



CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

2/16/2017

Public Safety Committee

February 16, 2017

Minutes

Committee Members: Councilors Sara Giannoni (SG) (chair); Selene Coburn (SC); David Hartnett (DH)

Additional City Staff: Richard Haesler (RH), City Attorney's Office

Also Present: Sarah Kenney (Police Commission); Christine Longmore (Police Commission); Max Tracy (City Council); Adam Roof (City Council); Brian Lowe (BL) (Mayor's Office); Shawn Burke (BPD); Dan Gilligan (BPD); Jaada Longmore; Gabriel Brunelle; Liz Curry

At 6:36 p.m. Chair Giannoni commenced the meeting.

1. **Agenda:** motion to amend by DH – move Item 4.02 ahead to Item 3 – move Item 3 Public Forum to 4.01 and each subsequent Item is moved in turn one item ahead on the agenda. Second by SC motion to amend passes 3 to 0

Motion to adopt agenda as amended by SC, second by DH – passes 3 to 0.

1. **Approval of minutes of 1/3/17:** Motion to Amend to correct misspelling of Phil Grenon's name and reference to subcommittee meeting twice a week should be twice a month.

RH to make correction

Motion by DH; Second by SC – passes 3 to 0.

Motion to accept minutes as amended by DH; second by SC – Motion passes 3 to 0.





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1. **Committee Discussion – Domestic Abuse/Sexual Violence: Discussion of Possible Trainings for Bystanders**

Adam Roof speaks – will come back at a future meeting as it is clear that there will not be sufficient time to attend to this item this evening – We have found that there is interest among the nightspots in the community for providing training sessions at various establishments. There was a work session at the License Committee last month and we are excited to be coming to the committee next. Thank you.

1. **Public Forum**

2. Sarah Kenney (SK) – from Police Commission – looking to create meaningful opportunity for public input

1. Liz Curry (LC) – Burlington School Board – See similarities in resolution of school oversight issues re the school board task force and what is being discussed here – certainly available to provide insights into how the school board proceeded

1. Max Tracy (MT) – Concerns – how is SPAC justified – is it the best? If so, why? If these questions are entertained and answered and it really is the best then it will win out – but we seem to be proceeding without asking these questions.

1. **Committee Discussion – Discussion of Resolution re: Appoint Task Force to Assess Responsibilities of Police Commission Using Civilian Oversight Models (as amended on 2/6/17)**

SG – our intention is at its root to find more ways for the community and our police to have a constructive relationship – where community members want to seek out police that they feel comfortable with their concerns – invites the other committee members to make opening remarks if they so choose.

SC – Appreciates the public comments – time has elapsed since the diversity equity report and this is not a topic which has had a rich public discussion thus far – we need to view this as an opportunity to explore options and avenues and to do so with community engagement – less concerned with what the process is than assuring that it actually affords the opportunities for the public input.

DH – has concerns about commissions generally – we have so many commissions that may not be meeting the needs of the community or sectors of our community – need to understand how these commissions are functioning or not



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functioning – and where we determine that there are needs, we need to identify and figure out what can be done.

SC – clarifies her position to speak to how this type of thinking might be brought to bear on the resolution as passed.

SG – We will want to hear from the Police Department as well as the Mayor's Office.

BL (for Mayor's Office): Want to clarify – the Diversity Equity Report recommendation in support of SPAC actually came from a process of community engagement – with consideration of many proposals – so we don't really want to go back – rather we want to see if community engagement here at the Public Safety Committee and then at the Police Commission and then before the full Council can identify through public discussions elements to address and make better.

Shawn Burke (SB) (BPD) – spoke with the chief – we are prepared to participate and work toward a meaningful outcome – but want to be mindful that proposed alternatives won't impact the collective bargaining package already in place.

Adam Roof (AR)(City Councilor) Sees that there is a need for additional public input – How is this best done? What does that look like given the Mayor's proposal?

