

POLICE CITIZEN REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE

December 9, 2020

Meeting Held Remotely Via Zoom

Members present: Emily West, Chair; Maria Testa; Luke Beland; Kaylin Kerina; Reggie Parson; Rev. Lewis

Staff present: Anne Torregrossa

6:00 Call to order via Zoom.

Motion to accept minutes of November 11, 2020. Seconded. Roll call vote 6-0.

The PCRS discussed the memo from the City Manager to Chair West regarding his changes in response to the PCRS recommendations.

- Rev. Lewis stated that he was appreciative of the process and the results.
- Ms. Testa was not pleased with the results. She felt that the response does not represent what the PCRS had recommended and is counter to the recommendation. The City Manager's plan with respect to the internal use of force committee does not give the community transparency.
- Rev. Lewis expressed concerns that the PCRS keeps spinning its wheels and the all or nothing position is not productive. He would like some additional clarity on the PCRS mission.
- Ms. Testa sees the City Manager's position as no change. She read a text from a friend stating that there was not transparency when he was appointed to a different committee by the City Manager. Ms. Testa feels that City Hall is detached from the public.
- Ms. Testa also heard that the City Manager did not agree to allow the PCRS to review internal complaints, and the last case that the PCRS reviewed shows that internal investigations are not up to par. She wants to present that recommendation back to the City Manager.
- Mr. Parson stated that the parties came together and were fluid in their positions and made progress. This result might not make everyone happy, but it should give hope of progress. Mr. Parson hopes that the City Manager will advertise the position for the internal use of force committee openly.
- Ms. Testa wants to know what the process would be. She would volunteer for the position.
- Ms. West would like to know the process for appointment and whether there are any exclusions for candidates. She has concerns about the all or nothing position. Ms. West has 20 years of experience working with criminal justice agencies and knows what approaches work to get change.
- Ms. Testa feels that there has been no negotiation.
- Rev. Lewis stated that anyone could have made the recommendation regarding the use of force committee. He is concerned about how far the

PCRS thinks its arms reach into City policy. It is important to engage and celebrate progress. We are not at the goal line but have made progress.

The PCRS held public comment.

- Joey Brunelle stated that he agrees with Ms. Testa and feels like this only gives the illusion of representation. He also has concerns about how the representative will be chosen; the Police Department's veto power; any disqualifications; and how the person will be chosen. The process feels secretive.
- Kate Sykes has concerns about how the person is selected and indoctrinated in the Police Department procedures, etc. She did commend the PCRS in their work and encourages the PCRS to go negotiate on behalf of the public. It was telling that the PCRS did not even know there was a use of force committee.
- Em Burnett feels that this was something negotiated by the Police Department because of the ride along and training requirements. The PCRS should push forward.
- Leo Hilton thinks the response from the City Manager is unacceptable and he can't be unbiased. The Government may not support the PCRS but the people have their back. The training expectations are unacceptable.
- Carina Cilluffo stated that the public wants more than this and wants to see the process by which this happened. She wants to know what is going on in City Hall. She wants the PCRS to review what uses of force are occurring and get the full story.
- Hawo M. is shocked at what is going on, quoted Malcolm X, and stated that this is not progress.
- Kristen Cappy stated she is proud of Portland because of the protests and call for the City Manager's resignation, but there is more work to be done.
- Wes stated that he thinks the PCRS should be contentious with the Police and should be criticizing the Police. Some PCRS members should be ashamed.
- Christiana Marvray spoke on behalf of Black Portland organizers. She is tired of telling the City what they need. They have been ignored and told they don't know what they are talking about. The PCRS needs to listen to people and if they're not listening they're not doing their job.
- Todd Blanchette is a South Portland resident who works in Portland. He is concerned that what the PCRS is being offered is a compromise when when a person is abused that person will accept scraps. The PCRS was supposed to be a two-way street and the City Manager's offer is merely scraps. The PCRS should reject the compromise and demand citizen oversight.
- Leea stated that the community has been stating what they want and doesn't want to see the City Manager tear it apart. The City Manager proposal is not a good substitute.

The PCRS then discussed the public comment and next steps.

- Rev. Lewis wants to make a clear distinction between the police oversight process and the internal use of force committee. How the use of force committee operates is different than the PCRS's responsibilities.
- Mr. Parson questioned who the person would be and how they would be chosen. He questioned whether the same advertising process as for boards could be used.
- Ms. Testa thanked the public for their comment and feels that she is speaking into a vacuum. She thinks the community involvement of the PCRS needs to continue and the PCRS structure needs to change. We don't need change because the Police Department is good or bad, oversight is needed for any Police Department. History and structure are problematic and citizen oversight is needed. People should express their displeasure with the memo. The PCRS is not an advocacy organization by design but the community should express.
- Ms. Kerina is frustrated by the memo and happy with the community voices. She feels that they have taken steps backward and wants to make the process more accessible and equitable.
- Ms. West appreciates the public input. She did put public comment after the memo so that people could comment. Emily would like to know what the qualifications would be, and maybe the person needs other types of trainings.
- Rev. Lewis asked how to move forward with recommendations on structural changes.
- Ms. West did say they need to get back to structural changes but did want to respond to the City Manager.
- Mr. Parson has questions around the selection process.

The PCRS then had significant discussions around a response memo to the City Manager, a copy of which is attached.

8:34

Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Roll call vote 6-0.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jon Jennings, City Manager
FROM: Police Citizen Review Subcommittee
DATE: December 9, 2020
RE: PCRS Position on Use of Force Subcommittee

The PCRS stands strong in staying with its original recommendation that the City Manager propose a change to the City Code in line with our recommendation that two citizens be appointed to the Use of Force Committee, and be appointed through the City Council process rather than only be appointed by the City Manager. While we recognize that we did initially recommend that you appoint two citizen members in the interim, your memo suggests that this is the permanent structure, which was not our intention.

We also heard concerns from Committee members and compelling, direct, and explicit public comment about the selection process of the appointee, which highlights why the PCRS recommends appointment through the more transparent City Council process. For example, concerns were raised about how the appointee will be chosen and appointed; whether the Police Department will have veto power over any particular appointee and what the Department's role will be in this process; whether there would be any disqualifications for this person, similar to those that exist for members of the PCRS; how the identity of this citizen will be communicated to the public; and the limited training provided to the individual, rather than a more well-rounded training that could include, for example, civil rights and similar trainings.

We would further ask that you share this memo and our original recommendations with the City Council, and look forward to continuing this dialogue as decisions are made regarding the Use of Force Committee.