



Photo by Erin Mizelle for The Chronicle

Winston-Salem Mayor Allen Joines, left, and some members of the Faith-based Coalition show a "Black Lives Matter" T-shirt at the "Black Lives Matter Late Night Musical" event on Friday, March 27. (L-R) Members shown are Elder Lamonte Williams, pastor of Diggs Memorial United Holy Church; Council Member Derwin Montgomery; Police Chief Barry Rountree; and Winston-Salem NAACP President S. Wayne Patterson.

**Lives**

from page A1

Joines praised Rountree for his efforts to build relationships in the community.

"You do it to prevent problems going forward," Joines said.

Rountree said that during a time when there is rampant distrust across the nation between communities and the police forces in those communities, "I am here to say black lives matter, and we're here to say all lives matter." He acknowledged the large number of young people at the event because, he said, he supports them.

The president of Winston-Salem State University's (WSSU) Student Government Association, Olivia Sedwick, also was at the event. She praised the "Trust Talks" that the city police and WSSU students have had, the latest one late last month. The Trust Talks are spearheaded by the city's Human Rights Commission and bring two sides together for frank discussions, which in this case, center around the police-and-student relationship at WSSU.

"It was a wonderful success. We were grateful" for the opportunity to talk, she said.

"It shows we need some understanding to work with police."

Sedwick passed out information from the Police Department's website that gives ways people should react to police. She said she wants people "to understand it's not all the policeman's fault. We need to govern ourselves as well."

Elder Lamonte Williams, pastor of Diggs Memorial and a facilitator of the event, brought Rountree and Sedwick to the front of the audience to answer some questions.

One man in the audience asked: "As a 40-year-old black man in this community, how can we get our people in this community to be less intimidated against police?"

Rountree said: "What we try to do is come out and engage people at events like this." Sedwick said that people should go to the Police Department's website, which will help explain how to interact

with police, and should attend community events to find out information.

"There're a lot of things going on that most of us were not aware of," she said.

Rountree mentioned some initiatives the Police Department have that engage the community:

\*A Citizen Police Academy, in which people get an inside look at how the Police Department works. The academy will be 13 weeks, beginning April 16, but the deadline to apply was Monday, March 30.

\*Ride-alongs, in which people ride with a police officer who is on duty to see what the officer has to handle daily. "It's not always like it is on TV," Rountree said.

Rountree also introduced the Police Department's community

After being asked about job opportunities with the Police Department, Rountree said there are several kinds of opportunities there.

\*Sworn-in positions, such as police officers.

\*Dispatchers, who take 911 calls.

\*Positions in forensics (as seen on TV shows such as "CSI").

\*Positions in the crime analysis department.

Rountree also mentioned a scholarship program the police department has for college students. If college students agree to serve as a police officer for three years after graduation, the Police Department will pay the students' tuition for their sophomore, junior and senior years.

Another area Rountree addressed was the Police Department's use of body cameras. He said the

be phasing out cameras in cars at some point.

Montgomery provided some background about why there is so much discussion and attention being paid to the police-and-citizens relationship.

"Winston-Salem has had its own history of things that have taken place in the past," he said. He mentioned the Darryl Hunt case, in which an innocent black Winston-Salem man in 1984 was wrongfully convicted of the rape and murder of a young white woman.

He was acquitted after 19½ years in prison.

(Also, as part of that history with police, a riot erupted on Liberty Street in 1967 after police killed a black man during an arrest for drunkenness.)

Montgomery said Winston-Salem now has a Citizens' Police Review Board, which serves as an advisory board to the city manager and Public Safety Committee.

(The Board, instituted in 1993, reviews citizens' request for appeals of the police chief's decision regarding complaints against Police Department employees, receives and reviews a summary of internal and externally made complaints against police officers and other duties.)

"We can say now with this police' systems and policies are in place to try to prevent future such occurrences.

"Nobody's perfect and things continue to happen. That's why we continue to have forums like this," Montgomery said.

