



City Council Public Safety Committee ***In-Person and Remote*** - Thursday, September 30, 2021 at 5:30 pm 9/30/2021

Public Safety Committee

Thursday, September 30, 2021

Sharon Bushor Conference Room, City Hall, Burlington, Vermont

MINUTES -(Adopted at Oct. 5 2021 Meeting)

Members Present: Councilor Paul (Chair), Councilor Hightower, Councilor Stromberg (By Phone)

Staff Present: Jared Pellerin (Assistant City Attorney), Jon Murad (Acting Chief of Police)

Meeting called to order at 5:39 p.m.

1. Agenda

1.01 Motion to adopt/amend agenda

Motion to adopt agenda as written.

Motion by Councilor Hightower, Seconded by Councilor Paul.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous/Councilor Paul, Councilor Hightower

No:

1. Public Forum

2.01 Public Forum

- Gene Bergman: Presented his edits to the proposed draft resolution regarding police oversight. Mr. Bergman wishes to see oversight to be expanded beyond citizen complaints. He also encouraged the Committee to adopt his proposed edits which would include the creation of an ad-hoc oversight board that would be separate and distinct from that of the already established Police Commission. **Please see Mr. Bergman's proposed edits contained herein as Attachment A**



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- Grace Pfeil: Echoed Mr. Bergman's sentiments and encouraged the Committee to consider the creation of an ad hoc board instead of instilling these powers with the Police Commission.
- Christie Delphia: Expressed concerns with the fact that the Police Commission has expressed troubles with getting documentation and information from the Police Department, she feels that is also a large issue that needs to be addressed. Spoke to the Committee about the ACLU documents from "last summer" and asked that they review those, she feels there is an absolute need to have an ad hoc board, independent and separate from the Police Department.
- Kyle Blake: Mr. Blake is a member of the Burlington Fire Department and showed up to discuss a letter that he had sent to the Committee members regarding the need for police support on calls responded to by the members of the Burlington Fire Department. Mr. Blake discussed the safety issues that arise as a result of low staffing within the Police Department. He discussed the lack of training on the part of the Fire Department to deal with individuals in dangerous situations and that the Police are trained and better equipped to handle such things, thus the need for them to be available to work as a team (Fire & Police) when responding to specific calls.

1. Minutes

3.01 Approval of Minutes of 9/2/21

Motion by Councilor Hightower, Seconded by Councilor Stromberg.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous/Councilor Stromberg, Councilor Paul, Councilor Hightower

No:

1. Committee Discussion/Possible Action

4.01 Continued Discussion on Police Oversight Resolution

DISCUSSION:

The Committee began the discussion by examining Mr. Bergman's suggested edits to the Police Oversight Resolution. Councilor Hightower discussed that based on NACOLE trainings and other resources she had examined that it didn't seem



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necessary to her to have an additional ad hoc board. She expressed that she thought the Police Commission could independently review police conduct and make recommendations or determinations on discipline.

Councilor Paul brought up that the idea of an ad hoc board had been explored in the past and that it was her recollection that the City Attorney, Eileen Blackwood, had advised that the creation of an ad hoc board would be outside the jurisdiction of the City Council and would require a new Charter provision, thus the better option was to give the police oversight functions to the Police Commission. Councilor Paul asked that the City Attorney's Office review this and report back to the Committee at the next meeting.

Councilor Stromberg felt that the changes were good on the surface but that she would like more time to review, as they had just been proposed and there wasn't much time to fully digest the material. Councilor Stromberg also expressed the desire to review this resolution in conjunction with the CNA Report, that is not yet finalized or a public document.

Councilor Paul agreed and proposed that the Committee put a pin in their discussion until the CNA report became public and to provide time for the City Attorney's Office to review the possibility of creating an ad hoc board. Councilors Stromberg and Hightower were in agreement that the Committee should meet again to discuss further changes.

Committee members agreed to hold off on any action on the resolution and set a time to revisit it, on Tuesday, October 5, 2021 at 5:30pm.

1. **Any Other Business**

The Committee set their next meeting for Tuesday, October 5, 2021 at 5:30pm, place was to be determined.

1. **Adjournment**

Motion to Adjourn by Councilor Stromberg, Seconded by Councilor Hightower.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous/Councilor Paul, Councilor Stromberg. Councilor Hightower

No:





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The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.