



Charlotte City Council  
Safe Communities Committee  
Meeting Summary  
June 1, 2021

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**COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS**

- I. Street Racing – Informational
- II. Family Justice Center/The Umbrella Center – Informational

**COMMITTEE INFORMATION**

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**Committee Members Present:** Larken Egleston (Chair), Dimple Ajmera (Vice-Chair), Renee Johnson, Greg Phipps, Victoria Watlington

**Additional Council Members:** Braxton Winston

**Staff Resource:** Emily Kunze, Assistant to the City Manager

**Meeting Duration:** 12:05 p.m. – 12:42 p.m.

**ATTACHMENTS**

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- 1. Agenda
- 2. CMPD Street Racing PowerPoint
- 3. Family Justice Center Responses to City Council Members Questions Posed May 4<sup>th</sup>

**DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS**

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The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m., by Chairperson Larken Egleston.

**Overview of Agenda**

Ms. Kunze advised that the meeting agenda consisted of CMPD’s report on the multi-agency operation to crack down on street racing activities around Charlotte and surrounding areas and an update on the Family Justice Center also known as The Umbrella Center.

**Street Racing Operation**

Captain Dave Harris of the CMPD Special Events and Transportation Division reported that the department began receiving an increase in calls for aggressive driving and street racing during the fall of 2020. Initially it was seen as a division level problem, rather than citywide, since some divisions had more of it than others and of varied activities. The Steele Creek, South Division and University North had the most volume and began their own operations to intercept the meet ups. However, the issuance of

tickets did not stop the problem and in fact, it escalated. In response CMPD organized a multi-tiered task force approach to address the problem citywide. Videos were shown that reflected disregard for public safety and that caused traffic delays in multiple areas of Charlotte, including a major interstate. The Task Force consisted of the Motorcycle Unit in the Transportation Division, DWI Task Force, and patrol and traffic officers. There was also an undercover element which was used to gather information at the meet ups. The gatherings had as many as 100 cars present for street racing and spinning donuts with people lining the streets. Photos of participants and car tags were captured. A partnership with the DA's office was also established to address the racing and reckless driving.

On April 19, 2021, CMPD was able to take their investigation results to a grand jury where they received 55 indictments. Additionally, a judge signed off on a total of 30 warrants and citations. As a result, CMPD was authorized to seize 85 cars. On May 5<sup>th</sup> CMPD held a safety briefing with CMPD transportation officers and outside law enforcement agencies (Gaston, Cabarrus, Iredell, Union and York Counties and the Town of Matthews) and distributed search warrants, photos of the suspects and vehicles. Captain Harris reported that there was no use of force, fights or incidents during the operation. There were 50 arrests on that day and 65 cars seized. Chief Johnny Jennings said they would like to ensure that vehicles are not returned. CMPD will work with the DA's office to place contingencies on the subject cars in order to inspect them to ensure they only have street legal parts if they are to be returned. A few of the cars that were not obtained were either wrecked, sold or repossessed.

The operation has also resulted in more than 2,500 traffic stops that resulted in 3,500 violations, including speeding, reckless driving, driving while impaired, and spontaneous racing. Additionally, a letter from Chief Jennings was sent to over 300 persons indicating that their vehicles were present at a location when organized aggressive driving, reckless driving, and/or unlawful racing was taking place. The letter cited the North Carolina General Statute violations that were being investigated and advised that further violations would result in an investigation of the individual and/or their car.

Captain Harris said an impact had been made through CMPD's efforts to curb street racing. Their work has made it clear that these activities will not be tolerated, and perpetrators will be held accountable. He said the Transportation Unit will continue to monitor these kinds of activities. CMPD advised that the public should continue to call and report incidents of street racing.

### **Family Justice Center/The Umbrella Center**

Ms. Kunze reported that the City is interested in collaborating on the project but would like more details regarding a detailed budget, operations plans, location and land acquisition. The City intends to follow the County's lead. Committee members were provided a memo from the City Manager on Friday, May 28<sup>th</sup> as well as responses to questions posed on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Staff will provide another update at the September meeting.

Additional information was requested on the following items:

1. What time of night was the video of the street racing seen on slide 2? If vehicles are returned to owners, who will ensure they only contain street legal parts?

2. Provide clarity around potential source of funding that can be used since the real estate will be in the County's name.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 p.m.