



ADVISORY COMMISSION ON POLICING

Monday, May 13, 2024

6:30pm to 8:00pm
[Meeting Virtually](#)

Commission members present: Petros Bein, Rev. Brian Bellamy, Cherri Branson, Kristy Daphnis, Mike Donahue, Francisco González, Eva Quittman, John Stephenson, Dr. Terry Walsh, Sean Watson [10 members]

Commission members absent: C. Arthur Blair, Christina DeLane

Ex-officio members present: Sgt. Cate Brewer (FOP), Lt. Jeff Innocenti (MCPD) [2 members]

Support staff: Logan Anbinder, Susan Farag [2 staff]

Guests: Capt. Jason Cokinos (MCPD), Carlene Ponder (CM Mink), Heidi Rhodes (Jews United for Justice) [3 guests]

Total attendees: 17

I. Call to Order and Attendance (6:30 PM)

- Chair Bellamy called the meeting to order at 6:30PM.

II. Approval of Draft Minutes, April (6:31 PM)

- Regarding the April draft minutes, Mr. González indicated that he also volunteered to work on the workplan subcommittee, so the minutes will be amended accordingly. **VOTE: Mr. Donahue moved and Mx. Quittman seconded accepting the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.**

III. Presentation from MCPD – Drone as a First Responder Expansion (6:33 PM)

- Capt. Jason Cokinos presented on MCPD and the Drone as a First Responder (DFR) program. Council staff began recording the meeting shortly after this time. After the presentation, Capt. Cokinos took questions.
- Mr. Stephenson asked how the DFR program would communicate with the Gaithersburg airpark. Capt. Cokinos indicated that the program works to comply with FAA regulations surrounding the airpark.

Advisory Commission on Policing

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- Mx. Quittman asked whether drones have facial recognition capability or whether MCPD plans to implement that capability; Capt. Cokinos indicated that this technology is currently prohibited under MCPD policy. They further asked how MCPD would ensure that DFR is not used to respond to first amendment behavior by students; Capt. Cokinos indicated that MCPD has never used a drone as part of its public order response.
- Vice Chair Branson asked what effect, if any, an anticipated decrease in the number of 911 operators would have on the effectiveness of the DFR program. She further asked how, if at all, a private party could request video from the drones be linked to police body-worn cameras (BWCs) or dashboard cameras if useful. She also asked for information about the percentage of total calls that the drones respond to, and whether there is any private contractor involvement in the operation of the drones. Capt. Cokinos responded as follows:
 - An MCPD deputy director of special operations provides oversight of the DFR program. The contractor position is the drone operator on top of the roof at each drone launch site. During an operation, the operator can share operation of the drone to an MCPD controller. Capt. Cokinos suggested that if the program continues, policymakers evaluate whether it is more cost effective to have a contractor or a civilian employee in that role.
 - MCPD has not tallied the total number of calls in the operational area of the drone compared to the number of calls responded to by the drone.
- Chair Bellamy requested that ACP members with additional questions for Capt. Cokinos forward them to Ms. Farag or Mr. Anbinder, who will forward them to MCPD.

IV. Workplan Subcommittee Presentation and Discussion (7:24 PM)

- Mr. Donahue offered to answer questions about the subcommittee's draft work plan.
- Vice Chair Branson suggested the goals section of the workplan be revised to emphasize accountability to the public as opposed to "expectations of public safety stakeholders." **VOTE:** After discussion, Mx. Quittman moved to change the end of the final sentence of the "Goal" section to: "...fostering trust, transparency, accountability, and public service." The motion passed unanimously.
- Chair Bellamy suggested reaching out to the Police Accountability Board (PAB) to ensure that there is not superfluous overlap between the goals of the two bodies. Mr. González suggested establishing a new subcommittee or designating an individual to reach out to the PAB.
- **ACTION:** The workplan subcommittee will meet with Vice Chair Branson to discuss her other feedback on the workplan and will also review the goals of the PAB. Mr. González will also convey his feedback to the subcommittee.

V. Discussion of [Bill 2-24 \("Freedom to Leave Act"\)](#) and Development of Questions for Councilmember Jawando (7:48 PM)

- **VOTE:** Ms. Branson moved and Mr. Stephenson seconded that ACP members send questions for Councilmember Jawando to Ms. Farag no later than June 3rd.

VI. New Business (7:51 PM)

- Ms. Branson inquired whether the ACP has developed a procedure for responding to public comment addressed to the commission. She suggested sending an initial response to messages to indicate that the message was received.

- Mx. Quittman suggested establishing a subcommittee that will meet monthly as needed to discuss messages received by the ACP. Ms. Daphnis suggested that instead of a subcommittee, the Commission could keep a running log of comments and/or add messages to the agenda. Staff has been maintaining a record of comments that have been received so far.
- Mr. Donahue requested information on the status of a number of items requested by the ACP:
 - MCPD's implementation plan for the audit findings of the reimagining policing recommendations
 - Copy of MCPD's Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) accreditation report
 - Information about MCPD's compliance with Maryland Police Accountability Act requirements
- Mr. Donahue asked when the ACP would have the opportunity to develop questions for the County Executive's nominee for MCPD Chief.
- Mr. Bellamy attended a meeting with the Executive's nominee for police chief. Ms. Branson also attended.

VI. Adjournment.

Mr. Donahue moved and Ms. Branson seconded to adjourn. **Meeting was adjourned at 8:10PM.**