He said Trust Talks should continue. "It just means we've done a lot of things that other cities haven't done," he said. "In that respect, we're ahead of the curve."

Patterson and Montgomery touched on the importance of action after the event.

"We're all going to have a good time, but at the end of the day, we must be proactive," Patterson said.

"Moreso for me, the question is, what do we do when we leave here tonight?" Montgomery said.

"I hope when you leave here tonight, you feel empowered to do something."

**Winston-Salem Police Information**

\*To get information on how to act when you encounter police, go to <http://www.cityofws.org/departments/police/crime-prevention>, then find the "Stopped By A Police Officer" brochure in the PDF format at the bottom of the page to download it.

\*Contact the Community Resource Unit at 336-773-7835 or by email at [communityresourceunit@wspd.org](mailto:communityresourceunit@wspd.org) for information about the SOAR (Successful Outcomes After Release) program. Also, go to The Chronicle's website to find information at <http://www.wschronicle.com/tag/soar-program/>.

\*For information about the Citizen Police Academy, contact Officer Claudia Morgan, Coordinator at 336-408-8126 or by email at [cmorgan@wspd.org](mailto:cmorgan@wspd.org).

\*For all other information, call 336-773-7700.

relations officer, who works to resolve disputes between people "who don't get along" and meets with neighbors and citizens.

Community Relations Specialist Pamela Peoples-Joyner spoke about SOAR (Successful Outcomes After Release). This is a program that uses city funds to help people who have criminal records. She mentioned that she works with programs such as Team BAM (Becoming a Man), a group that helps male teens.

Artemus Peterson, who leads the Team BAM program, was in the audience. Williams acknowledged the work he does and took up a donation to support the program.

department started testing body cameras two or three years ago, and about 340 police officers use them now. This includes 20 school resource officers and officers in traffic enforcement. The police department has an authorized strength of 559 sworn police officers

Rountree said that officers can turn the cameras on and off but he asks that officers use them when interacting with people. Only supervisors or an officer can view the footage from the cameras, and no employee can manipulate the footage. CDs of the footage can be made for trials or investigations.

He also mentioned that the Police Department will

**Review**

from page A1

believe that racial profiling has been a key factor in the numerous officer-involved shootings across the nation. One case close to home is the September 2013 fatal shooting of Jonathan Ferrell, who was mistaken by a Charlotte police officer for a suspect in a breaking-and-entering case. Ferrell had actually been looking for help after a car wreck that night.

House Rep. Edward "Ed" Hanes Jr., said he signed the bill to create a conversation and open dialogue about profiling.

"It's a conversation that absolutely needs to happen. We've had a lot of unfortunate interactions over the last four or five years that just really brought the situation, in regards to the interaction between police and the black community, to the forefront. This bill aims to get the conversation started at a higher level so that we can work with our law enforcement community and with the broader community to make sure that some of the things that are happening, from a profiling standpoint, can cease," he said.

Council member James Taylor, chair of the city's Public Safety Committee, said that racial profiling and discrimination are real throughout the nation and it needs to be addressed.

"I would note that the deplorable practice of discriminatory profiling is already prohibited by the Winston-Salem Police Department, and we are currently working to improve the system that is already in place to address such issues," Taylor said.

"Our police department has more work to do, but it has been one of the most transparent and trailblazing North Carolina police departments as it relates to police checkpoints reform, data storage, domestic violence, police body cameras, and reductions in uses of force. Nationally, all police departments certainly have more work to do to promote education and sensitivity training against discriminatory profiling."

Currently, communities have to receive permission from legislators to create Citizen Review Boards, which investigates and reviews allegations of misconduct by law enforcement officers. This bill would remove that requirement. It would also require training to those agencies.

The boards could be created without the approval of legislatures as long as they follow the guidelines in the bill, which include the procedure of appointment, the manner in which hearings are held and the length of terms and qualifications for those appointed.

