



Policing Advisory Commission
Monday, December 14, 2020
Virtual Meeting
6:30 – 8:00 pm
Meeting Minutes

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

Commission Members Absent: None

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

Support Staff: Carlos Camacho, Susan Farag

Guests: Francha Davis, (Commission on Juvenile Justice) Alicja Nutting (MoCo League of Women Voters Observer Corps), Nicholas Augustine (MCPD), Joy Nurmi (Chief of Staff for Councilmember Gabe Albronz)

Meeting was called to order at 6:35

Agenda:

- 1. Attendance and Recording of Meeting:** Mr. Camacho took attendance and began recording the meeting.
- 2. Administrative Updates:**
 - i. Ms. Mirza – Please feel free to tell people about the Commission. Feel free to share your views but also remind folks that these are not necessarily the views of the Commission.
 - ii. PAC members took a minute to check in with each other and provide personal updates as this was the last meeting of the year.
 - iii. Please respond to the Google Feedback Form. Responses are open until Wed for feedback. This is a way to share your thoughts on what has been working, additional things we can be doing, and set ourselves up for continuing success.
 - iv. Minutes from the November 9, 2020 meeting were approved unanimously by the Commission.
 - v. Ms. Mirza - Reminder to share subcommittee meeting times, links to online meetings, and minutes with Carlos to make those public. Let us know if you have any issues setting up a meeting and we can help with that.
 - vi. Data Requests
 - Traffic Enforcement Request - sent on November 10 and awaiting response.
 - IAD data on serious police officer involved incidents and the type of discipline administered to officers - sent on November 6 and response provided on December 8

3. Subcommittees Updates (5 minutes to present updates and 5 minutes for questions) –

- i. School Resource Officers Subcommittee
 - a. Mr. Osorio – Young People for Progress (YPP) is having a town hall that will be discussing the SRO legislation in both MoCo and at the State level – Del. Jheanelle Wilkins will introduce legislation at the state level to remove SROs from schools. Parents and community members will speak at this event. Subcommittee met with YPP to discuss their position and will follow up with them after their presentation on Wednesday.
- ii. Emergency Response Subcommittee
 - a. Ms. Lynn (Subcommittee Chair) - Met once since the last PAC meeting. Shared the minutes. Had several discussion points:
 - i. Mobile Crisis Teams consisting of an officer and someone with mental health experience and the pros and cons of this situation (e.g. added risk of sending an untrained person into a dangerous situation). Agreed that one Mobile Crisis Team is not enough for the County.
 - ii. Discussed a voluntary database for folks with a history of mental health issues to add their information so that emergency response professionals can know and so that this information can be shared among County agencies. There is the issue that some people may not want others to know this information.
 - iii. Reached out to the 911 Call Center but did not get a response so perhaps need help from Sgt. Mullaney (Citizen Academy) or Carlos to reach out and get a response.
 - iv. Discussed trust issues among various populations and the police.
 - v. Ms. Mirza was going to reach out to the Silver Spring Justice Coalition and Ms. Lynn to some Autism organizations. Would also like to connect with Sergeant Brewer to get the union/police perspective.
 - vi. Wanted to mention two pieces of Federal legislation – 1) Human-services Emergency Logistic Program (HELP) Act, which will provide funds to states to improve their 211 (non-emergency call systems); and 2) Safe Interactions Act, which would fund training of law enforcement on having safe interactions with people with disabilities. This would be an 8 hour program, half of which would need to be taught by folks with mental disabilities.
 - b. Mr. Ricks – These types of situations are very prevalent in the County, just this week police were called to a scene to assist someone with mental health issues and they started shooting. This is my concern with regards to sending a social worker to these situations without an officer.
 - i. Ms. Lynn – not proposing that social workers respond without officers but with officers.
 - c. Mr. Reid – How are we looking at funding decisions and restrictions? Perhaps need to explore if funding more mental health positions is possible?
 - d. Ms. Mirza – While we were not asked specifically to look at legislation at the Federal level it is within our purview to send a letter to the Council making them aware of these bills and how they could help with regards to funding.
 - e. Dr. Gaster – All the things we examine and recommend will have some budgetary implication but suggest that we postpone discussion of budgetary issues until the PAC has determined the necessary recommendations and then we can figure out how we can pay for it.

