November 9, 2026

The Honorable Will Jawando
Montgomery County Executive-Elect

Re: Selection Process for a New Police Chief

Dear County Executive-Elect Jawando:

We would like to respectfully suggest important considerations in the process for selecting the next Chief of the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD).

MCPD is in vital need of strong executive leadership that provides a strategic vision to advance Montgomery County's goals for effective and equitable policing. Leadership that can energize the department and inspire the best out of our highly qualified officers. Leadership that results in effective strategies to measurably reduce crime and improve response times, as well as strengthen public trust and legitimacy, improve morale, recruitment and retention, lower liability and manage risk.

We believe that the best way to select the new Chief that MCPD needs is for the County Executive to conduct an open and transparent selection process, considering all qualified internal and external candidates, and preferably managed by an outside organization with expertise in police executive recruitment and selection.

Besides the statutory requirements for the position, the Chief Executive should carefully consider the qualifications, values, philosophies and skills of any individual being considered for taking over such a critical role in shaping law enforcement in our county. MCPD's Chief must possess experience and executive skills required to effectively manage a large and complex organization:

- Master's degree (such as an MPA or MBA) in Public or Business Administration, Criminal Justice, or a related discipline. At a minimum a bachelor's degree.

- Graduation from an executive training school, such as the FBI National Academy (FBINA) or the Police Executive Research Forum's Senior Management Institute for Policing (SMIP).
- Clear and realistic strategies to deliver improved outcomes for MCPD and Montgomery County, such as measurable crime reduction and better response times, strengthened public trust and legitimacy, improved recruitment and retention, better morale and reduced officer burnout, lower liability and risk management.
- A demonstrable commitment to integrate the police in a whole-of-county government approach to public safety.
- Mastery of modern policing precepts and experience in effectively deploying data-driven policing strategies, such as identifying trends and shifting patterns, holding district and bureau commanders accountable, Problem-Oriented Policing, Smarter Scheduling, social media analysis, and user-friendly data dashboards to build community confidence.
- Experience in justifying and overseeing a complex multi-million-dollar budget, maximizing grant funding, and aligning fiscal resources with strategic priorities.

Given our county's highly diverse population, the Police Chief must also act as a bridge builder and ensure equitable, constitutional policing practices across all neighborhoods:

- A demonstrable commitment to a frank dialogue with elected officials, the media and the community, including regarding resources, goals and challenges.
- A credible commitment to support Montgomery County's Racial Equity and Social Justice goals, as well as experience implementing programs regarding implicit bias, cultural sensitivity, de-escalation, and language accessibility.
- A sophisticated understanding of Community Policing, as well as a track record of utilizing partnerships to jointly develop problem solving strategies.
- Proven skills in navigating high-profile, sensitive issues, managing media relations under scrutiny, and ensuring robust internal affairs systems to ensure accountability.

Finally, public safety is not the responsibility of MCPD alone. We must all contribute to this goal, and the new Chief of Police must gain the trust and support of both the department and the community it serves. With this in mind, we recommend the organization of a public forum where community members can engage directly with the candidates, ask questions and share their concerns.

To help interviewers elicit relevant perspective from candidates on their qualifications, experience and issues of importance to the community, we offer the attached suggestions questions.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Eva Quittman

Chair
Advisory Commission on Policing

Attachment: Suggested Interview Questions for MCPD Chief Candidates

CC: County Council President Natali Fani-González
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for Montgomery County Richard Madaleno
Acting MCPD Chief Darren Francke
Florence Jewell, Chair, Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission

SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MCPD CHIEF CANDIDATES

Challenges and Priorities

What do you view are the top **challenges** facing law enforcement today? What specific action, policy, training, program, or initiative have you developed, or would develop as Chief, to effectively address these challenges?

Based on your understanding of Montgomery County, its demographics and public safety challenges, please describe specific **program areas** you would prioritize as Police Chief within your first six months. Elaborate on your approach to tackling these areas and why they are the most pressing to address.

As the new Chief of the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), what would your top three **priorities** in the initial 90 days after assuming the role and why?

What do you perceive as MCPD's primary impediments to **reducing crime** and delivering public safety services more effectively? As Police Chief, what actions would you undertake to remove these impediments?

MCPD, as well as law enforcement agencies across the nation, are struggling to attract qualified applicants and retaining police officers. What is your strategy and what actions or measures would you undertake as Police Chief to improve the department's **recruitment** and retention?

What policies, programs, or initiatives would you propose to tackle **youth**-related crime?

What are your thoughts regarding the role of Community Engagement Officers (CEOs) and the proper role for police in **schools**?

