



Policing Advisory Commission
Monday, October 12, 2020
Virtual Meeting
6:30 – 8:00 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: Jerome Price

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

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

Guests: Art Brodsky, Amelia Brust

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 6:36pm

Agenda:

- 1. Attendance and Recording of Meeting:** Mr. Camacho took attendance and began recording the meeting
- 2. Administrative Updates:**
 - Commission will vote to approve minutes from last meeting
 - i. Motioned and seconded. All Commissioners voted to approve the minutes contingent on the correction of typographical errors.
 - Review of motion from last meeting (response from MCPD regarding data fields and dictionaries for its databases).
 - i. MCPD is working on gathering this information but based on the number of other requests for information and data, it is taking some time.
 - Chief Jones – MCPD will work as hard as possible to fulfill this request in a timely manner. Asks for the Commission's patience. Have an enormous backlog of MPIA and data requests since the George Floyd incident.
 - ii. Dr. Gaster – A little bit of time is not good enough. Need to get an estimate on when they can deliver something. Happy to give MCPD extra time but need an update on the timeline.
 - iii. Ms. Fredrickson – Suggests giving MCPD until the end of the month.
 - iv. Ms. Mirza – Would greatly appreciate MCPD to adhere to the 30 day turn around as specified in the Commission's charge.
 - Ms. Mirza – Have gotten responses on things the PAC will like presentations on. Mr. Reid will be giving an optional Microsoft Teams training to the PAC.
 - Proposal for intra-Commission discussion on substantive matters

- i. Ms. Mirza shared a proposal on how the PAC can communicate between monthly meetings. The process would work as follows: If there is an item that requires a full PAC discussion, Mr. Osorio and Ms. Mirza will ask for feedback. Members will send responses to Mr. Camacho who will then post the information on the PAC website. The PAC will also look into other ways to make that information available (e.g. through social media). Whatever responses are given will also be shared to the entire Commission.
- ii. Ms. Fredrickson – Want to clarify that this is not a way to get around the Open Meetings Act but a way to abide by the laws while also facilitating the PAC’s work.
- iii. Mr. Osorio - It’s a way to strive to achieve full transparency.
- Other reminders:
 - i. Ms. Mirza – please “reply all” to Commission wide emails as some members have been dropped or an incorrect email has been.
 - When soliciting feedback via google survey please complete to the best of your availability, giving as much information as possible.
 - ii. Ms. Hudson – Is it possible for Mr. Camacho to create a group list or listserv of all PAC emails to ensure all messages are sent to the full PAC?
 - Mr. Camacho will work with Mr. Reid, who knows how to set this up, on creating a central PAC email list/address.
 - iii. Ms. Mirza – Acknowledged the outcomes of Breonna Taylor and Finan Berhe.

3. Discussion on Priority Issues:

- Ms. Mirza opened the floor to Commission members to discuss issues that they would personally like to work on over the next year, in the context of potentially forming a subcommittee focused on that issue.
- Prior to the meeting staff sent out a survey allowing the Commission to identify key priorities. The top priorities identified through the survey were: 1) misconduct and discipline; 2) School Resource Officers (SROs); 3) hiring and recruitment; and 4) mental health crisis response.
- Mr. Osorio – Want to focus on SROs. MoCo School Board presented data on school arrests over the last three years. 83% of school-based arrests were of black and brown students. There has been a lot of organizing in the County around the presence of SROs with a movement to remove SROs from schools. Interested in working on this issue and creating a space for youth to speak their concerns around SROs.
- Ms. Hudson – Worried about the infiltration of white supremacy in the police force. Has been discussed in reports released by CBS, PBS, WTOP. Congresswoman Norma Torres has asked the DOJ for the release of a highly redacted FBI report on this issue. This is linked to hiring and recruitment. Also, interested in looking at how calls are answered by police. This is also linked to defunding the police and exploring if other professionals would be better suited to responding to some calls for service.
- Ms. Fredrickson – Recruitment and hiring. MCPD is very unrepresentative of the community. Needs more diversity. Concern with the disconnect between how people are trained to be in combat (e.g. military) and how people are trained to address public safety.
- Ms. Branson – First had some questions: 1) Will the PAC be organized in three subcommittees? 2) Are the topics identified in the survey going to be the topics of the subcommittee? 3) How many people per subcommittee? 4) Can members serve on more than one subcommittee?
 - i. Areas of interest are: traffic enforcement, mental health crisis, and how police interact with residents on a day-to-day basis.
 - ii. Ms. Mirza – Thinking of three or at most four subcommittees. Would like each member to serve on one subcommittee. Would like each subcommittee to be open to the public with agendas and minutes but keep the groups small enough where they do not reach quorum and as such email threads discussing subcommittee matters are not subject to the Open Meetings Act.
- Mr. Sterling – Interested to serve on a subcommittee that deals with promotion and things that condition a police officer’s behavior (e.g. ability to be promoted). How are officers rewarded? This is how guidance from management is reflected.

