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[in-person] Chicago Police Board

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Takeaways

- Police Board decisions on police misconduct cases are on hold as a lawsuit decides whether cases can be determined through private arbitration. This lawsuit is currently being heard by the appellate court.
- The Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) has seen a reduction in the amount of time it takes for the department to close cases.
- Chicago's Office of the Inspector General has released a draft of its Public Safety Annual Outlook, and it is looking for feedback from the public on the department's priorities.

Follow-Up Questions & Observations

- When the arbitration lawsuit has been decided, how will the nature of police misconduct cases change? If the appellate court upholds the decision to mandate that police misconduct cases, including those decided through arbitration, be open to the public, will that provide a meaningful way for the public to ensure police accountability?
- The public comment section featured speakers with many diverging views on public safety, violence prevention, and the roles police play in Chicago, including in its communities of color. Are these views representative of debates around the police in Chicago as a whole? How will debates between members of the public about the role of police in Chicago affect the future priorities of the Police Board?

Notes

Meeting begins at 7:31 p.m. Additional meeting assets: [Blue Book](#), [CAN-TV Video](#), [Transcript](#), [Community Input Report](#)

Police Board President Kyle Cooper announces that the [schedule of Police Board meetings for 2025](#) have been posted on the city's website.

Kyle Cooper announces an update on the [lawsuit](#) determining whether police misconduct cases can be decided through private arbitration. A judge previously ruled that these cases can be decided through arbitration, but that they have to be open to the public. The case is before the appellate court. Decisions about police misconduct cases are on hold until the establishment of a procedure for arbitration.

[00:06:00]

The Police Board begins its discussion of [appeals](#). These appeals are generally filed by people who have applied to be police officers but whose applications were denied due to a background check. The Police Board affirms previous decisions to disqualify several appeals. They also vote to reverse several decisions.

Kyle Cooper provides updates on a presentation he gave in front of The Chicago Commission for Public Safety and Accountability (CCPSA) on the Police Board's goals. The Police Board will update procedures in 2025. Kyle Cooper says he will provide more information about these updates at January's Police Board meeting.

A police chief gives an update on behalf of Superintendent Larry Snelling. He acknowledges fallen Chicago Police officers. He announces that Chicago saw a 7% reduction in shootings and murders in 2024. He reaffirms the Chicago Police Department's commitment to residents feeling safe. He announces that officers have recovered over 12,000 guns in 2024. He says detectives have worked to strengthen homicide investigations. He says the department is addressing crime patterns and a spike in robberies. He says that the department's [efforts](#) to secure the safety of the city during the Democratic National Convention were a success.

[00:13:00] Andrea Kersten, the Chief Administrator for the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA), gives a report on statistics for 2024. She says the department

received 288 complaints. She says there were four officer-involved shooting notifications. She describes 2024 as having a historically low caseload for the department, with the caseload per investigator averaging 10 cases. She says that the majority of cases have been closed within six months, which she says is a reduction in the average amount of time it takes for cases to be closed compared to previous years. She says COPA saw increased staffing in legal and policy departments. She also reports that COPA was in all 77 community areas in 2024 doing community engagement events. She says she is “tremendously proud” of the work COPA has done in 2024.

Tobara Richardson, the Deputy Inspector General of Public Safety in the Office of the Inspector General (OIG), talks about the public safety section within the OIG. She says the public safety section conducts [programmatic reviews](#) of the Chicago Police Department. She says that OIG has participated in public outreach events in which they have asked the public for feedback on how they should conduct their work. She talks about the department’s [2025 Public Safety Annual Outlook](#). She says the department’s top three priorities will be improving the Chicago Police Department’s administrative, managerial, and operational competencies, improving the police discipline and accountability system, and protecting Chicagoans’ civil and constitutional rights. She asks the public to go to OIG’s website, look at the annual plan for 2025, and fill out a [survey](#) about the department’s priorities.

[00:23:00] She also says the public can provide [feedback](#) on the department’s [Audit Annual Plan](#).

Kyle Cooper announces the beginning of the public comment period.

The 1st speaker says his friends were subjected to an “execution” on October 7th, 2024, which he protested. He says he was attacked by the owner of JJ Fish, who he claimed filed a false police report. He says he talked to a police officer, who said he was harassing the owner. He says the officer later told him that the owner of JJ Fish wanted to make amends. However, he (the speaker) wanted to press charges. He says the officer threatened to arrest him for harassment of the owner of JJ Fish if he didn’t drop the charges.

[00:28:00] A member of the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Police Repression asks the Police Board to get justice for [Dexter Reed](#). She also asks that the Police Board fire all officers involved in police misconduct.

The third speaker, a pastor, says his mother, who died in September, was a virgin when

she was married because she was raised with values. He says he thought about committing suicide on Christmas Day 2000. He says Black pain is real. He says he supports officer Thomas Rapp, who was fired. He hopes the Police Board will reverse the decision to fire him. He says he would like an investigation against CCPSA member Sandra Wortham because she claimed he harassed her. He says CCPSA President Anthony Driver refused his requests for investigation. He talks about slain officers, and says that as a Black man, he believes Black people need to take accountability for violence in their communities. He says that he believes society needs to acknowledge that Black people commit the majority of the violent crimes that occur in Chicago.

[00:35:00] The fourth speaker, a torture survivor, says Black lives matter. He says that the police are killing Black people. He says the trauma of racism causes all Black people to suffer from mental health issues. He talks about the Chicago Police Department's issues with [members having ties to the Proud Boys and other extremist groups](#), and he describes this issue as "bullshit." He says an unspecified police killing was an "assassination."

Police Board meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

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