



ADVANCE SHEET – July 17, 2026

President's Letter

REMARKS OF GEORGE W. LIEBMANN, PRESIDENT OF THE LIBRARY COMPANY OF THE BALTIMORE BAR, INTRODUCING RICHARD WORLEY, POLICE COMMISSIONER OF BALTIMORE CITY, JULY 8, 2026

I have the honor to introduce Richard Worley, who has been Baltimore City's Police Commissioner for nearly three years, since October 2023, and who has been a member of Baltimore City's police force for 28 years, since 1998.

As we all know, the police force has made spectacular progress under his administration, particularly as measured by homicide statistics, which are difficult to manipulate or alter. These have declined from 334 in 2022 to 133 in 2025 and 46 in the first six months of this year, short four days.

His tenure, like that of Commissioner Donald Pomerleau half a century ago, dramatically shows that the reform of police forces must be carried out by police commissioners, not by mayors, governors or judges, and certainly not by presidents.

His career by recent Maryland standards is distinctive in another respect: he was appointed in reliance on his personal character and local knowledge. He is not that all-too-familiar figure, a bonus baby, the product of a 'search committee' whose recruits are distinguished by their ability to tour the nation, failing upward. There are lessons here for this region's school and library boards.

Commissioner Worley has served as a patrol officer, commander, Chief of Homeland Security, Chief of Criminal Investigations, and head of the Homicide Unit, the Robbery Unit, and the Warrant Apprehension Task Force.

As a lawyer, I am embarrassed to say that the nation possesses many law schools, but few schools of public administration. The Commissioner's education is in police administration, magna cum laude in Oklahoma and then in training institutes elsewhere. His career is an example to all of us.

George W. Liebmann



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History of the Force:

The first police force for Baltimore Town was created in 1784. Constables were appointed and given police powers to keep the peace. The State Legislature on March 16, 1853, passed a bill, "to provide for the better security ... in the City of Baltimore." This statute provided that police officers should be armed and that a badge and commission be furnished each member. In March of 1862, the Federal military authorities who had taken control of the Baltimore City police on June 27, 1861, turned over the Police Department to the authority of the state. In 1867 the State established a Board of Police Commissioners (Chapter 367, Acts of 1867). From 1867 until 1920, the Board of Police Commissioners was appointed by the Governor. After 1920, a single Police Commissioner of Baltimore City was chosen and also served on the Governor's Advisory Council. In 1978, the State Legislature granted the Mayor the power to appoint the Police Commissioner, subject to confirmation by the City Council (Chapter 920, Acts of 1976).

The Records:

Because the Police Department remains a State agency, most police records are considered State Records, and many are therefore located at the Maryland State Archives in Annapolis. Here are the series related to the Baltimore City Police Department at the MSA and BCA (BCA records are labelled with an *):

- **Historical description** of the department: [SH248](#)
- **Board of Police Commissioners Trial of Officers** [S1895](#) (1962-1975) and *Proceedings* [S1894](#) (1866-1966)- some of these proceedings have been digitized and are available online through the link, *Reports* [T2438](#) (1910-1914)
- **Criminal Dockets Consolidated** [C3065](#) (1873-1955), for *Central District* [C2117](#) (1885-1960), *Eastern District* [C2111](#) (1863-1959), *Middle District* [C2109](#) (1870-1884), *Northeastern District* [C2110](#) (1900-1960), *Northwestern District* [C2112](#) (1876-1959), *Southeastern District* [C2115](#) (1959-1961), *Southern District* [C2113](#) (1867-1960), *Western District* [C2114](#) (1959-1961), *Southwestern District* [T4880](#) (1901-1959), and *Miscellaneous* [C3075](#) (1902-1956),
- **Homicide Docket** [T2290](#) (1954-1955)
- **Housing Docket** [C3067](#) (1850-1951)
- **Invoice Records** [T2293](#) (1913)
- **Juvenile Dockets** (NOTE: Juvenile records are restricted- please see information in series descriptions via the links) *Central District* [C3070](#) (1943-1954), *Eastern District* [T2263](#) (1943-1971), *Northeastern District* [T2262](#) (1943-1954), *Northern District* [T4859](#) (1949-1955), *Northwestern District* [T2274](#) (1943-1952), *Southwestern District* [T4879](#) (1949-1951)
- **Marshalls Dockets** [T2437](#) (1891-1894)
- **Matron's Records** [T2276](#) (1940-1951)
- **Military Dockets** [T2440](#) (1942-1944)
- **Motor Vehicle Maintenance Records** [C3071](#) (1942-1949)
- **Patrol Wagon Records** [C3073](#) (1944-1948)
- **Police Casualties** [T2300](#) (1870-1964)
- **Roll Books** [C3066](#) (1871-1950)
- **Traffic Dockets** [C3068](#) (1931-1961)
- **Arrest Record Indexes** [C3072](#) (1891-1916)
- **Arrestees Physical Descriptions** [C3069](#) (1908-1923)
- **William M. Hackley Collection** [BMS34](#) (1849-2009)*
- **Baltimore City Police Department Gifts and Acquisitions** [BMS33*](#)
- **Reports: Board of Police Commissioners for the City of Baltimore** [BRG68-1](#)(1868-1955)*

Other Sources:

- Personnel records are held and maintained at the Police Department's Personnel section. They have personnel jackets (containing transfers, assignments, discipline, and commendations/awards) as well as microfilmed reports that date from the early 1900's to the present.
- An independently maintained website created by the late Police Detective William M. Hackley and maintained by retired Police Detective Ken Driscoll contains a great quantity of useful information about the department: <http://baltimorecitypolicehistory.com/>

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Important Dates In Law Enforcement History

April 1635

The City of Boston establishes a “night watch,” in which officers served part-time, without pay.