- iii. Discretionary Policing Subcommittee
 - a. Dr. Gaster – Have not met again since the last PAC meeting, have been waiting for the information request on traffic enforcement to be answered. In the meantime, will be looking at the data dictionary sent by MCPD. Will focus on traffic stops, pedestrian stops, and then other discretionary interactions.
 - b. Ms. Branson – We were able to get some information on traffic stops from the Citizen Academy presentation but do need to circle back for follow up. Bigger picture, what are the goals of the subcommittee? What should we expect to produce and how will what comes out of this be incorporated into the recommendations and/or report that the PAC will publish? Does the PAC plan on submitting an interim report?
 - c. Ms. Mirza – I think we do want to create and hand over some type of document and are open to suggestions on what that will look like. We are operating under the understanding that the PAC will pass on recommendations to the Council but how that is done may be developed as we go along. Also, in the meantime we may want to write a letter on the pieces of legislations introduced by the Council that the PAC is reviewing.
- iv. Hiring and Discipline Subcommittee
 - a. Ms. Hudson – Met twice in December. Discussed LEOBR. Also, discussed racial bias concerns in hiring and recruitment. Sent an inquiry to Carlos regarding finding information on any psychological tests/screening instruments used for hiring to identify racial bias. Also, discussed SROs. Are looking into getting a presenter from the MD State Police Standards and Training Commission and also someone else to discuss Internal Affairs processes.
 - i. Also, expressed concerns regarding the Citizen Academy in terms of the depth of presentations and some specific comments made by presenters.
 - b. Mr. Sterling – Wrote a summary of the issues that we discussed with Law Professor Christy Lopez, who focuses on police accountability. Trying to understand more of the issues regarding Bill 34-20.
 - c. Ms. Fredrickson – Think it would be appropriate for there to be an independent review of the Citizen Academy to better understand whether MCPD is accomplishing its goals.
 - i. Ms. Mirza – One of the questions in the Google Forms addresses the Citizen Academy so we can hold another conversation on this topic.

4. Input from Ex-Officio Members –

- i. Sergeant Brewer – Not directly involved in the Citizen Academy but is involved in officer in-service training and would like to hear the questions/concerns that folks have.
 - Dr. Gaster – Do you have a handout that shows all of the annual in-service training that officers receive?
 - Sgt. Brewer - Can provide the in-service training program of instruction (it is a bit different due to COVID) and can also provide the planned program of instruction for next year, and the State and CALEA training requirements that MCPD adheres to.
- ii. Chief Jones
 - Ms. Hudson – Chief Jones mentioned that officers went to the National African American Museum of History and Culture, was there a follow up assessment to show what officer learned from their experience?

- Chief Jones – Did not formally follow-up with officers but the training staff did follow-up with the recruits that were taken and did an overview and got their feedback. Also, had a debrief/discussion with the Executive staff that went. But it is a great idea to do some sort of formal follow-up assessment with officers in the future.
- Chief Jones – To give a brief update, the MCPD audit has begun with the consultant that was hired but the County. Also, apologize for the delay on the data request but MCPD has been flooded with information requests. Should have the traffic enforcement data this week. Understand that there are a lot of questions with regards to SROs, spoke with the County Executive and MCPS staff regarding the SRO legislation and MCPS' report on the SRO program. Still believe there is a need for a partnership between MCPD and MCPS but are always open to improving programs. Want to remind the PAC that we are here for you all as a resource.
- Mr. Reid – How much discretion do you have in deciding what gets communicated out to the public? What can we directly impact and help in communicating the positive aspects of policing?
 - Chief Jones – MCPD has its own Public Information Office. We are currently changing the dynamic of this office by hiring a civilian Assistant Chief to oversee the unit. Have been focusing on messaging. Hoping to hire this person in the next 2/3 months and hope to see a change in messaging on different platforms.
- Mr. Sterling – Want to ask about problem-oriented policing. Are officers encouraged to take the initiative to find solutions that are intended to benefit the community outside of enforcement duties?
 - Chief Jones – We try to work with external partners, including county agencies, to develop solutions to issues that are somewhat outside the purview of the police or that spill over into other areas that are not strictly law enforcement.
 - Dr. Gaster - Seems like there may be a need for a high-level liaison in or near the office of the Chief Executive who can act as the connector.

