



Policing Advisory Commission
Monday, September 14, 2020
Virtual Meeting
7:30 – 9:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

Commission Members Present: Jerome Price, Cherri Branson, Jenn Lynn, Justice Reid, Shabab Ahmed Mirza, Caroline Fredrickson, Nadia Salazar Sandi, Vernon Ricks, Eric Sterling, Alicia Hudson, Robin Gaster, Jasmine Williams, Dalbin Osorio

Commission Members Absent: None

Ex Officio Members Present: Chief Marcus Jones, Cate Brewer (FOP representative)

Support Staff: Carlos Camacho, Susan Farag, Amanda Mihill, Linda McMillian

Guests: Alicja Nutting, Patricia Fenn, Phil Andrews, Monica McQueen

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:33pm

Agenda:

1. Attendance: Council staff took attendance using the MS Teams participant list

2. Action - Approval of Minutes:

- Mr. Sterling proposed a correction to the previous minutes regarding his point of order on PAC member introductions.
- Mr. Ricks motioned to approve the minutes with Mr. Sterling's correction, seconded by Mr. Gaster. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Presentation from Ms. Caroline Sturgis on the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force

- The Task Force has been assembled and is composed of 80 representatives. About half are subject matter experts from County Departments, Agencies, and Municipalities and the other half are members from the community and different community organizations.
- The Task Force held its first meeting in late August and will hold its second meeting on September 24.
- The subject matter experts from the County have prepared and will transmit a packet of information to the Task Force that contains data on: 1) 911 dispatch calls to determine the types of calls the police responds to; 2) 311 calls to determine community needs; and 3) the Police department's budget and structure to examine how resources are allocated.
- The Task Force will also examine and rethink how the County is currently responding to community needs, particularly in areas where the Police are filling the void in services – homelessness, mental health, child protection, etc.

- With these data, the Task Force will create a report outlining recommendations that is due on January 18, 2021.
- The short timeline for the report is intentional so that the Task Force can make recommendations to the Executive prior to the formulation of the Executive's FY22 budget. The Executive will be able to use the Task Force's recommendations to prioritize investments that meet community needs and align with the types of calls for service that the data show.
- The other piece of the Task Force is to hire a consultant to not only help facilitate the Task Force but to also conduct an independent audit of the Police that will focus on biases that exist within the department and understand if policies and practices are being applied differently to different groups, particularly groups that have been historically marginalized.
 - i. The audit is planned to begin within a month or so and will be completed by approximately next spring/summer.
- Mr. Ricks noted that it seems that much of the data and analysis will be done by the Task Force, which is what he believed the PAC would be doing. Which body was created first and how will the two interact?
 - i. Ms. Sturgis – The Task Force was created this summer in response to national events regarding public safety and policing. The County Executive believed it was prudent to have a conversation prior to making any recommendations, engage as many people as possible, and give input to next year's budget. The Commission was created by law in 2019 and members were appointed during the summer so the Commission came first. While the Task Force is intended to be a short-lived entity, the Commission is much longer-term and will hopefully formulate its recommendations using the work done by the Task Force and go beyond the work done by the Task Force but the two entities undoubtedly will collaborate and share information.
- Ms. Branson asked whether the Task Force has already hired the consultant and also requested that the Task Force share the information/data it receives with the PAC.
 - i. Ms. Sturgis - Have not yet hired the consultant but have had multiple conversations with capable organizations and have identified one organization that would be a good fit for the Task Force's need. Task Force is now seeking approval for the hiring of the consultant and the decision will be made public. Ms. Sturgis also noted that the Consultant's audit will take much longer than the Task Force's report that is due by mid-January. An in-depth audit for a police department typically takes between 12 – 18 months.
- Monica McQueen (member of the public) – How does a community organization engage with the Task Force and help provide community information/input?
 - i. The question was not answered as time was only allotted for PAC members to ask questions, but Council staff helped connect Ms. McQueen to Ms. Sturgis and the Task Force.
- Ms. Frederickson – How is the Task Force handling community engagement? Ms. Frederickson noted that the PAC was created in a way to illicit community engagement and this could be a way for the PAC to effectively collaborate with the Task Force while also using the expertise from the Task Force.
 - o Ms. Sturgis – The community will have the chance to provide questions and input. The community is represented by 45 members on the Task Force. The Task Force has also created an email address specifically for the Task Force so that the community can ask questions in that manner.