Residents already have the ability to file formal complaints against any officer of the Winston-Salem Police Department or Forsyth County Sheriff's Department. They can also file a complaint with the Citizen Police Review Board, made up of residents from the community, if they disagree with

the results. If that doesn't work, residents can take any alleged case of profiling or discrimination to the Public Safety Committee for review, according to Taylor.

"As the chair of Public Safety, I do believe that making the citizen review boards easier to establish statewide is a good thing, especially in cities and towns that do not have one established as we do in Winston-Salem," he said. "There can never be too much citizen input when it comes to government. Citizen review boards help to keep local government in the hands of the people."

Hanes, who represents the 72nd district, said that the review boards are a necessary and needed interaction between law enforcement and the community. He said that it is not to point fingers at the police but to create a checks and balances system for all involved.

"Citizen review boards can, and should, be part of that interaction. We have to make sure that police officers are being treated fairly

in the same way that we have to make sure citizens are being treated fairly by the folks that we depend on to protect and serve the community. This is not a situation where we are looking to catch

police officers in nefarious activity or anything like that," Hanes said. "It's really about making sure that everyone is accountable in an interaction that we absolutely must have. We must have police officers protecting our community. It's there to make it easier for these boards to exist without a lot of encumbrance."

Taylor said that while the bill has good intentions, he believes that it is a double-edged sword to communities. He said that the bill could prove to be too costly for residents due to departments being strapped for cash and the lost general fund revenues from recent General Assembly cuts.

"I feel that mandating our police department to complete additional reporting duties, and to meet additional paperwork deadlines in order to provide a database of information that can already be requested by any private citizen, actually takes away from time that our officers should be out protecting and serving our community. This bill does have the potential to serve as an excellent source of information on reporting collective local crime statistics to the state and federal government, however, it may place an undue financial burden on our local government to hire additional administrative staff, without providing the necessary funding," he said. "It is never a good practice to place a price tag on public safety. Winston-Salem has lost revenue from the loss of sales taxes, business privilege licenses, and the loss of the ability to regulate software fees."

For more information about the bill, visit <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/gascripts/BillLookUp/BillLookUp.pl?Session=2015&BillID=HB+193&submitButton=Go>.



Moore



Taylor

**Election**

from page A1

officers whose terms were to have expired will continue to serve until a new election occurs."

Patterson said this means that there will be a new election.

"The election is going to be governed accordingly based on the correct policies and procedures when it comes to the election process."

The agency has been attempting to elect new officers since November 2014. Patterson originally called in the state chapter to oversee the election due to some violations of the agencies bylaws.

According to Patterson, names of candidates were submitted after the nomination process was closed. Protocol calls for each person running for an office to have been a dues-paying member prior to April 15 of the

**"With the election hold up, we can't do anything else. We've just been frozen."**

— Isaac "Ike" Howard

election year. Patterson said that some people paid their membership dues in August, making them ineligible to seek office. He said that those running for offices had to submit their names, verbally and in writing, to the nomination committee before their Oct. 28 meeting. An individual could have also been nominated from the floor prior to the nomination process being closed at the meeting.

This is not the first time the state has been called in to oversee a Winston-Salem branch election. In 2004, when incumbent Stephen Hairston was being challenged by JoAnn Allen amid questions about the branch's finances and voting methods, a N.C. NAACP official oversaw the

vote.

Patterson, who said he has increased membership in the organization and has garnered funds to renovate headquarters including opening a computer lab and library for the community, said that if elected this would be his last term. He is also ready to get past the election.

"Hopefully we can start focusing on more community activities, our Freedom Fund and activities that the national office has mandated the local office to do," he said. "We are ready to get down to business."

Howard, a long-time community activist who is running on visibility, dependability and accountability, agrees wholeheartedly.

"People are looking for the NAACP to begin exerting itself and doing what we are supposed to be doing, which is addressing issues locally, statewide and nationally," he said. "With the election hold up, we can't do anything else. We've just been frozen."