

POLICE CITIZEN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

March 11, 2020
Portland High School Library

Members present: Mike Harris, Chair; Emily West; Maria Testa; Luke Beland; Kaylin Kerina (non-voting)

Staff present: Lt. Cliff Strout; Sgt. Chris Dyer; Anne Torregrossa

Public present: Jim Devine, Homeless Voices for Justice

6:03 Call to order.

Motion to approve minutes of January 8, 2020. Seconded. Passed 4-0.

Motion to approve minutes of February 12, 2020. Seconded. Passed 4-0.

Debrief of February 12, 2020 meeting.

Presentation – using pamphlet was good to give overview.

Location – getting to room was difficult, but room itself was fine. Come prepared with signs to help navigate to room.

Feedback from public – Ms. Testa's outreach was the reason that all of the guests attended and she wishes that they had done more. City needs to do more for advertising for the Subcommittee, including social media. Ms. Testa reiterated that Subcommittee needs to go where the people are, sending an email, etc.

Mr. Harris suggested that outreach might include sending announcement of next public meeting to targeted groups.

Ms. West noted that they heard many things that aren't under the PCRS's control, and the Subcommittee should discuss what to do with that information. Much of the feedback came with respect to immigrant communities and fears of police from national events and interactions with other police.

Lt. Strout explained that type of feedback centers around policy issues that take place at the command staff/Chief level.

Chair Harris suggested talking to the Chief and asking about his policy direction in these areas.

Sgt. Dyer talked about the Community Policing centers as a resource for

the communities and to bridge the gap between the public and PD. Chair Harris suggested that it might be important to reach out to organizations that work with new immigrants and understand their work.

Ms. Testa explained that there are many other groups that serve the immigrant population, but felt that the value is to inform the Subcommittee on issues surrounding policing. Ms. Testa feels like there is an opportunity for more listening and communication. Ms. Testa feels like there should be an opportunity to revisit the Subcommittee's purview.

Mr. Harris is interested in ensuring that new immigrants understand the basic functioning of the PCRS, and when they met and what they do.

Mr. Devine shared that he hadn't known about the Subcommittee previously. He was aware of many new Mainers at the meeting. Mr. Devine shared that Homeless Voices for Justice had a productive conversation with former Chief Sauschuck about CT orders from public spaces. HVJ also attends the policy academy every year to train candidates about interactions with homeless individuals. There is also a bill to have homelessness be a protected class under the Maine Human Rights Act. Mr. Devine suggested having a good connection with certain groups who serve new Mainers as well as HVJ. Anna Brewer would be the appropriate contact for HVJ.

Mr. Beland shared that he heard people say that it was valuable to understand there was a complaint process and that mistrust might be overcome by community events bringing the PD and community together. It might be helpful to hear about the community policing program. Chair Harris will contact the Chief to ask for a community policing representative to come talk to the Subcommittee.

Ms. Karina suggests that information needs to be accessible, including translations and interpreters. Ms. Karina also suggested that younger populations might be interested in this, including high schools and universities, including USM, SMCC, etc.

Discussion of next public location meeting at Casco Bay High School. Ms. Testa and Ms. Fournier are still discussing with the Casco Bay principal. Goal is for May meeting there. April meeting will be regular meeting in City Hall.

Discussion of Annual Report. The Subcommittee suggested several changes. Ms. West is going to draft some additional narrative for the report.

6:54 Motion to move into executive session pursuant to 1 M.R.S. § 405(6)(A) to review IA investigations. Seconded. Passed 4-0.

7:18 Motion to come out of executive session. Seconded. Passed 4-0.

Motion to find that IA2019-0012 was thorough, objective, fair, and timely. Seconded. Passed 4-0.

Motion to nominate Ms. West as the new Chair of the Subcommittee. Seconded. Passed 3-0 (Ms. West abstained).

Chair Harris gave parting remarks and thanked everyone for their efforts, including Subcommittee members and staff. The Subcommittee also thanked Chair Harris for his service.

7:21 Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Passed 4-0.