investigation was completed by the City Attorney and Chief of Police at the direction of the City Manager, Mark Washington. No violations of law or policy were found.
- In the final two complaints from the same complainant, IAU cited the complainant's pending criminal charges as a barrier to completing the investigation, stating that constitutional protections prevented them from conducting an interview.

Breakdown of Percent Change from 2024 to 2025

- Total Complaints: 63.83% increase
- Total External Complaints: 70.59% increase
- Total Internal Complaints: 62.79% increase Sustained Complaints: 82.61% increase
- Not Sustained Complaints: 900% increase Unfounded Complaints: 20% decrease
- Exonerated Complaints: 15.38% decrease Administratively Closed Complaints: 700%increase

Complaints Received by GRPD from 2022 through 2025

GRPD Complaints	CY2022	CY2023	CY2024	CY2025
Total	69	80	94	154
External	36	48	51	87
Internal	33	36	43	70
Class 1	11	18	17	31
Class 2	5	5	42	67
Sustained	35	39	46	84
Not Sustained	4	3	1	10
Unfounded	14	25	20	16
Exonerated	7	11	13	11
Admin. Closed	8	4	4	32
Withdrawn	0	0	0	0



These graphs show that complaint activity within GRPD has grown significantly from 2022 to 2025. Total complaint counts increased from 69 in 2022 to 154 in 2025, more than doubling overall, with an especially sharp rise between 2024 and 2025. The data also shows a meaningful shift in complaint types and outcomes, most notably a rise in Class 2 allegations and a substantial increase in Administrative Closure dispositions in 2025. Also of note, is that external complaints over this four-year period exceeded internal complaints every year by an increasing margin.

Civilian Appeal Board Hearings and Findings

This section gives greater detail about the facts and circumstances involving the cases that were appealed to CAB in 2024 and 2025.

Appeals – CAB Decisions

In 2024, there was 1 case appealed to CAB whereas in 2025, there were 3 appeals filed but no appeals heard by CAB due to delays in production of the case files. Below is a summary of the case reviewed by the Board in 2024. This summary does not detail all the facts, policies, and law(s) that were considered by IA or CAB; rather, it is meant to provide a brief insight into the nature of the allegations that were appealed and the outcome of the appeal.

Complaint Number: CR24-033
Nature of Complaint: Illegal Entry
Date of Incident: June 10, 2024

Date of Complaint: June 12, 2024
Date of Appeal Request: July 30, 2024
Date of CAB Hearing: December 18, 2024

A full length recording of this appeal hearing can be viewed [here](#).

Summary of Complaint CR 24-033: CR 24-033 involved a 911 call to report a crime in progress. The call was answered by a call taker at the Kent County Sheriff's Office who obtained the information from the caller. The call taker then relayed the information to Grand Rapids Police Department (GRPD) Officers; however, the call taker relayed the wrong apartment number to the officers. The call taker was off by one apartment.

Officers went to the location they were dispatched to and went into the apartment building. An officer observed smears of blood in the hallway and heard a male and female yelling but the officer was unable to tell exactly where that was coming from. The officers made forcible entry into the apartment bearing the apartment number given to them by dispatch. There was no one home in the apartment. Officers contacted maintenance while still on scene and they were working on the door within an hour.

Complainant alleged that GRPD Officers left his apartment unsecure causing money on his coffee table to be stolen. Internal affairs reviewed the body camera footage of when the officers made entry into the apartment and could see that there was no money on the coffee table.

2024 and 2025 Year-End Reviews – Anecdotal Summary

Summary of Meetings

The Civilian Appeal Board (CAB) met regularly throughout 2024 and 2025 to carry out its mandate under City Commission Policy 800.02, serving as a review body for Internal Affairs findings related to complaints of alleged mistreatment by Grand Rapids Police Department officers.