5. Presentations of Interest –

- i. Ms. Mirza – Want to remind the PAC that there are great presentations for the Commission to review on their own time:
 - Results from survey of county residents (fielded by Reimagining Public Safety Task Force and County Executive).
 - December 3 public forum hosted by Reimagining Public Safety Task Force
 - Presentation on racial equity by County's Chief Equity Officer, Tiffany Ward

6. Pending Legislation –

- i. Ms. Mirza – Hope that starting next month we can hear back from the subcommittees on the pending legislation. Want to draft a letter with analysis and recommendations/endorsement of the following bills:
 1. Bill 34-20, Police – Disciplinary Procedures, referred to Subcommittee on Hiring and Discipline
 2. Bill 45-20, Police – Community Policing – Data, to be referred to Subcommittee on Discretionary Policing,
 3. Bill 46-20, Police – School Resources Officers – Prohibited, to be referred to Subcommittee on School Resource Officers

- ii. Ms. Sandi – Bills are pressing so going through the subcommittee may hinder the possibility of a bill be passed. Can we set a tighter timeline because worry that we will take too long.
- iii. Mr. Osorio – Myself and Shabab have discussed creating a process, for example whereby we get notified of a bill being introduced and then that bill is automatically referred to a subcommittee to report back in 20/30 days and then the PAC can decide whether to endorse the bill or not. Need to balance being cautious with also doing things in a timely manner especially when other groups are putting out reports and things keep progressing quickly.
- iv. Ms. Hudson – How are we supposed to be commenting on these bills?
- v. Ms. Mirza – It may be helpful if we have another meeting in early January to discuss the specific pieces of legislation so that we have enough time to comment before the public hearing. The current Google Form does not ask for feedback on the legislation.
- vi. Ms. Branson - Suggest we normalize any process that we do ultimately decide on. This shouldn't be ad hoc.
- vii. Dr. Gaster – Want to second what Cherri said. Also, everything the PAC does and sees needs to be posted to Teams. Shabab and Dalbin could propose a formal structure and the PAC could comment.

7. New Business

- i. Ms. Lynn – Wanted to ensure that it was appropriate for me to summarize and share the minutes/updates from the other subcommittees with organizations and folks we talk to outside the Commission.
- ii. Dr. Gaster – Finding ways to ensure we have time to hear from MCPD staff. Make sure that we find ways to have those meetings with the relevant staff members.
- iii. Mr. Osorio – One thing that Shabab and I have discussed is scheduling a time/meeting just for the PAC to speak with MCPD staff regarding any questions the Commission may have.
 - Ms. Branson – That's a good idea but it could get unwieldy with a large group asking many different questions. Alternatively, people could submit questions to Dalbin/Shabab in writing and you could detect similar themes, group questions together, and then submit those to MCPD in advance.
 - Mr. Osorio – Like that suggestion and propose that we try a process whereby PAC emails Carlos with any questions you may have by next Monday, December 21 and then myself and Shabab will group the questions into different themes, submit to MCPD, and then we can decide on a date to meet to get these questions answered.
- iv. Ms. Mirza – Agree that it is important to get input and have presentations from MCPD staff, it is also very important to get feedback from those who are experiencing policing. Could we also pose some of these same questions to those who have had these experiences with MCPD?
- v. Dr. Gaster – Wonder if we are going to be able to put up a public comment form on the website somewhere? Something that could hopefully include video.
- vi. Ms. Mirza – Completely agree, and this is something that was included in the Google Form for feedback. It is in our Authorizing statute that we must receive comments and input from the public.
 - Mr. Camacho – Believe creating this comment form is feasible and will look into it but we also need to be aware that we can't make a blanket assurance that any comments submitted will not be published anywhere because all of these comments would be subject to public disclosure in the case of an MPIO request.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:01pm.