BL – this series of meetings is designed to elicit public engagement

SC – Three meeting are not enough – just one meeting with the Public Safety Committee will not be enough – I have looked at the School district's diversity equity recommendations – allows the school commission to look at the date and see if progress is being made – if not, they ask the school administrative to address re what can be done

Dan Gilligan (DG) (BPD) – Vice Chair of Police Association – follows up on SB's concerns that proposal not negatively impact collective bargaining.

LC – the school commission was positioned to basically say 'here is the data and here are the goals' make it happen – define the goal – build around that – mitigate the problem – And as far as task force concerns, I'm surprised that people do not want to go that route – there really are not that many in the city that I am aware of – and it will help take the tension out of the air.

SB – I want to point out that we have data sharing now – the transparency of the department under this chief is unprecedented – making great strides - so yes we want a public process and yes we want to get it right but we want to





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keep moving forward and not bog down and produce a process for oversight in a timely way

SC – the Mayor’s proposal falls short of what I’m looking for – where is there an opportunity for anyone else’s ideas to be considered? Need more equitable access

Christine Longmore (CL) – Agrees – The resulting process can and should be a collaborative thing.

SG – There was a meeting at the library presenting use of force data – it was very impressive.

CL – Yes. Race, Mental Health. Substance Abuse. The data is clear that these groups are disparately impacted.

MT – So let’s not just check the box – we have a moment right now to get it right – not inviting a conversation is a continuance of a resistant mind set.

AR – But I haven’t heard any other ideas – what would a taskforce look like? How would it roll out?

SC – A taskforce assures that many stakeholders will be involved in crafting the nature/composition of the resulting body.

BL – I want to point out that the original proposal came from the Diversity Equity plan

SG – Should we be looking at going to different locations? Some might not be comfortable coming to City Hall.

SK – Data release is great – it’s overwhelming in some respects – but we need to know – in the face of this data, what do we want? What are the goals? And check the capacity/resources for accomplishing the goals – example: fair and impartial policing policy – let’s not repeat that.

DH – Is there a way to take the administration’s proposal and also look to input other proposals – and get results in 3 to 6 months.

SG – Interested in a hybrid with the administration proposal – if there are a lot of people saying we need more time –





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would police consider task force if you were assured it wasn't going to involve discipline/ impact collective bargaining?

SC – At some point the City will need to filter, but let's not start there – let's fashion how to have a full and complete discussion but mindful that practical measures will need to be taken – and inclusion of the impacted entities i.e. the police themselves – why just one proposal? Having a lot could be helpful.

Gabriel Brunelle (GB) – have been listening and trying to identify stakeholders to be involved in the discussion/taskforce – here's what I have as a start –

- Connecting Cultures
- Vermont Cures
- CJC
- Hope Works
- Black Lives Matter
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- LUND
- Administration
- BPD
- School superintendant
- Housing First/COTS
- Howard Center/Street Outreach
- Uncommon Alliance

DH - warns that there is no appetite on the Council for passing a resolution that calls for a taskforce – that is why the committee has the resolution it now has

BL – I think with outreach to specific organizations for input (to include even specific alternative proposals) that to come back to the Public Safety Committee with the Police Commission – maybe a joint hearing – might make sense

SC – Could we put out requests to solicit input – 20th Century Policing Report; SPAC, include Jaada Longmore's report that she is finalizing, etcetera to go along with the Mayor's proposal for discussion of crafting a final

SB – I will have to confer with the Chief – I would caution that some people can be skeptical if the alternatives are proposed or endorsed by the Police Department

SG – utilize CEDO's Community Engagement Specialist possibly – Timeline; Can we let the Police Commission do its work – then return for another hearing here on March 20th.





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DH – Moves to meet March 20 @ 6:30 pm.

SC – second – Motion passes unanimously

1. **Other business**

None

1. **Adjournment**

DH move to adjourn.

SC seconds. Passes unanimously – Meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.