



**450 N Wilson Ave.
Bartow, FL 33830
CityofBartow.net**

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Laurie Hayes, Director of Communications

lhayes@cityofbartow.net

Office: 863.733.4642

Cell: 863.378.7929

**BARTOW POLICE DEPARTMENT FORMS CITIZENS ADVISORY
BOARD**

Seven Individuals Selected to Serve on Inaugural Board

(Bartow, FL - January 22, 2026) The City of Bartow Police Department has selected seven individuals to serve on a newly created Bartow Police Citizen Advisory Board. Following the announcement of the formation of the Board in November, the City solicited applications for approximately one month. In accordance with Florida Statute 166.0486, which governs the establishment of such boards, Police Chief Stephen Walker selected seven individuals - six citizens, as well as a retired Lakeland Police Officer - to serve as the first members of Citizen Advisory Board. They are:

1. David Bagnell - Duke Energy
2. Ryan Cellucci - Coca-Cola Beverages Florida
3. Jessica Correll - MidFlorida Credit Union
4. Walter Dennis - Retired Law Enforcement Representative
5. Linda Holcomb - Main Street Bartow
6. Alvin Smith - Retired
7. Marie Wilmot - Florida Polytechnic University

The Bartow Police Citizen Advisory Board was created to assist in building positive relationships between citizens in our community and law enforcement officers.

“To achieve this mission,” said Chief Walker, “the Board will support an interactive process in which the concerns of citizens and the police department can be discussed, in order to enhance

the partnership between the citizens and the police and improve the overall quality of life within the City of Bartow.”

Walker added that the purpose of the board is to review and provide understanding of Department Policies and Procedures as well as past police/citizen interactions, explore new programs and processes, and assist in building community understanding and support for the Department. The Board also will provide insight into the community’s needs or concerns.

Per the State Statute, the Board does not have the authority to investigate, review, or otherwise participate in matters involving specific police personnel or specific police-related incidents.

Members of the Bartow Police Citizen Advisory Board will serve two-year terms, with a maximum of eight years, and each member shall serve until a successor is duly appointed and qualified. Their first meeting will be on Feb. 5.

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