2024 began with meetings that focused on routine governance matters and foundational items such as reporting and planning. On March 20, the meeting opened with a moment of remembrance for former board member Matthew Smith, who had recently passed away. Members received updates on the Biennial Report covering appeals and statistics for 2022–2023. Discussion centered on revisions to the report, with some members requesting additional time for review. The board agreed to reconvene its Report Writing Subcommittee to refine the document before publication. Chairperson Olmsted also shared preliminary ideas for bylaw updates, signaling an ongoing effort to modernize governance. The meeting concluded with announcements about community engagement events, including OPA’s annual expungement fair and the Neighborhood Summit.

The summer meetings reflected a mix of administrative progress and strategic planning. The June 20 meeting was brief due to lack of quorum, resulting in postponement of all business. By July 17, the board regained momentum, approving prior minutes and formally adopting its Annual Report for publication. The report included historical context, complaint and appeal processes, statistical data, and summaries of past cases. Members discussed officer elections, attendance compliance, and the need for a bylaws subcommittee to address term staggering and operational updates. Concerns about low appeal volume prompted ideas for outreach and complainant surveys, alongside suggestions for improved onboarding materials.

On August 21, the board elected new officers—Jason Osbourn as Chair and Dean Pacific as Vice Chair—and officially formed the bylaws subcommittee, composed of Osbourn, Pacific, and Russell Olstead. The board also learned of a pending appeal and emphasized the importance of verifying training compliance before any hearing. A presentation from the City Clerk’s Office provided insight into board governance and public access requirements, reinforcing CAB’s commitment to transparency.

The year concluded with the December 18 meeting, which marked a significant milestone: the board conducted a full hearing on Appeal Case CR24-033. The case involved a forced apartment entry by GRPD officers following incorrect dispatch information. After reviewing the facts and questioning procedures, the board unanimously affirmed Internal Affairs’ finding that the allegation of illegal entry was exonerated. The meeting also introduced new member, Douglas Mileski, who abstained from voting pending completion of required training. Additional business included approval of the 2025 meeting calendar and continued discussion of bylaw revisions, which were slated for early 2025. Staffing updates and reflections on policy challenges rounded out the session.

In 2025, CAB did not see any appeals but did continue their push for reform and changes. At the February meeting, there were two proposed bylaw changes presented from the

Bylaws Subcommittee that was formed in 2024. While unable to obtain a quorum in the March meeting, discussion of the bylaw changes did continue at the April meeting where it was agreed that the bylaw changes would be sent back to the subcommittee. Changes to the bylaws regarding CAB members' training were passed at the August meeting.

Throughout 2024 and 2025, CAB demonstrated a strong focus on governance, transparency, and accountability. Key accomplishments included publishing the Annual Report, electing new leadership, initiating bylaw modernization, and conducting an appeal hearing. The board also prioritized community engagement, process improvements, and readiness for future cases, underscoring its role as a vital component of civilian oversight in Grand Rapids.

City Departments – Roles Related to the Civilian Appeals Board

CAB is supported by and interacts with multiple City departments. Below is a description of how various departments interact with CAB and the challenges associated with those interactions:

The City Attorney's Office

Role: The City Attorney's Office performs legal services for the City and provides legal counsel to every aspect of city government. Representatives of the City Attorney's Office are present during the appeal process to provide information and to answer legal questions. The City Attorney's Office also handles all Garrity statements related to civilian appeals. Garrity statements are those statements made by a police officer acquired during an IA investigation concerning a complaint. See *Garrity v. New Jersey*, 385 U.S. 493 (1967). Before hearing an appeal, the Board must contact the City Attorney's Office to arrange a time to review any related Garrity statements. In addition, the City Attorney's Office is now responsible for collecting and disseminating police video footage to the Board.

