



Policing Advisory Commission
Monday, March 23, 2021
Virtual Meeting
6:30 – 7:30 pm
Meeting Minutes

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

Commission Members Absent: Caroline Fredrickson, Justice Reid

Ex Officio Members Present: Sergeant Cate Brewer (FOP representative), Captain Stacy Flynn (designee for Chief Jones)

Support Staff: Carlos Camacho, Susan Farag

Guests: Sonya Turner (MoCo Resident), Sherif Almiggaber (MCPD), Dinesh Patil (MCPD), Willie Parker-Loan (MCPD)

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm

Agenda:

1. Attendance and Recording of Meeting: Mr. Camacho took attendance and began recording the meeting. All guests were asked to enter their name and any organizational affiliation into the chat. Guests were invited to share their thoughts and comments in the chat with the understanding that Commissioners may keep these for their own records and that comments may be made public in the event of an MPIO request.

2. Administrative Items

- All subcommittee and full PAC meeting details are on the PAC website.
- Next PAC meeting will be on April 12, 2022

3. Guest Speaker – Dr. Felicia Bell

- Dr. Felicia Bell is the senior advisor to Dr. Anthea M. Hartig, the Elizabeth MacMillan Director at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Her full bio can be found [here](#).
- The title of Dr. Bell's presentation was ***"History Doesn't Repeat Itself, but it Often Rhymes:" Recurrences in Policing African Americans***. Below is a summary of the main issues discussed in Dr. Bell's presentation.
 - The title of the presentation is a Mark Twain quote and is meant to convey the fact

that there are patterns in history that keep happening, not exactly how they happened in the past but in a similar manner.

- Fugitive Slave Clause and Acts – authorized local govts (1793) to capture fleeing slaves and return them to their owners because they were seen as property. In 1850, private citizens were then compelled to assist in the capture of runaway slaves.
- Dr. Bell showed an example of a reward poster for a runaway slave from 1853 and also a poster warning African Americans of slave catchers who would capture free African Americans and sell them into slavery.
- Weaponization of animals during the 1800s to hunt humans – “Negro Dogs” – which continued into the 20th Century with canines being used against peaceful protestors in the 60s and even today whereby some police depts have been found to use canines disproportionately against Black and Latino people compared to White people.
- 13th Amendment prohibits slavery or involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime, and allows Congress to enforce this through the passage of laws. However, what actually happens and the laws that get passed and enforced are something different.
 - Black Codes and “Pig Laws” were laws put into place to continue the subjugation of African Americans after the passage of the 13th amendment.
- 14th Amendment makes all persons born or naturalized in the US citizens and prohibits states from abridging the privileges of any citizen nor denying any person life, liberty, or property without due process or equal protection under the law.
- 15th Amendment affirms the right of all citizens to vote regardless of their race or color and allows Congress to enforce this through legislation. Women still cannot vote at this time.
 - Voting Rights Act of 1965 prohibits discriminatory voting practices adopted in many southern states.
- Lynching – defined as punishing, usually by death, for an alleged legal offense or infraction of social mores without due process. Some lesser-known facts are that sometimes there were survivors of lynchings and not all lynchings happened in the South. Also, other ethnic groups were lynched, not just Black people.
 - An infamous lynching was Moore’s Ford Lynching in 1946 in Georgia. This was the last mass lynching in the US. None of the men responsible were ever charged or indicted.
 - Dr. Bell presented a graph showing a pattern where Counties, which at one point had a high number of lynchings, today have a high number of officer-involved shootings of Black people. The relationship is opposite for White people.
- Bus drivers used to be able to police segregated buses and enforce rules with weapons against black people.
- Dr. Bell gave various examples of black people peacefully protesting against segregation and being arrested or physically assaulted by police.
 - This is juxtaposed to when White people peacefully protest and how officers react in non-violent ways.
- Dr. Bell then transitioned to modern examples of positive policing
 - In Newark, NJ no officer fired a firearm at all in 2020 and they attributed this mainly to de-escalation training and a transition away from para-military style training.
 - Support Team Assistance Response (STAR) program in Denver, CO – non-police co-responder program with EMT and mental health professionals/social worker responding to mental health crisis incidents. During the six-month pilot program the STAR team responded to over 700 calls and none required assistance from police and no one was arrested. This reduced police response by 3%.
 - Coffee with a Cop program where citizens can interact positively with police and

discuss issues in a non-confrontational way.

- Dr. Bell also taught a course to recruits in Montgomery, AL called “Policing in a Historic City,” which spoke about policing and their relationship with communities. Recruits were also given a tour of the Rosa Parks Museum. There is a similar program being done in DC with the Metropolitan Police Dept with both veteran officers and new recruits.
- Questions for Dr. Bell
 - Ms. Mirza – At what point in history do we shift our mindset from “these people are doing something illegal” to “these people are doing this to free themselves”?
 - Dr. Bell – Must look at it in the context of the time period in which the action took place. Today we can view these things from a contemporary lens.
 - Mr. Sterling – What was the role of judges in ordering those alleged to be fugitive slaves to be entrusted to the slave catcher and taken back to the place they escaped? What was the burden of proof? How much time was needed to determine whether a fugitive slave was to be returned or not.
 - Dr. Bell – If a fleeing slave was caught, it was a federal not a local judge making this determination but generally there was no burden of proof. If the reward poster matched the description of the slave then the case was closed. Even free African Americans with freedom papers were still deemed to be slaves and sold into slavery.
 - Ms. Salazar-Sandi - What is your perspective on the economic motives and the link between profits and the criminalization of people and crime (e.g. war on crime and for-profit prisons)?
 - a. Dr. Bell – History is rhyming again! Whereas slave catchers used to profit off of slavery, today for-profit prisons and corporations are profiting off of people who are convicted of crimes.
 - Ms. Hudson – What is your opinion/perspective on the incident of the 17-year-old young man in Kenosha, WI who killed several people and was able to walk towards police with a rifle and was not harmed, as well as the insurrection at the Capitol?
 - Dr. Bell – The insurrection at the Capitol was a very difficult issue as I have done extensive research on the forced labor that was used to build the Capitol and then seeing the work of these skilled craftsmen be destroyed by a mob that was trying to prevent Democracy from happening is difficult, full of discrepancies, and disturbing. Hesitant to give an opinion as a historian because my job is to present history and let people decide what they do with that information, but I am very tired of seeing Black men die. We need to figure out how to turn this story around and change things.
 - Mr. Price – When you go to programs and events are folks having conversation regarding the harm of the 13th Amendment whereby people can still be placed into involuntary servitude as long as you can criminalize something?
 - Dr. Bell – People are having these conversations and there are scholars that discuss the relationship between the 13th Amendment and mass incarceration, but it deserves more attention and critical analysis.
 - Ms. Mirza – We will be sure to share the questions in the chat and allow Dr. Bell to follow up by email.

4. Meeting Adjourned at 7:33pm