



Bill Federice <federicebill@gmail.com>

Police Accountability - Letter to Editor

2 messages

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To: mayor@cobleskill.org
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Fri, Feb 26, 2021 at 1:38 PM

For the interest of Law Enforcement Review Committee, WRS

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject: Letter to Editor
Date: Fri, 26 Feb 2021 12:04:24 -0500
From: stinson <stinson@midtel.net>
To: TJ <tjournalnews@yahoo.com>

26 February 2021

To the Editor

The Times Journal

Concerning police oversight (Who Will Watch the Police, TJ 2.17.21), much is to be learned about the issue from the Law Enforcement Review Committee's (LERC) response to a suggestion of a Police Citizen Review Board. Police Committee members exhibited substantial push back concerning the question of citizen oversight. Their claim is essentially that existing structures provide the needed opportunity for citizen oversight. My experience has been to the contrary.

Sheriff Stevens suggests folks can bring their concerns directly to him, and vote him out if dissatisfied. Sounds great but, many citizens would not feel confident enough to personally confront the Sheriff. The power imbalance is far too great for most to overcome.

Other Sheriff's Department staff and LERC Chairman Federice offered that the Board of Supervisors and the Board's Law Enforcement Committee can serve the public's oversight needs. It doesn't work. See <https://scfpg.blogspot.com/p/camp-homicide.html>

In some jurisdictions around the state independent entities have been established to receive citizen complaints regarding police performance. Such efforts have had limited effectiveness. If such an entity were established it would have to be empowered to represent the public's needs and must have authority to effect the police services.

Absent an effective independent commission to serve as an intermediary, citizens do have the ballot box solution suggested by Sheriff Stevens. Citizens should take their police performance complaints to their elected representatives in

local government. If those officials fail to adequately represent them and act on their complaint, they can remove those officials from office at the next opportunity. Holding elected representatives accountable for police performance is the necessary first step in achieving police accountability.

Wayne Stinson

summit, NY

Bill Federice <federicebill@gmail.com>

Sun, Feb 28, 2021 at 12:37 PM

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