Challenges: The City Attorney's Office attends all appeal hearings in a legal capacity, which includes, but is not limited to, answering pertinent privacy questions posed by IA; answering legal questions posed by the Board; explaining the law surrounding an officer's complained of conduct; explaining the nuances and requirements of the Open Meetings Act; and providing general guidance for Board specific requirements under Robert's Rules of Order. The City Attorney's Office also serves as legal counsel to all City departments, including GRPD. Because of this, community members have expressed that the City Attorney's Office has a conflict of interest – insofar as it is charged with defending the City from all liability, which necessarily includes any alleged unconstitutional or unlawful acts committed by GRPD. Whether the conflict of interest is actual or perceived, the City should strive to maintain integrity, accountability, and transparency in all facets of the appeal process – abiding by relevant laws, policies, and collective bargaining agreements.

Grand Rapids Police Department – Internal Affairs

Role: All information regarding the investigation of the complaint being appealed is gathered and sent to OPA by IA. OPA organizes those materials and provides them to the Board for review. An IA Complaint file can include IA Reports (Complaint Intake Report, Complaint Investigation Report, Complaint Disposition Report, Complaint Action Report, Informal Complaint Finding Report, Informal Complaint Report, Administrative Documentation), correspondences (actual complaint submitted, letters, etc.), emails (internal and external), Incident Report(s) (all copies of relevant or related police incident reports), copies of related Use of Force Reports, investigative notes, related memos, all audio files and transcriptions of conversations or interviews with the complainant and employee or citizen witnesses, copies of related photographs (in-house or provided by citizen), all relevant video files (footage from citizens, Body Worn Cameras, In-Car Videos, and Squad Car videos), or other miscellaneous documentation (IA's examination of relevant laws, policies, and procedures). Representatives of the Grand Rapids Police Department are present during the appeal process to provide information regarding the scope of the investigation and to answer any GRPD-specific training questions.

Challenges: IA attends all appeal hearings to answer questions posed by the Board surrounding the scope of complaint investigations. IA answers the Board's questions with thoughtful and complete responses, explaining the thought process behind its investigative techniques and decisions. At certain times, however, the Board has criticized IA for their investigative procedures (e.g., leading a police witness to answer questions in way that will protect the officer who is being investigated; not making specific findings in relation to all allegations in a complaint which prevents CAB from reviewing that allegation; misclassifying a complaint; interpreting a potential complainant's failure to articulate an alleged violation of GRPD's policies and procedures as a desire to not file a formal complaint; isolating only the complained of acts for investigation; and failing to uniformly apply its logic and discretion when investigating acts of discourtesy).

Office of Oversight and Public Accountability

Role: OPA was created in August 2019 to serve as an independent City department that works to increase transparency and accountability within the City of Grand Rapids public safety departments. OPA is responsible for helping to protect civil rights, supporting effective policing, building bridges between public safety and community, increasing confidence in the police, managing risks, and ensuring greater accountability by the City's public safety departments. OPA is authorized to receive complaints and submit complaints to IA for investigation. OPA may also monitor those investigations to ensure that complaints are processed appropriately and to identify any systemic issues plaguing the complaint process. OPA's overall goal is to recommend changes in policies and procedures to improve police and community relations and create equity and trust. OPA serves as liaison to CAB, which means it is responsible for reasonable requests for information from the Board, guidance, scheduling hearings, organizing information sent from the IA, and other routine matters. OPA staff attends all Board meetings and hearings but has no voting power.

OPA may also conduct supplemental investigations where CAB considers the record to be inadequate to complete its review. Upon completion of the requested supplemental investigation, OPA shall provide a written report to CAB summarizing the actions taken and information received during the supplemental investigation.

Challenges: To effectively fulfill its role, OPA needs access to IA records and documentation to conduct an objective and complete supplemental investigation for CAB's review. Depending on what the Board is requesting be investigated, there may be privacy protections in place that would prohibit or restrict OPA's ability to conduct a thorough investigation. When called upon to perform a supplemental investigation, OPA will likely have to balance the need for transparency and accountability, whilst observing privacy protections guaranteed by law, policy, and/or collective bargaining agreements.