April 29, 1786

Sheriff Benjamin Branch of Chesterfield County, Virginia died when he was thrown from his horse becoming the first known law enforcement officer to be killed in the line of duty.

September 24, 1789

The United States Congress creates the first Federal law enforcement officer, the United States Marshal. Thirteen U.S. Marshals were appointed by President George Washington.

1835

Texas creates what was later to become the Texas Rangers, the oldest statewide law enforcement agency in America.

1857

The City of Baltimore becomes the first police department to issue pistols to their officers.

1858

Police departments in Boston and Chicago issue uniforms to their officers.

April 14, 1865

On the day he was shot by the assassin John Wilkes Booth, President Abraham Lincoln approves the formation of what is now the United States Secret Service.

February 26, 1870

Graham, North Carolina, Constable Wyatt Outlaw becomes the first African American police officer to be killed in the line of duty when he was removed from his residence by members of the KKK and lynched in front of the county courthouse. The previous week, Constable Outlaw had fired upon a group of men who were rumored to belong to the Klan.

November 2, 1870

Thomas J. Smith, of Abilene, Kansas, becomes the first of more than 627 Police Chiefs to die in the line of duty.

October 26, 1881

Legendary Lawman Wyatt Earp, along with his brothers Virgil and Morgan and John Henry “Doc” Holliday, win the Wild West era’s most famous gunfight at the O.K. Corral.

December 16, 1891

City Health Dept. Inspector Marie Owens is appointed to the Chicago Police Department as a police officer assigned to the Detective Bureau, becoming the nation’s earliest-known female sworn law enforcement officer.

1893

The first national police group is formed, the National Chiefs of Police Union, which would later become the International Association of Chiefs of Police. For the first time, police leaders met regularly to share ideas.

1895

Future President Theodore Roosevelt begins his three-year term of Police Commissioner in New York City.

1902

Fingerprinting is first used in the United States by law enforcement.

1906

Nellie Wicks, a Head Attendant for the New York State Department of Corrections, becomes the first female law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty when she was fatally stabbed by an inmate on September 27, 1906.

1914

The Berkeley (CA) Police Department becomes the country's first agency to have all patrol officers using automobiles.

1929

Federal Agent Eliot Ness begins his legendary law enforcement career and is picked to lead a group of agents nicknamed "The Untouchables" — Marty Lahart, Sam Seager, Barney Cloonan, Lyle Chapman, Tom Friel, Joe Leeson, Paul Robsky, Mike King, Bill Gardner, Al 'Wallpaper' Wolff and two other associates, Frank Basile and Jim Seeley.

1932-1934

John Dillinger and his gang murdered ten law enforcement officers — more than any other outlaw. They were responsible for the deaths of Officer Howard Wagner, Trooper Eugene Teague, Sheriff Jesse Sarber, Sergeant William Shanley, Patrolman William O'Malley, Patrolman Martin O'Brien, Officer Francis Mulvihill, Chief Franklin Culp, Detective Henry Perrow and Undersheriff Charles Cavanagh.

September 1968

Betty Blankenship and Elizabeth Robinson of the Indianapolis (IN) Police Department become the first female police officers in the United States to work as patrol officers on the street. The pair are transferred from administrative assignments after meeting with Chief of Police Winston Churchill and asking to be put on street patrols.

The following was from the Web Site of the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (<https://nleomf.org>).



Judge Paul W. Grimm To Speak At The Library

On Tuesday, September 29, 2026, the Honorable Paul W. Grimm (Ret.) will take part in the Kaplan Schneider Lecture Series at the Baltimore Bar Library. Judge Grimm will speak on judicial security: how judges are increasingly under attack and what needs to be done about it. A flier about the evening will be going out soon, but if you already know you want to attend, call the Library at 410-727-0280 or e-mail us at jwbennett@barlib.org.



Move Toward The Light

The older that I have gotten, the earlier the start for each day has become. I remember an old Monty Python skit where two fellows are arguing over who has had the more difficult life. On the subject of how early they had to get up each morning the one proclaimed that he had to get up a half an hour before he went to bed. It is sort of like that: I have become “Farmer Joe.”

Last Saturday as I lay in bed I noticed the light coming through the window. I realized that yes I was still alive and I could in fact get up. That was of course if I “could” get up.

For me, each day is in fact just like New Years Day. We get another turn. We get another chance to get it right. We see the light, but do we really? Today affords you

every opportunity that January 1 does. Make the most of it. At the risk of being morose, remember that one day you won't be seeing the morning light coming through the curtain.

Now, as far as seeing the light, why not use it to find your way to the Baltimore Bar Library. Once you get here, you will see that everything you could conceivably need to advance your case or cause is waiting. Extensive collections and databases within the confines of a truly elegant setting. The only thing missing in the equation is you.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Joe Bennett



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