

April 11, 2012

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Residents have three ways to rate the Burleson Police Department's ability to comply with standards set by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA).

Comments from the public are welcome between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Monday, April 23, by calling 817-426-9921. That night, the floor is open at a public hearing slated for 6 p.m. in the council chambers at Burleson City Hall, 141 W. Renfro St. Written comments may also be mailed to CALEA, 13575 Heathcote Blvd., Suite 320, Gainesville, VA 20155.

A team of assessors representing CALEA will be in Burleson April 21-24 as the Burleson Police Department vies for its seventh reaccreditation. Burleson was the first police department in Texas to be accredited by CALEA in 1987.

The accreditation program requires agencies to comply with standards in four basic areas: policy and procedures, administration, operations and support services. Comments should address the agency's ability to comply with CALEA's standards.

The assessment team leader is Capt. Christopher Smith of the Kokomo Police Department in Indiana and the team member is Capt. Christopher Settle from the Culpepper Police Department in Virginia. Smith has served with Kokomo since 1984. He is currently the training officer but has also served as a field training officer, watch supervisor, school resource officer, accreditation manager, patrol captain and major. Settle has served as captain with the Culpepper Police Department since 2011. He was hired in 1997 and worked in patrol, narcotics and investigations, as a motorcycle officer and bicycle officer, and as a sergeant and lieutenant. Settle has been Culpepper's accreditation manager since 2011 and a CALEA assessor since 2008.

Every three years, the commission provides a team of trained assessors to conduct an on-site re-assessment of the agency. This is a requirement of the process to maintain the agency's accredited status. The process is similar to the accreditation of hospitals and universities. It provides the agency with an unbiased account of their service and performance to the community.

The voluntary accreditation program for law enforcement agencies was created through the joint effort of four major law enforcement executive membership

associations: International Association of Chiefs of Police; National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; National Sheriffs' Association; and the Police Executive Research Forum. The Burlison Police Department provides annual reports to the commission to prove continued compliance and report changes or difficulties experienced during the year, including actions taken to resolve noncompliance.

CALEA was formed to establish standards to increase law enforcement agency capabilities to prevent and control crime; increase agency effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of law enforcement services; increase cooperation and coordination with other law enforcement agencies and with other agencies of the criminal justice system; and, increase citizen and employee confidence in the goals, objectives, policies, and practices of the agency.