Labor Relations

Role: The Board is not authorized to engage in separate investigations, interview witnesses, or hold evidentiary hearings, but it may remand the case to the Labor Relations Division to complete a supplemental investigation. The Labor Relations Division is responsible for administering cost-effective bargaining agreements for employees of the City of Grand Rapids. The Labor Relations Division has the authority to conduct supplemental interviews with the complainant, the officer(s), and witnesses if the Board considers the record to be inadequate to complete its review. Once the supplemental investigation is complete, Labor Relations provides a written report to CAB summarizing the actions taken and information received during the supplemental investigation. A continuation hearing is then scheduled for the Board to further discuss the case and complete its review.

Challenges: Due to the scarcity of appeal hearings in 2024 and 2025, Labor Relations did not participate in any CAB meetings. If the Board does not request a supplemental investigation, then Labor Relations, in essence, takes no part in the appellate process.

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Affirm	The earlier decision was upheld.
Board or CAB	The Grand Rapids Police Civilian Appeal Board
CCP 800-02	City Commission Policy 800-02
CDR	Complaint Disposition Report
Complainant	The person who initiates a complaint.
Exonerated	The act, which provided the basis for the complaint or allegation, occurred; however, the investigation revealed that it was justified, lawful, and proper.
GRPCOA	The Grand Rapids Police Command Officers Association
GRPD	The Grand Rapids Police Department
GRPOA	The Grand Rapids Police Officers Association
IA	The Grand Rapids Police Department Internal Affairs Unit
Modify	To change or alter whether using adaptation, translation, extension, reduction using merging with other material, or by any other means.
Not Sustained	The investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to clearly prove the allegation made in the complaint or to conclusively disprove the allegation.
OPA	The Office of Oversight and Public Accountability
Reverse	To overturn the participating plan's action and internal appeal decision.
Unfounded	The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to clearly prove the allegation made in the complaint. Violation of policy and/or procedure did occur, and appropriate administrative action will be taken.
IA	The investigation conclusively proved that the act or acts complained of did not occur. This finding also applies when the act(s) may have occurred, however, the named employee(s) were not involved.

Appendix

City Commission Policy 800-02

CITY COMMISSION POLICY

GRAND RAPIDS  MICHIGAN	NUMBER: 800-02	HISTORY FILE # DATE	
	DATE: July23, 1996	62671	11/19/96
	FILENUMBER: 62262	71397	7/08/03
	DEPARTMENT: POLICE		

SUBJECT: **GRAND RAPIDS POLICE DEPARTMENT CIVILIAN APPEAL BOARD**

PURPOSE: To encourage compliance with rules and regulations concerning the conduct of police officers during interactions with citizens; to encourage individuals who believe they have been mistreated by police officers to use the internal complaint process of the Grand Rapids Police Department to have that officer's conduct reviewed; to create a process that fairly and evenhandedly evaluates and judges the conduct of everyone involved to determine whether or not a breach of departmental rules and regulations has occurred; and to afford the community a sense of confidence that the community itself is involved as necessary in reviewing the activities of its police officers.

POLICY:

ACivilian Appeal Board is hereby established within the Grand Rapids Police Department to act as a reviewing body for findings of fact made by the Grand Rapids Police Department with respect to complaints made by individuals who believe that they have been mistreated by police officers through:

- (a) the use of excessive force;
- (b) falsification/lying;
- (c) civil rights violations; and
- (d) hostility, discourtesy or other conduct unbecoming an officer when such conduct is committed in a context of racial animosity or prejudice.

For purposes of this policy, "racial animosity or prejudice" is evidenced by derogatory conduct or discriminatory behavior which involves expressions of prejudice through words, gestures, or actions directed at an individual based upon that person's race, color, religion, gender or national origin.

CITY COMMISSION POLICY

NUMBER: 800-02

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(1) Membership, Term of Office and Vacancy.

The Civilian Appeal Board shall be comprised of nine (9) members. Each City Commissioner shall nominate one member, and the Mayor shall nominate three (3) members. The Mayor's nominations shall be made so as to encourage that the members selected for the Civilian Appeal Board constitute a diverse representation of the community at large. The Civilian Appeal Board shall be composed of those nominees approved by the City Commission.

