



CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE - The meeting will be entirely Remote with Virtual Access: Link to join Via zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83206222666?pwd=RnpHbWd2MEQwWGZDQURNZGI3cW5ZUT09>; Meeting ID: -----

Public Safety Committee (held via Zoom)

June 18, 2020

Minutes

Committee Members: Councilors Perri Freeman (PF)(Chair); Franklin Paulino (FP); Zoraya Hightower (ZH).

Others Present: Richard Haesler (RH), City Attorney's Office (Committee Staff); Acting Police Chief John Murad (JM), Burlington Police Department, Burlington Fire Chief, Steve Locke (SL), L. Terhune (LT); M. Sullivan (MS)

At 3:46 p.m. Chair Freeman commenced the meeting. Announces that due to technical difficulties in getting this virtual meeting started, Public Forum will be offered in keeping with the agenda but will be continued and offered again at the back end of the meeting to ensure that anyone who wants to speak is afforded the opportunity.

1. **Agenda:** Motion by ZH

Second by FP; passes 3-0

1. **Approval of minutes of 1/8/2020:**

Motion by FP; second by ZH– passes 3-0

1. **Public Forum:**

None at this time. Continued to after Agenda Item # 4

1. **Organizational Meeting – Discussion and Priority setting for the coming year**





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Intro by Chair Freeman – willing to give broad consideration of possible topic.

ZH: How active is this committee generally speaking?

PF: It varies but my sense is we can be liberal in considering topics we might take up. Last year the committee primarily focused on shelter on public lands – some piece of that issue likely remains.

FP: My review of past minutes seems to indicate that the Committee certainly focuses on Fire Department issues – some Police Department – but I believe the Police Commission focuses there. So maybe we want to ask – What is our role?

What does the administration see as our role?

PF: It might be helpful to ask our staff, RH, what has this committee taken up over the years?

RH: I have staffed the committee for 12 or 13 years and the topics of concern are wide and largely dictated by issues of public concern relating to public health and safety – so that most recently focused on shelters and encampments for the homeless but it has varied considerable – we spent a lot of time on fluoridation of water – we took up fire station relocation – we spent considerable time on drop boxes for hypodermic needles. I should also note that I am not aware of the policies of the new City Council president. I know Presidents Wright and Knodell both had some sort of requirement of signoff before a particular issue could be taken up by a committee – I don't know what President Tracy's policy is.

PF: We can work within a broad scope as far as I'm concerned.

ZH: I would be interested in/offer to attend a few Police and Fire Commission meeting and that might inform some topics of consideration.

FP: I also recognize that there will be agenda items that come to us from Departments – where Departments are seeking our sponsorship of City Council agenda items. And I'm good with that as a focus. Public Safety tax – Fire Department – approved by the voters overwhelmingly – create more firefighter positions for the City –

SL: We do bring work to the City – a couple of times a year – there is a resolution re Fire Department matters – acceptance of grants, etc. – that we come to you with.



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JM: Police Department too. And I welcome any invitation to address community concern. Example: Use of force policy

FP: I believe that the Mayor's proposal to increase social service positions implicate public safety issues – so to invite Howard Human Services seems like something we could be doing.

PF: So I feel like for now we could be looking at setting a monthly meeting and after Public Forum we will discuss next meeting.

1. Public Forum (continued):

PF: We can now hear from the public if any would like to. Some may have joined us now that weren't here or if you were here and want to speak now anyway.

No one?

RH: A Michael Gaffney had emailed and indicated that he intended to speak – his follow-up email indicated that he was having technical difficulties and might be late. He did send a summary of what he was going to speak about.

1. Other business:

PF: Next meeting we should take up Police Department Summary Report of the Special Committee re Policing Practices.

Are we looking for a meeting at five o'clock? Is that a good time for everyone.

Discussion

Proposed date of Tuesday July 7, at 5:00 p.m.





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Main agenda item – discussion/review of the special committee's report on policing practices

RH: As a last matter of business – Mr. Gaffney has not joined us but I will include his emailed summary as an attachment to the meeting minutes. Additionally, I have finally figured out how to operate the chat room on this meeting site – as I was alerted that one of our attendees – Lea Terhune - was using the chat site to address some of the technical issue the City was having here with this meeting – and I am reading them now – Is there anything you want to say.

I guess we are all set

1.
 - i. **Adjournment**

(PF) ok, we will look for the setting of a next meeting – do I have a motion to adjourn?

(ZH) moves

(FP) second

Motion passes 3-0

Meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.

Michael Gaffney re Public Forum Statement:





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Hello Mr. Haesler,

I would like to speak on the budget and absurd calls to eviscerate our law enforcement without a sensible replacement plan, tonight if possible.

My proposed statement reads roughly as follows:

Hello, my name is Michael Gaffney, I'm an African-American mixed with European ancestry, and I hope it's clear by my voice I'm a man.

I'd first like to start by taking the side of the most oppressed ones in this forum, commending those officers of the Burlington Police Department who work tirelessly towards Justice, while condemning those who stand in the way of a better world, most notably the brutalizers with badges who have been repeatedly named throughout this forum. It's disgusting that they're not even relegated to desk duty, with the blood on their hands. I will note that I've suffered injustice at the hands of officers of many institutions, and yet never has there been a BPD badge behind those hands.

I must add, I'm rather disappointed by the direction of this forum, and I'd like to commend the patience of Mayor Miro and the Councillors (in particular Councilor Deng). Rather than engage in constructive discourse about solutions which will ensure our police are acting justly, we seem to have been hijacked by practically neocolonialist pressure groups of out-of-state students from low-crime cities reciting talking points. We all agree change is needed. The point is to discuss **what** that change ought to be.

Given that this is a **budget** meeting, rather than the much-needed forum on changes to policing, I propose as a starting point that taxpayers pay more or that thirty percent of funds be moved to providing social necessities, i.e., job training, free business licenses and assistance for low income individuals, and guaranteed job opportunities for Burlingtonians, preferably by way of non-governmental groups to achieve maximum leverage per dollar--FDR had to establish the WPA, and we will likely need to do something shrewder and greater.

It's truly tragic that the pains of Maafaa are still mirrored worldwide, and so many youth, especially, feel a need to break the law in order to go to bed with food in their stomach, and are then subjected to brutal treatment rather than provided with Hope. While class-reductionism is incorrect, strictu sensu, 80% of the ostensibly racial problems we see **are** in fact socioeconomic, and we must address these first, and then the remaining issues--I'm sorry, starvation takes precedence over microaggressions (they're micro- for a reason). We must work to ensure that there is a basic standard of living and equality



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for all, rather than succumbing to divisiveness. That said, the problem of injustice by bureaucrats is a human problem, transcending the treatment of and injustices against the involuntary and voluntary African diaspora. It is our responsibility to seek the good for all Africans and for everybody, by working for universal principles emblazoned on our hearts by our Creator, and it is in that Spirit which I hope this forum will continue.

I'll now take a second to ask that the Hand of our Creator, which is Unity, Mercy, and Justice guide the remaining discussions. God Bless Burlington, and God bless all those demonstrating the virtue of Justice here tonight.

Rest assured, the statement will be delivered in the allotted time, after extensive rehearsal.

Best regards,

Michael Gaffney

P.S.

Thank you for your past work on my behalf and in pursuit of Justice.

P.S.S.

Ideally, we should have an 802 number for these meetings for those without long distance access.

