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News Release

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Time: 11:10 a.m.

Contact: City Manager's Office
(217) 403-8710

Community Representatives Continue To Work on Police Issues

In 1998, the City of Champaign was approached by representatives of the NAACP and the Urban League of Champaign County to discuss concerns between the minority community and law enforcement officers. Some concerns included: creating a citizen review board, diversifying the police workforce; racial profiling; pre-textual traffic stops; diversity training; and increasing opportunities for minority contractors. (letter attached). As a result of this interaction, the Police Community Relations Committee was formed, a group of concerned citizens and police leadership committed to a dialogue on these concerns.

After meeting for almost a decade, the group reaffirmed its commitment to work on issues of concern in the African American community and renamed itself the Champaign Community and Police Partnership (CCAPP), to emphasize the importance of police and community working together. The mission of CCAPP is to seek solutions to policing issues raised by the African American community that will improve community and police relations. The guiding principle is based on the belief that impartial and efficient law enforcement depends upon cooperation and understanding between the African American community and police.

“The committee is not an official board, but is a group of concerned individuals, who are trying to improve police-community relations”, states City Manager Steve Carter. “Over the years, CCAPP membership has grown to include key stakeholder groups and community representatives who have offered to work with the City to reach positive solutions to these issues”, he added.

Since its inception, the committee has addressed a number of issues and implemented programs that have had a positive impact on improving police-community relations in the City, including:

1. Documentation of Field Interviews for analysis purposes
2. Installation of in car video cameras
3. Collection of traffic stop data (before required by State of Illinois)
4. Police training on Prevention Biased Police Practices
5. Development of a Youth Police Academy
6. Review of juvenile justice issues and initiation of Youth Dialogues
7. Creation of a local Summer Youth Employment Program with other partners
8. Community Feedback on Tasers
9. Review of the Police Complaint Process with suggestions for improvement

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10. Research on and development of a Citizen Review Board proposal
11. Sponsorship of citizen & police dialogues
12. Efforts to increase recruitment of minorities and females
13. Review of School Resource Officer Program evaluation
14. Initiation of youth gang outreach initiatives
15. Identification of Youth Summer Recreation Needs and funding sources

The committee is comprised of community representatives that include the religious community, University of Illinois, Illinois Employment Training Center, NAACP of Champaign County, Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club, Champaign-Urbana Area Project, Champaign Park District, Parkland College, Champaign Unit #4 School District, Champaign County Housing Authority, Human Relations Commission, Land of Lincoln Legal Aid, City Staff, and at-large representatives.

In keeping with its mission CCAPP has been meeting since the Vine Street Incident to discuss community concerns about this tragic event. CCAPP members are working with City Officials to plan a community dialogue within the next few weeks to expand community involvement in finding solutions to these important community issues.

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October 1, 1998

Mr. Steve Carter
City Manager
CITY OF CHAMPAIGN
102 N. Neil Street
Champaign, IL 61820

Dear Steve:

As you are aware, The Urban League and the NAACP, are the two(2) oldest civil rights based organizations nationally as well as locally. As we work toward ensuring our community is one in which all citizens are treated fairly and equally, we realize this can not be accomplished without the participation of our community leadership. For the last year we have been working on improving the communication and interaction between the Champaign Police Department and the African American Community. As we work toward common solutions, it appears there are issues we continue to have a difference of opinion. If, we are to find common ground, we believe it is necessary for us to dialog about these issues. Recently, you received a document which outlined the areas we are interested in discussing. The issues are:

- * Creating a Citizen Review Board
- * Increasing the number of African American Officers, Supervisors and Detectives
- * Racial Profiling of African American Motorist (DWB-"Driving While Black")
- * Pretextual Traffic Stops
- * Diversity Training
- * Increase the Number of African American Vendors for Contractual Services

Recently, Jesse Taylor, from the Department of Justice Community Relations Office, visited our community to meet both of our organizations. Mr. Taylor has offered his services in assisting us in identifying common solutions. It is our hope that we can create a spirit of cooperation and openness between the city, police department, our organizations and the African American community.

We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible. Please feel free to contact Tracy Parsons at 356-1364 or Cleveland Jefferson at 352-7166.

Sincerely,



Tracy Parsons
President
The Urban League of Champaign County



Cleveland Jefferson
President
NAACP Champaign County Branch

TP-CJ/lfh

Champaign Community and Police Partnership Members

1. Al Anderson, Illinois employment Training Center
2. Andre Arrington, Don Moyer Boys and Girls Club
3. Arthur Culver, Champaign School District
4. Bishop Gwin, Religious Community
5. Charles Burton, Champaign Park District
6. Domonic Cobb, Citizen Representative
7. Ed Bland, Housing Authority of Champaign County
8. Giraldo Rosales, Citizen Representative
9. Jameel T. Jones, Champaign Park District
10. Joan Walls, City of Champaign
11. Joe DeLuce, Champaign Park District
12. Mark Aber, Human Relations Commission
13. Michael McFarland, Champaign School District
14. Minor Jackson, Parkland College
15. Pam Burnside, Citizen Representative
16. Patricia Avery, Champaign-Urbana Area Project
17. Rene Dunn, City of Champaign
18. Rev. Charles Nash, Religious Community
19. Rev. Jerome Chambers, NAACP
20. R.T. Finney, City of Champaign
21. Steve Carter, City of Champaign
22. Valerie McWilliams, Land of Lincoln Legal Aid