Appointments to the Civilian Appeal Board shall be effective the first Monday in May for a term of two (2) years. No member shall serve on the Civilian Appeal Board more than three (3) consecutive full or partial terms or a total of six (6) years. Residency within the City is a continuing qualification for office for those members appointed. Members shall be deemed to have vacated and resigned their office if they cease to be a resident of the City during their appointed term. Mid-term vacancies will be filled as they occur by the appropriate appointing authority for the remainder of the term of the member leaving the Civilian Appeal Board. No individual may be appointed to fill a vacancy unless they would be able to serve out the entire term.

(2) Investigation of Complaints.

Individuals with complaints alleging that they have been mistreated by police officers through the use of excessive force; falsification/lying; civil rights violations; or through hostility, discourtesy or other conduct unbecoming an officer when such conduct is committed in a context of racial animosity or prejudice will be referred to the Internal Affairs Unit of the Grand Rapids Police Department. The Staff of the Internal Affairs Unit, with the assistance of an Assistant City Attorney, will conduct an investigation and prepare a proposed "Complaint Disposition Report" containing a summary of the facts regarding the complaint and a conclusion regarding whether the police officer(s) violated Grand Rapids Police Department Rules or Regulations. The Complaint Disposition Report, when approved by the Chief of Police, will be provided to the police officer(s) involved, the City Manager, the City Attorney, and the Labor Relations Division of the Human Resources Department. A copy of the Complaint Disposition Report will also be mailed to the complainant(s) at their last known address together with information advising the complainant regarding their right to appeal the conclusion reached in the Complaint Disposition Report to the Civilian Appeal Board.

CITY COMMISSION POLICY

NUMBER: 800-02

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(3) Review by Civilian Appeal Board.

If the Complaint Disposition Report concludes that the complaint is not sustained, was unfounded or that the officer is exonerated, the complainant may appeal to the Civilian Appeal Board by filing a written request for review with the City Attorney's Office within fourteen (14) calendar days after the date of mailing of the Complaint Disposition Report. If a timely appeal is filed, the Civilian Appeal Board will review the conclusions contained in the Complaint Disposition Report and the evidence secured by the Grand Rapids Police Department during the investigation. The Civilian Appeal Board is not authorized to engage in separate investigations, to interview witnesses, or to hold evidentiary hearings, but it may remand the case to the Labor Relations Division to conduct supplementary interviews with the complainant, the officer(s), and witnesses in the event that it considers the record to be inadequate to complete its review. The Labor Relations Division will provide a written report to Civilian Appeal Board summarizing the actions taken and information received during the supplemental investigation.

The Civilian Appeal Board will meet as necessary to consider the matters referred to it in a timely fashion. Representatives of the Grand Rapids Police Department and the City Attorney's Office will be present during the review process to provide information regarding the scope of the investigation and to answer legal questions. At the conclusion of its deliberations, the Civilian Appeal Board will prepare a written decision affirming, reversing or modifying the conclusions contained in the Complaint Disposition Report. If the Civilian Appeal Board reverses or modifies the conclusions in the Complaint Disposition Report, the written decision must contain sufficient detail to explain the reason for the reversal or modification. The Civilian Appeal Board has no jurisdiction to impose discipline or to recommend that discipline be imposed and its decision will not address or recommend potential disciplinary action. The decision of the Civilian Appeal Board will be submitted to the City Manager and a copy of the decision will be provided to the complainant(s), the police officer(s) involved, the City Attorney, the Police Chief and the Labor Relations Division.

(4) Final Disposition.

The Complaint Disposition Report as affirmed, modified or reversed by the decision of the Civilian Appeal Board will constitute the City's final disposition regarding the complaint. If the decision of the Civilian Appeal Board concludes that the police officer(s) violated Grand Rapids Police Department Rules or Regulations, the City Manager will determine the disciplinary or other action to be taken.