TO: HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: CITY MANAGER
DEPARTMENT: POLICE

DATE: AUGUST 1, 2005

SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION OVERVIEW REGARDING POLICE REVIEW

This is an informational report that provides an overview of the Council study session regarding police review and no action is required.

On February 7, 2005, Mayor Burch and Council Member Freeman agendized the issue of using the Human Relations Commission (HRC) as a police review body. At that time, the Council directed the City Manager to return to the Council for discussion of responsibilities of such a police review body as soon as possible after providing the Human Relations Commission with an opportunity to review and provide input. At the HRC meeting of February 10, 2005, the City Manager and Police Chief discussed the Council’s proposal to formalize the HRC role in this regard. At that time, the HRC raised some questions and requested additional clarification on its proposed role.

At the April 21, 2005 HRC meeting, the City Manager and Police Chief provided responses to the HRC questions concerning its role. At that time, with two members absent, the HRC voted three to one to take on the role as proposed by Council on a short term basis for nine to 12 months while, in the interim, the Council and/or the HRC would explore other options in case the strategy did not work out. However, several members expressed concern about their lack of knowledge and expertise in this area, as well as their thought that they would be unable to deal with other issues they needed to address in addition to the police review.

Since then, staff has attended one additional HRC meeting (May 12, 2005) for a subsequent discussion on the implementation of the police advisory role. Specifically, items that were discussed included a proposed calendar for meetings dealing with police issues, additional training that the Commissioners would need and Commissioners’ access to additional resources. This meeting was primarily dominated by discussion about police issues and little time was available for members to handle other issues.

In May, two HRC members submitted their resignations and both cited one of the reasons for their resignations as being their concern about the police oversight direction.

As a result, staff has been reviewing the various responsibilities that make up the police review function. The purpose of the study session is to share with the Council staff’s thoughts in this regard. Additionally, in order to better understand the complexities of police oversight, a “primer”
on the Peace Officer’s Bill of Rights and the associated legalities will be provided for the Council during the session.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment A – Study Session Agenda

PREPARED BY: LYNNE JOHNSON
Police Chief

CITY MANAGER APPROVAL: EMILY HARRISON
Assistant City Manager