- Ms. Williams – SROs. Continuing to rely on an institution that carries out its duties in a punitive manner, disproportionately on communities of color, we are ensuring the continuation of racial discrepancies and the school to prison pipeline. Experience as a recent high school graduate and activist in youth protest movements shows that there is a consensus from young people that they don't want officers in schools and those resources would be better used in other ways like on counselors and social workers.
- Ms. Lynn – Mental health response, including Autism, Asperger's and those with invisible disabilities. Making sure that police respond effectively to mental health incidents and do not misinterpret behaviors of those with mental health issues. Also, the 911 system and finding a solution similar to how the 211 suicide prevention call center operates. Has to be a way for mental health professionals to respond with law enforcement.
- Mr. Reid – Incentives for police officers and how to reinforce/drive good behaviors. Will serve on any committee as necessary. Also, the role of technology and the collection/uses of data to provide transparency. De-escalate with information.
- Chief Jones – Want to have deeper conversations regarding the issues presented here so that MCPD can better explain their internal process (e.g. promotion, recruitment, hiring, SROs). Committed to helping the PAC as they make recommendations.
- Ms. Sandi – The disciplinary process. Comes from a union background and does not know of any other profession that has a bill of rights. Concerns her as someone has suffered through police brutality. Wants to work on a transparent and honest disciplinary process.
- Dr. Gaster – Data is going to underpin that we do in every area. Very important that we get that pipeline moving on data sharing. Also, interested in discretionary policing, particularly with regards to traffic stops and drug arrests. Why do we have 100K traffic stops in a County of 1M people? Who gets stopped and what happens to them afterwards? Also, interested in the disciplinary process and internal affairs investigations. No limitation on the reporting of outcomes on the aggregate level. Need to improve internal affairs reporting.
- Ms. Brewer - As the Training Supervisor for in-service training at the Training Academy, I can provide info with regarding to training and the process involved in creating the training. Very interested in community policing, regarding training and what community policing means in MoCo. Shift from stat driven benefits. Also, providing more resources for the police and for citizens to deal with public safety issues (mental health professionals, drug counselors, etc.).
- Mr. Ricks – Interested in modern day policing and what the feedback will be from the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force and how the County will implement and use that information. Also interested in all of the subjects mentioned.
- Ms. Mirza – As we move toward alternatives to the police, to make sure that the mental health supports that we offer are not reproducing the correctional system (e.g. things that are mandatory or forcing people to do things without their consent). Need to create a care model driven by compassion.
- Many common themes were presented but how can the PAC best structure our work over the next year?
 - i. Dr. Gaster – A lot of interest in SROs. What Ms. Lynn mentioned about mental health is important and has to be addressed and is more urgent. Broad area of discretionary policing is a useful bucket and connected to many issues. Discretionary policing means that an officer has considerable discretion on whether they are going to stop someone and how they respond.
 - ii. Ms. Sandi – Breaking down the work of the police into: 1) how they are trained, 2) what they do, 3) reporting, and 4) any consequences. Creating an Emergency response system that is secure, safe, and tailored to specific emergency situations. Figuring out alternatives to prevent people from entering the criminal justice system.
 - iii. Mr. Osorio – All of these issues build on each other so it is important to group these issues together as organically as possible. Can use the perspective of reallocating funds from one existing program (e.g. SROs) to another (e.g. mental health). Another example is looking at

technology as a broader category and how it can be used to measure recruitment, hiring, and training, as well as officer effectiveness and misconduct. Proposal:

