



**MINUTES
COMMISSION FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES - REGULAR SESSION
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026, 1:00 PM.**

The Commission for Safe Communities convened in regular session in the Government Center Boardroom at 1:00 PM, on March 26, 2026. Chairperson Bertrand called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Ryan Bertrand	Commissioner	Present
Cathy Lust	Commissioner	Present
Elizabeth German	Commissioner	Present
Kaitlyn Selman	Commissioner	Present
Cierra Aiden	Commissioner	Present
Scott Denton	Commissioner	Absent
Robert Harris	Commissioner	Absent
Aaron Veerman	Ex-Officio Member (non-voting)	Absent

Staff Advisors Present:

Lieutenant (Lt.) Clayton Arnold, Bloomington Police Department (BPD)
April Wozniewski, BPD

Chairperson Bertrand directed the Staff Advisor to call roll.

Public Comment

No public comment was received via email or in person.

Approval of Minutes

The following item was presented:

Item 4.A. Consideration and action to approve the Minutes of the January 22, 2026, Regular Session Commission for Safe Communities Meeting.

Discussion had to postpone approval of the minutes until the next Commission for Safe Communities - Regular Session Meeting on May 28, 2026, to allow more time to review them.

Commissioner Bertrand asked if the commission agreed to wait to approve the January 22, 2026, minutes and the commissioners agreed.

Regular Agenda

The following item was presented:

Item 5.A. Presentation and discussion by the Bloomington Police Department on the current status of gun violence in the Bloomington-Normal area.

Staff Liaison Lt. Arnold shared that year-to-date there have been three shootings in each Bloomington and Normal. BPD has investigated two shootings in Bloomington since the last commission meeting.

- One shooting occurred in the 400 block of West Graham Street. There was one adult gunshot victim with non-fatal wounds. Two suspects were arrested in Normal for this shooting.
- Numerous shots were fired in the 2200 block of Rainbow Avenue early the morning of this meeting, March 26, 2026. There were no reported injuries during the event, and the case is currently under investigation.
- BPD is providing specialized investigative support to Normal Police Department regarding a March 22, 2026, shooting outside of student apartments near Illinois State University.

Item 5.B. Review and discussion by members of the Commission regarding follow-up on the recommendations set forth in the Special Commission for Safe Communities' report, Reducing the Risk of Gun Violence in Bloomington: 2025 Research and Recommendations from the City of Bloomington, IL, Special Commission for Safe Communities.

The commissioners confirmed which recommendations from the report on which they will conduct follow-up. Commissioner Bertrand requested that each commissioner reach out to agencies or individuals who would be willing to present at future commission meetings. When you have confirmed a presenter, please let Staff Liaison Wozniowski know so they can be added to the meeting agendas.

Commissioner Lust inquired if the City of Bloomington provides any kind of grant writing support. Staff Liaison Wozniowski checked and learned it does not currently offer this type of support.

Item 5.C. Discussion by Commissioner Bertran regarding his work with Suzanne Montoya, Director of Court Services in McLean County, in developing a survey on risk factors for gun violence.

Commissioner Bertrand indicated he is working with Director Suzanne Montoya to administer a survey to youth and young adults, to gather data on youth perspectives of gun violence. He has been also reached out to Project Oz, BPD School Resource Officer Scott Day, Regional Alternative School (RAS), and the director of the West Bloomington Revitalization Project (WBRP). Project Oz did not see a way for them to be involved with the survey; Officer Day referred Commissioner Bertrand to District 87 school principals; and he is awaiting a response from RAS and WBRP. He indicated he is open to ideas from other commissioners on other organizations in the community that could also be helpful in providing respondents to the survey.

Commissioner German mentioned the YWCA has some Bloomington Junior High School students and she also mentioned the Not in Our Town group.

Commissioner Aiden suggested that students involved with YMCA and the Boys and Girls Club could be good audiences for focus groups following the surveys. She raised the idea of having discussions or questions for youth regarding the role of music in gun violence. The commissioners had some discussion about the role of music and other parts of culture (social media, gaming, etcetera) in gun violence.

Commissioner German asked if the commission should add questions on conflict's role in gun violence - how conflict begins and how conflict is processed by the people involved. She inquired about asking youth to give their perspective of how they process their feelings and how they act when they feel disrespected. She inquired about how families navigate conflict.

Additional suggestions were made regarding the survey:

- Involve Bloomington Career Academy, Heartland Community College, or Illinois State University students as survey respondents
- Potentially add a question to the survey about how long the respondent has lived in the Bloomington-Normal area
- Age Cap for survey (Commissioner Bertrand said he believes Director Montoya said 25 years old would be the cap.)
- Keep survey limited to 10 questions
- Add an open-ended question, such as "What would you like to see done?"
- Having focus groups talk about survey results & cultural influences on gun violence

New Business

Commissioner Selman mentioned that every 1st and 3rd Saturday from now through June 2026, there is a free event called Skate Park Saturdays at Fairview Park in Normal, IL. The event is from 10:00am to 1:00pm and features food, t-shirts and collaborative art, all at no charge to participants.

Commission Member Comments

Commissioner Lust is going to try to have updates on McLean County suicide statistics at each future meeting. The data does not separate suicides by method.

Adjournment

Commissioner German made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Lust, to adjourn.

Motion carried (viva voce).


The Meeting Adjourned at 2:03 PM.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON



Ryan Bertrand, Chairperson

ATTEST



April Wozniowski, Staff Liaison