



**MINUTES
SPECIAL COMMISSION FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES - REGULAR SESSION
THURSDAY, April 24, 2025, 1:00 PM.**

The Special Commission for Safe Communities convened in regular session in the Government Center Boardroom at 1:00 PM, on April 24, 2025. Chairperson Denton called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Scott Denton	Commissioner	Present
Cathy Lust	Commissioner	Present
Kaitlyn Selman	Commissioner	Present
Ryan Bertrand	Commissioner	Present
Kevin Crutcher	Commissioner	Present
Timothy Harris	Commissioner	Absent
Elizabeth German	Commissioner	Absent

Commissioner Kevin Crutcher was appointed to the Commission by Mayor Mwilambwe.

Staff Advisors Present:

Kiel Nowers, Staff Liaison

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 March 27, 2025, Regular Special Commission for Safe Communities Meeting.

Commissioner Lust made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Bertrand, to approve the Item as presented.

Chairperson Denton directed the Staff Liaison to call roll:

AYES: Lust; Selman; Bertrand; Crutcher

Motion carried.

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 Kiel Nowers shared a three-year summary of illegal gun activity in Bloomington, which was compiled by Bloomington Police Department (BPD) Crime Intelligence and Analysis (CIAU) Supervisor Jack McQueen. The information provided by CIAU Supervisor McQueen covers the years 2022-2024:

- Bloomington has experienced an average of 36 shooting incidents per year. The year 2024 had the most with 42 incidents.
- Bloomington has averaged 8.6 persons shot per year.
- There has been a steady decrease in the number of people shot, with 15 people shot in 2022, and 4 people shot in 2024.
- Bloomington has had 5 handgun-related homicides, all of which were in 2022.
- Over 95% of all gun-related incidents involved large-caliber weapons, with 9mm and .40 being the calibers used most.
- There has been an increase in the number of rounds fired per shooting incident.
- BPD has seen an increase in the number of shootings by fully automated handguns. This syncs with the increase in possession of Glock handguns, which can be easily converted to be fully automatic using inexpensive parts.
- The incidence of arrestees/suspects in gun-related incidents who are African American males remains higher than other race/sex combinations. Of the incidents involving African American males, the age range for both suspects and victims have mostly between the ages of 18-22 years.
- Gang-motivated shootings are less common than in the previous 10-year period.
 - Youths who appear focused on first-time acquisition and use of a firearm
 - In many cases, youth have been shooting at property, not at other people.

Most illegal firearms in Bloomington are being acquired through theft, particularly theft from vehicles. In addition, based on analysis of BPD's submissions to the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBN), approximately 40% of shootings between 2022-2024 were done with the same handgun(s). This does not mean the same suspect(s) are responsible for multiple shootings; guns are being treated as commodities, switching hands frequently.

Commissioner Lust asked where the responsibility lies when a firearm is stolen from a vehicle. Staff Liaison Nowers stated that leaving a firearm in a vehicle is negligent but not illegal. Commissioner Lust followed up with asking if it is a crime if someone doesn't report a stolen firearm. She also inquired if it's considered theft if someone steals an item from someone who had also stolen the item. Staff Liaison Nowers stated he would check into it.

Item 5.B. Review and discussion of the 2024/2025 Special Commission for Safe Communities Meetings and Report progress.

Commissioner Denton stated he will set up a meeting with CIAU Supervisor McQueen and/or Crime Data Analyst Carl Fever to procure gun-related statistics for Bloomington.

Commissioner Selman mentioned being interested to know if data about domestic violence incidents can be filtered to see those that involve guns, as well as the relationship between the victim and suspect in domestic violence incidents involve firearms.

Commissioner Denton spoke with Mayor-Elect Dan Brady about the future of the commission and was told Mayor-Elect Brady would be in favor of extending the commission with the same commissioners.

Commissioner Denton passed out a handout to the commissioners that Chief of Police Jamal Simington provided at the April 21, 2025, Committee of the Whole meeting.

Commissioner Lust is going to try to obtain suicide data for 2024. She mentioned that when Dr. Kathleen Yoder, the McLean County Coroner, presented to the commission, Dr. Yoder referenced "suicide contagion" and Commissioner Lust would like to learn more on the topic for the commission report. Commissioner Denton suggested having someone from the mental health field present at a future commission meeting on the topic of veteran suicide.

Commissioner Selman gave an update on the status of the report topics she and Commissioner German are working on.

Commissioner Bertran gave an update on the status of the report topic he and Commissioner Harris are working on. He also expressed interest in having young people present to the commission about how they feel about gun violence.

Commissioner Lust asked if Staff Liaison Nowers would be willing to give a presentation on de-escalation to the commission, with a focus on youth. Commissioner Denton asked if that topic could be presented at next month's meeting. Commissioner Selman recommended training community members on de-escalation techniques. She also indicated interest in obtaining statistics or other data on the effectiveness of de-escalation. Commissioner Lust added she would try to get a Not in Our School program member to speak to the commission.

Staff Liaison Nowers suggested someone reach out to Edwin Sargent, who is the executive director of the Western Avenue Community Center, to give a presentation.

Commissioner Denton suggested adding a section to the commission's report on gun violence and mental health. Commissioner Crutcher agreed to handle that portion of the report.

Commissioner Bertrand asked Staff Liaison Nowers if school personnel would know if a domestic violence incident occurred in a student's family at home (e.g. if a parent had been arrested over a weekend). Staff Liaison Nowers replied that the School Resource Officers would likely be aware but due to confidentiality, there is a limit on which school staff are made privy to that information.

New Business

Commissioner Lust will reach out to a Veterans center in Peoria to see if someone can speak to the commission at a future meeting. Staff Liaison Nowers said he also knows someone and will reach out to that person.

Commissioner Selman mentioned there are at least 7 other councils the commission should reach out to, to find out if or how they align with or overlap with this commission. She will send her list to Staff Liaison Aaron Veerman.

Commissioner Bertrand requested people to start sending him any parts of their reports that are complete. He requested if commissioners have tables, send him the actual tables, not screenshots.

Commissioner Lust suggested that asking youths to get involved with the commission could be a recommendation made in the commission report to the city council.

Commissioner Bertrand suggested community de-escalation training be a recommendation in the commission report to the city council.

Commissioner Selman is going to reach out to someone who presented at the university on restorative justice and de-escalation to see if they will come talk to the commission at a future meeting.

Commissioner Bertrand will try to send out what has been given so far about a week prior to the next meeting.

Commissioner Lust will ask the state's attorney's office to present to the commission about victim assistance.

Adjournment

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

Motion carried (viva voce).

The Meeting Adjourned at 2:11 PM.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

ATTEST

Scott Denton

Scott Denton (Jun 16, 2025 15:06 CDT)

Scott Denton, Chairperson

Kiel Nowers

Kiel Nowers, Staff Liaison