- S1: SROs & Mental Health: Not This, but That (using SRO budget to fund more mental health resources)
 - S2: Hiring, Recruitment, Training, and Retention: using technology to measure diverse recruitment, training, and officer hiring
 - S3: Police Interactions & Misconduct: Using Technology to Measure Officer Effectiveness & Misconduct
 - S4: Community Policing: Traffic enforcement, mental health response & using technology to measure the effectiveness of the response to impact policy changes
- iv. Mr. Sterling – Looking at public safety from the community’s perspective. How does the community feel about walking home at night, if their bikes are safe, if they are safe from burglary, hate crimes, etc. Also, can look at drug-related arrests (particularly marijuana-related arrests) and examine why is MoCo focusing on this type of crime and is this distracting from other public safety initiatives?
 - v. Ms. Hudson – Implicit bias and racism is alive and well in the County. Have first-hand experience with this in MoCo. Very concerned about this infiltration of white supremacists in our County. Who are we hiring, how are we picking them, how are we training them and who are we promoting?
 - vi. Ms. Fredrickson – propose three broad buckets: 1) personnel – hiring, recruitment, etc.; 2) task/functions - discretionary policing, what they do and what they shouldn’t do, traffic enforcement and alternatives, budget; 3) Public relation/perceptions/community relations
 - vii. Ms. Branson – Dalbin’s proposal is helpful. Important to remember that none of these subcommittees are going to be siloed. Should establish the big picture focus for each subcommittee. Once we decide who is on each subcommittee then we should examine what type of information is needed for each subcommittee to do its work.
- Ms. Mirza – hope that prior to the next meeting, subcommittees can meet at least once and put together what kind of data they need so that a comprehensive information request can be sent to MCPD.
 - i. Subcommittees would organize themselves and are free to nominate a Chair/Vice Chair. Just asks that Commissioners only serve on one subcommittee and that each subcommittee does not reach quorum.
 - Ms. Hudson – Question for Chief Jones, does MCPD look at social media posts for officers or recruits?
 - i. Chief Jones – All officers that go through the recruitment process get their social media vetted and MCPD does a thorough review of their social media. This is also ongoing while officers are on the force.
 - Ms. Mirza – Will work with Dalbin in trying to pare down this list and get the subcommittees organized will send out further information to the rest of the Commission.
 - Ms. Hudson – Want to ensure that a committee also examines the proposed replacement for the LEOBR and the community review board that is part of that legislation.

4. Public Forum

- Ms. Mirza – Part of the Commission’s duties is to hold a public forum each year. Propose that the first forum take place on December 7. Should make sure that community outreach happens in multiple languages taking into account the diversity of the County. Hope it is a chance for the public to share their stories and an opportunity to invite key individuals to speak and answer questions. Have gotten feedback from individuals/communities/organizations that PAC would like to see represented. If anyone has other suggestions then to please send them to Shabab/Dalbin.
- Mr. Ricks – No mention of the Citizen Academy for the Commission. This will help the PAC understand a lot of the issues that have been discussed today. Also, will forums be virtual?
 - i. Ms. Mirza – Mr. Camacho sent the proposed dates for the PAC Citizen Academy. They will be on

consecutive Wednesdays starting November 4 but will not have sessions the weeks of holidays. These dates will be sent in a follow up email. The forum will be over zoom or another platform.

- Ms. Branson – Want to ensure that PAC members will be notified when the recorded Citizen Academy sessions are made available in case members cannot attend the live sessions. Second, with regards to the forum, while it is good to hear from people on their individual concerns and interactions with the police, two hours of storytelling will not really inform us on the issues that need to be addressed. Weary that if the forum is structured only as a way for people to tell their stories, people may expect the PAC to respond in some way. Need to think about the composition of the testimony and the PAC’s response to some of the issues that may be raised.