In Montgomery County we continue to see individuals suffering from mental illness or undergoing a **mental health crisis** die before specialized assistance arrives at the scene. What initiatives would you

implement as Police Chief to help police officers de-escalate and stabilize these volatile situations until specialized help can arrive?

Many law enforcement agencies, including MCPD, are hindered by inadequate **crime reporting, data and analysis processes**. Aside from procuring a new Records Management System (RMS), please elaborate on specific measures you have implemented or propose as the new Chief to tackle these issues.

Management

Describe your general **management style** and provide specific examples of how you would deal or have dealt with each of these and the issues that were involved:

- County Executive and/or Chief Administrative Officer
- County Council or local legislature
- Employee Relations – Fraternal Order of Police (FOP)
- Community organizations and civilian commissions

Reflect on the most sensitive or critical issue or crisis that either impacted or could have influenced your relationships with other senior officials. Describe the specific techniques or **interpersonal skills** you utilized to address and resolve the issue. What was the result?

Have you dealt with a **collective bargaining** organization to implement reforms? What was your approach and how did it work out?

Discuss how strategic planning can contribute to a law enforcement agency's accomplishment of its mission. What steps have you taken to support the success of a department's **strategic planning** process?

Describe the importance of a robust **analysis and planning capability** to a police department. Provide specific examples of how it can contribute to support positive change within, as well as better outcomes for, a police department.

Do you believe MCPD could derive advantages from **reallocating available resources** to address patrol staffing and reduce overtime? Which specific positions within the department do you think could be candidates for reallocation to improve the department's responsiveness to calls for service?

What are your thoughts on **civilianization**? Are there specific positions or functions within your agency that could be suitable candidates for civilianization to improve efficiency?

What other specific areas or functions in the department would you **reorganize** to improve efficiency and cost savings?

What are the most significant **accomplishments** of the units you have supervised as a police executive? How have these achievements directly enhanced the department's efficiency, transparency, and fostered greater public trust and respect for the community you serve?

Accountability

Detail three specific actions or measures you have introduced during your tenure as a senior executive that have effectively improved the level of **accountability** within your law enforcement agency.

As an executive in a law enforcement agency, what are your views on ride-alongs and unannounced **precinct visits** to gather direct observations, hold managers accountable and model a proactive management style?

Explain the importance of **written policy** in law enforcement and your specific role in the formulation, revision, and execution of these policies within your agency. What specific policies do you deem as having the greatest impact on public safety, accountability and risk management?

What **disciplinary action(s)** do you consider appropriate for changing the behavior of officers who repeatedly fail to adhere to departmental policies, such as failing to activate their body-worn cameras for situations required by department's policy?

What are your views on **civilian accountability boards** and administrative charging committees established to involve members of the community in addressing officer misconduct? Do you believe changes are warranted to improve the effectiveness and equity of the current system? If so, describe the process you would follow to advocate for these changes.

Modern Policing

What are the key elements of **Community Policing**, and what are your views on effectively implementing this policing philosophy? How can a police department empower patrol officers to serve as problem solving agents in the communities they serve?

What specific objectives, strategies, **performance metrics**, and outcomes would you propose to develop, implement, and evaluate the quality of community policing-related services provided to the diverse communities in Montgomery County?

What are your views on the Six Pillars of **21st Century Policing**? What specific actions or initiatives have you undertaken as a senior executive in a law enforcement agency, or as Chief, to integrate these concepts into an organization's culture, policies, practices, and training?

Define **evidence-based policing** and explain its role in law enforcement. Please describe specific examples, while serving as a senior executive in a law enforcement agency, in which you have actively participated in formulating or implementing such practices to promote positive changes within the department.

The Montgomery County Police Department uses a data-driven management tool (**CompStat**) to track crime trends, analyze patterns in real time, and deploy police resources efficiently across its six districts. How should it be integrated within a police department to effectively bolster crime prevention and investigative outcomes. What modifications would you propose to the current CompStat process to enhance the department's ability to more effectively solve and prevent crime?

What are your views on how MCPD can contribute to achieving the county's **Racial Equity and Social Justice** goals?

What actions or measures have you implemented as a senior law enforcement executive that have directly contributed to the expansion of **fair and impartial policing** practices in your agency?

What can MCPD and the County do to ensure the privileged and the underprivileged receive **equitable** policing services?

Health and Welfare

How would you evaluate the **morale** of a police department and what actions would you take to improve the morale of the officers who serve and protect our community?

Describe your views on how an **Early Intervention (Warning) System** can help address health issues and negative officer behaviors. Does your department currently employ such a system or policy? If yes, how has it worked out?