



City Council Public Safety Committee *In-Person and Remote*** - Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 5:15 pm 1/11/2022**

Public Safety Committee

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

Contois Auditorium, City Hall, Burlington, Vermont

FINAL MINUTES

Members Present: Councilor Hightower (Virtual), Councilor Stromberg (Virtual)

Staff Present: Hayley McClenahan (Assistant City Attorney), Dan Richardson (City Attorney), Kerin Durfee (HR Director), Tyeastia Green (REIB Director)

Meeting called to order at 5:15 p.m.

1. Agenda

1.01 Motion to adopt/amend agenda

Motion to adopt agenda as written.

Motion by Councilor Stromberg, Seconded by Councilor Hightower.

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous/ Councilor Hightower, Councilor Stromberg

No:

2. Public Forum

2.01 Public Forum

No one from the public opted to speak during the public forum. The forum was opened at 5:20pm and closed at 5:23pm, seeing no one who wished to be recognized.



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3. Minutes

3.01 Approval of Minutes

No minutes to consider at this meeting.

4. Committee Discussion/Possible Action

4.01 Discussion on CNA Report and Next Steps

DISCUSSION:

Jane stated that perhaps an organization discussion was in order. Zoroya replied that the last meeting had been organizational and that they should just try to get into some substantive discussion.

Discussion about which version on the website was considered final:

Melo Grant asked about the various versions posted on the City's Website

Tyeastia Green responded that one version had changes requested by the Administration. Some requested changes were accepted by CNA and some were refused. If any changes were made, they were only made by CNA. Admin did not make changes unilaterally.

Melo Grant asked if the requested and/or accepted changes represented "best practice". Tyeastia Green responded that she did not believe they did.

Jeff Nick commented generally that CNA did not do a workload analysis in terms of the number of sworn officers needed. He stated that Burlington has just as much if not more retail theft, graffiti, and ordinance violations as any other City this size and less officers to do the work. He stated that the City should consider putting a person of color officer on every shift as a way to address police racism towards community members as a white officer is less likely to behave in a racist way if they have a black officer on duty with them.

Kerin Durfee disagreed with Jeff Nick about that theory. She stated that HR was looking to become more of a partner with BPD in hiring and increasing racially diverse applicants and that HR would be using tactics to recruit minority candidates.

Zoroya Hightower requested that the Committee stay on track and try to move through the recommendations in the report in a linear fashion.

The Committee discussed Rec 1.1, "consider adding cultural competency training to those listed in [the trainings section] of DD03."

Zoroya Hightower asked for input from Oren Bryne and Melo Grant on the PD's position on this recommendation and what training they already have in place.



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Oren Bryne stated he was there in his capacity as BPOA rep and did not know what the Administration had been planning and could not speak for them.

Melo Grant stated that Chief Murad had told the police commission that the Dept had already done significant work on implementing the recommendations but that she did not know the substance of it. Zoroya Hightower asked if the Police Commission could request that information from the Dept. Melo Grant responded and said the request would be better suited coming from the Administration because past requests to the Dept from the PC have gone unanswered.

Tyeastia Green stated that the City's anti-racism training is for all City staff and she considers it basic training. She considers cultural competency training to be a "watered down" version of anti-racism training and that it is not effective. She learned from BPD that a small group of officers went on a trip to Alabama and visited a lynching museum and called that training.

Melo Grant stated that the Police Commission had learned from a speaker who attended one of their meetings that implicit bias training is not effective.

Jeff Nick said that the City should see what other departments are doing for training best practices and copy them. Melo Grant responded and said that Burlington and Winooski are unique due to the racial makeup and need custom training. Melo Grant said that she feels the administration should request from the PD a summary of their trainings to date. Melo Grant said that she knows that data exists showing use of force by officer and race of the subject, but that BPD will not provide it.

Jeff Nick stated that he felt the group was at an impasse with respect to addressing training. Zoroya Hightower disagreed and stated that they had next steps in place.

Zoroya Hightower asked the group to discuss recommendation 1.2, to define and/or give examples for their officers of what indicators of potential biased policing may be so that supervisors may be better alert to it and be able to respond appropriately.

Zoroya Hightower stated that BPD and/or the City statistician should provide 2-3 indicators that are already being tracked so that it can be discussed as part of officers' annual reviews. She stated that the Committee did not want to create extra work for the City and to use indicators already being tracked if possible.

Jane Stromberg and Zoroya Hightower commented that the Committee had been discussing for over an hour and only gotten through two recommendations. Zoroya Hightower asked if there was a way to work on a public google doc to speed up the process. Hayley McClenahan stated that it could be done within confines of open meeting law if it was used as a planning tool and if no action was taken on the document.

Committee moved to discuss recommendation 1.3.1, which is to revise their complaint policy so that all complaints are documented in the same complaint system.

Melo Grant stated that the police commission and BPD are doing extensive work on complaint tracking. Complaints that come in through BPD's website are automatically forwarded to Commissioners. Complaints that come in through other channels are reported to the police commission in executive session. Melo Grant further stated the commissioners needed support for when they ask for information from BPD and do not receive it.

Meeting concluded with an emphasis on finding a way to move through the recommendations in a more efficient manner.

1. Any Other Business



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The Committee discussed that their next meeting would tentatively be held on January 18, 2022 but that they would need to circle back with the Chair of the committee, City Councilor Karen Paul, who was unable to be at the current meeting.

1. Adjournment

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

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Yes: Unanimous/Councilor Stromberg. Councilor Hightower

No:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.