5. Social Media:

- Mr. Osorio – One idea when considering in engaging youth and multilingual folks is to use social media to share graphics and briefs to explain complex issues like LEOBR that can be widely shared. The other idea is using the program Anchor to record short segments on police issues in audio form and then post it to the PAC website. Provides a different way to engage with folks that is not watching an hour and half meeting on the computer. This may also help with the public forum by allowing the community to understand what the PAC has been discussing and be more comfortable sharing related stories/issues based on what they know the PAC has been discussing.
- Ms. Hudson – Perhaps also consider using Twitter to give people easy access to what the PAC is doing.
 - i. Mr. Osorio – believes it provides a good alternative medium for the PAC to interact with the community.
 - ii. Ms. Salazar – Emphasize that MoCo is not insulated from what is going on around the country and that the issues being seen across the country are also present here.
 - iii. Dr. Gaster – Concerned about Twitter as it is an instant response medium where people expect a rapid response. The PAC are not experts that cannot respond on behalf of MCPD or MCG. PAC is here to do measured work. Wants to connect with the community in as many different ways as possible but also think that Ms. Branson’s point is valid that people may be disappointed in the responses they receive.
 - iv. Ms. Hudson – Understand the concerns but as a former teacher, teachers use Twitter to share ideas and improve their field, but this would require more thought on how it could be used.
 - v. Ms. Mirza – Yes, would need to be very intentional on how Twitter would be used.
 - vi. Mr. Ricks – Agree with Dr. Gaster’s concerns. Also, hope the Commission is taking the perspective that we do not have the worst police dept in the country but that we have a department that we want to help make improvements.
 - vii. Ms. Branson – Believe we can’t do Twitter because there is no one who should be speaking for the Commission per se in a social media format. Not empowered to speak to the public on what the Commission may or may not do. This has the potential to undermine the work of the Commission. The subject matter we are covering is new but the format and the process is old and is a format that has yielded good results. We don’t have to remake the wheel but need to be transparent in a different age.
 - viii. Ms. Hudson - Twitter was just one idea on how the PAC could potentially use technology to increase transparency and not for any one person to be a spokesperson for the Commission.
- Ms. Salazar – Want to ensure that we are constantly challenging the existing structures that continue to marginalize communities. The PAC should strive to reach communities in every way possible.

6. New Business:

- Ms. Mirza - Council President Katz has requested that the PAC review and comment on Bill 34-20 – Police – Disciplinary Procedures – Collective Bargaining. As such, we would like to call a meeting at the same time next week on Monday. Understand that this is very short notice and some may not be able to attend so also want to take advantage of the new intra-commission process mentioned to get feedback.
- Ms. Branson – Would like more information on what Council President Katz is asking for. Would like the bill text and the memo sent to Councilmembers with an analysis of the bill. Believe that this Commission

is not an advocacy organization and that it would be problematic and endanger the rest of the Commission's work if it were to take a position on this bill.

- Mr. Osorio – Believe that the Commission is being asked to take a position because we are Council's appointed Policing Advisory Commission and if we are not in favor then it says something about the bill. Councilmember Reimer also reached out to folks individually to submit testimony in support of the bill. This will not be the last time the PAC is asked to comment on a bill.
- Ms. Branson – Don't think the charge of the Commission includes weighing in on individual pieces of legislation. We can set a precedent now not to do things that will undermine the long-term work of the Commission.
 - i. Mr. Osorio – One of the Commission's duties is defined as "advise the Council on policing matters, provide information on best practices, recommend policies, programs, legislation or regulations"
 - ii. Ms. Branson – Do not believe that this means in real time. If we decide to weigh in then would like a vote.
- Ms. Hudson – Would like an opportunity to read the bill and other documents regarding the bill. Don't think anyone wants to harm the effectiveness of the Commission or act hastily on anything.
- Ms. Mirza – Do think that if the Commission were to take action on a piece of legislation, a vote is necessary to act as a body.

7. Meeting Adjourned: Meeting was Adjourned by the Chair at 8:12pm