4. Action - Nomination and Election of Officers (Chair and Vice Chair)

- Council staff briefly explained the agreed upon nomination and election process to the PAC. Staff sent out the nominees and brief statements prepared by each nominee prior to the meeting. Each nominee then gave a one to two-minute statement on their vision for the Commission and their qualifications for Chair/Vice Chair.
- The nominees were Ms. Mirza and Mr. Ricks for Chair, and Ms. Branson and Mr. Osorio for Vice Chair.
- Voting was conducted by secret ballot. Members sent their vote by email for both Chair and Vice Chair

to Council staff. The vote was tallied by staff and reported out.

- Ms. Mirza was elected Chair and Mr. Osorio was elected Vice Chair.

5. Citizen Academy

- The Commission discussed if the proposed, condensed Montgomery County Citizen Academy course met the needs of the Commission.
- Ms. Farag explained that the condensed Citizen Academy consisted of five days' worth of information from the standard Citizens Academy. Additional information not included can be requested by the Commission. Ms. Farag also encouraged Commission members to attend the full 15-week Citizen Academy as they can. MCPD has strived to make the Citizen Academy course more flexible by providing the option for virtual participation via MS Teams and also recording each session, allowing participants to view the sessions at their own convenience. Ms. Farag also stated that she will send an email to Sergeant Mullaney with a list of Commission members who would like access to the MS Teams groups where meeting links and session recording are made available. She also noted that while the sessions are recorded, not every aspect of each session is recorded, for example, the tour of the Public Safety Training Facility was not recorded.
- Mr. Ricks commented that while he understands the concern regarding COVID-19, the in-person trainings provided through the Citizen Academy are very interesting and beneficial to better understanding policing in practice.
- Ms. Branson proposed that Council Staff create a survey with potential dates for the Commission members to attend the condensed version of the Citizen Academy.
 - i. Mr. Reid agreed with Ms. Branson's suggestion to find potential dates for the live, condensed sessions.

6. Next Meeting Date and Frequency of Meetings:

- The Commission discussed potential dates for the next PAC meeting, as well as the frequency of meetings.
- Ms. Mirza suggested that a survey be sent out with different options for the next meeting date. She suggested that the week of October 5th be considered.
 - i. Council Staff will work with Ms. Mirza to create a survey and send out to Commission members.
- Ms. Frederickson noted that while six meetings per year is the minimum required meetings that the PAC must hold, perhaps additional meetings where the Commission is broken out into Committees may be warranted.
 - i. Ms. Mirza also suggested that the full Commission could perhaps meet more frequently in the beginning while the Commission gets organized
 - ii. Ms. Salazar agreed that meeting more frequently at the beginning would be helpful. Also, a conversation on topics that the Commission will explore is needed.
 - iii. Ms. Mihill suggested that Commission members should send their survey responses to Council Staff individually.

7. Any Other Business:

- **Action - Information Request from MCPD**
 - i. Mr. Gaster wanted to address a data request asking MCPD to let the Commission know exactly what type of data they have and are using so that the Commission can ask more informed questions.
 - ii. Mr. Sterling shared via MS Teams a formal request to MCPD – "It would be helpful to the Commission's work to understand what data are used by MCPD. Accordingly, could you please

request that MCPD provide a list of all databases used by the Department. For each database, please provide a list of data fields and the data dictionary that defines and explains each data field. Note that this request does not seek access to any database and does not request any actual records from any database. There should therefore be no privacy or confidentiality concerns. In the event that the requested information is not available for any data set, please ask MCPD to explain why the data are not being made available.”

- iii. Ms. Lynn made a point that she does not want to duplicate any requests that the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force has already made. Also, the OLO Report on local policing data outlines some data gaps within MCPD so Commission should look at that.
- iv. Mr. Gaster motioned to formally send the information request to MCPD, Mr. Sterling seconded the motion. The Commission passed the motion unanimously.

- **Priorities Going forward**

- i. Ms. Mirza outlined the priorities for the Commission going forward: 1) deciding on the next Commission meeting and for the Citizen Academy; 2) making the formal information request to MCPD; and 3) identifying areas of interests for the Commission
 - Council Staff will help the Commission in sending the information request, creating a survey to identify dates for the Citizen Academy and for the Commission’s next meeting.
 - Council Staff will also help the Commission in finding a workable mechanism to identify areas of interest for each Commission member, perhaps also using a survey (e.g. Google Form)
- ii. Mr. Gaster also reiterated that it would be helpful for any email that is sent to the Commission to have a new subject line with the issue at hand and to include “PAC” in the subject line.

8. Meeting Adjourned: Meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 9:03pm.