

## VIRGINIA BEACH CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL



In the area of Virginia Beach, a citizen review panel was composed just over two decades ago as a way of helping to find out more information about the different complaints made against the police department in the area. The city believed that by relying on this review panel, they would be able to investigate and find out more information on how the public feels about the employees that work for the city, also enabling citizens to make fair complaints if necessary, even if the complaints were made against police officers. Some believed that this particular panel was actually working but the truth is that it basically was not used for over six whole years and has done the opposite of what it was supposed to do. At this point in time, now more than ever, citizens of the United States often feel as though they cannot trust their own government. And, now, the citizens of the Virginia Beach area are feeling the same way, wondering if these intentions of the panel were even worth it. The human resources department for the city was supposed to be looking over the panel to see what type of work and progress was being made. However, the department ignored the complaints and did not keep up with the files, nor did they answer any questions or provide any assistance to the people who already made complaints against certain employees or city officials. There were dozens of complaints made, some of which dated all the way back to 2002. These complaints were actually filed but were forgotten about or simply ignored and all the while, there were certain documents that just could not be found. A former director of human resources for the area had dismissed a number of complaints, stating that the panel had gotten together to review the complaints, which was actually false information because the panel had never gathered together to review such information. The human resources department also failed to mention to police officers about the fact that the panel was not gathering together and because of that, police officers were continuously making references for having complaints sent to the panel. It is quite obvious that much negligence has gone on, especially within the human resources department for the Virginia Beach area. The management of these operations is quite disturbing and even considered troubling and some believe that this has happened due to a large amount of budget cuts leading to such problems. However, it seems the main issue is that the panel has not even gotten together since December of 2005.