Cleveland, Ohio – The Cleveland Community Police Commission (CPC) today issues a statement of condemnation regarding the actions of Mayor Justin Bibb, Director of Public Safety Karrie Howard, and Chief of Police Wayne Drummond for their failure to adhere to Charter Section 115-5 in the recent appointment of two police commanders, Kevin Kincaid, Bureau of Special Services, and Ralph Valentino, Fourth District. Under the “Duties and Authority of the Commission,” Charter 115-5 clearly states that the CPC must be included in the “Interviewing and recommending [of] candidates for police commander and inspector general to the Mayor,” ensuring that the community has a voice in the selection process and that it remains open and transparent.

By bypassing the Commission entirely, the administration has not only violated the letter of the City Charter but has also disregarded the spirit of community engagement and oversight that the Charter embodies. This oversight mechanism was put in place by the voters of Cleveland to foster a collaborative, transparent, and community-centric approach to policing—a fundamental principle that has been overlooked in this instance.

Statement from John Adams, Co-Chair, Cleveland Community Police Commission:

The recent appointments of Kevin Kincaid and Ralph Valentino represent a direct and blatant violation of Charter 115-5. At the CPC’s December 16th meeting, Chief Drummond expressed his intention to respect the Charter and fully cooperate with the Commission. Since that public statement was made, Chief Drummond has denied the CPC’s request for police discipline records, which we need to conduct police accountability work, and appointed two commanders despite the clear language and intent behind the law. As a Co-Chair of this Commission and a resident of Cleveland, I am alarmed and disappointed by the pattern that is developing under Chief Drummond’s leadership as it pertains to respecting the authority the citizens of this city voted overwhelmingly to give to the CPC. Our authority must be honored and until the CDP and the City of Cleveland follow the proper process for appointing commanders, as outlined in Charter 115-5, their promotions are unlawful and should be rescinded immediately. In the future, we hope that the citizens of Cleveland can trust that their police department will not demonstrate such overt disregard for the laws they have taken a sworn oath to enforce. Considering that Mayor Bibb has yet to formally meet with the CPC since we were selected, we are requesting an official meeting to allow us to build a working relationship that will foster a clear understanding of our duties and responsibilities to ensure that future violations of our authority are minimized. Our goal as the CPC is to guarantee that all of the layers of police oversight can work together and not against each other.

About the Cleveland Community Police Commission:

The CPC was established to ensure that the police force and its leadership are accountable and reflective of the community’s needs and values. It is tasked with bringing systemic changes to policing in Cleveland, enhancing transparency, and strengthening the relationship between the police and the community it serves.
The Commission’s role in recommending candidates for police commanders is a critical aspect of this mission, ensuring community voices are heard and considered in these vital appointments.

**Call to Action:**

The Cleveland Community Police Commission demands that the Mayor’s administration rectify this breach of trust by rescinding the appointments in question and reinstating the prescribed role of the Commission in the selection process. Moving forward, the CPC insists on full compliance with all aspects of Charter Section 115-5 to restore faith in the commitment to community-led police reform and governance.

For further details on the Commission’s response or inquiries about our mission, please contact Co-Chair, Dr. John Adams at 216-452-2866 or via email at Jadams5@Clevelandohio.gov.

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