

CITY OF NORWICH
Police Reform
Community Advisory Board (“CAB”)
Meeting Minutes
November 25, 2020
3:00 p.m.
Zoom meeting

PRESENT

Mayor Shawn Sastri
Police Chief Rodney Marsh
Assistant Police Chief Scott Burlison
Aldерwoman Nancy Allaire
Police Officer Brandon Clarke – PBA President
Pastor Jen Westervelt
Adrienne Zornow
Melody Girgenti
Missy Beers
Lynn Murray

Reminder that there will be a 3:30 meeting with MCAT.

Moving Forward

The meeting will be a mix of Zoom and in person meetings at City Hall. Next weeks meeting will be on Tuesday, December 1st at 3:00 pm so that FOR (Friends of Recovery) can present to the group.

Community Survey

Question related to Officers conduct off duty needed to be removed per the Police Union. A question was asked: Should the question relating to rating a Police Officer’s off duty conduct be removed as well. Officer Clarke noted the question can remain on the survey.

Pastor Jen wanted to get insights related to people who have concerns, what are the committee’s thoughts on how to accomplish the goal on off duty conduct. Should we add a note that any allegations should be directed to the Police Chief or the Mayor? She wants to honor the reason for the question and what goal the question had.

Officer Clarke said that there is a system in place for handling complaints either on duty or off duty.

Chief Marsh receives complaints against PO in person, voice mail or emails.

Proposed Future Topic Schedule

If you look on the agenda at the bottom, there is a list of future topics. Some areas are not yet on this list, there are some items that need to be re-visited and there are areas that overlap into other topics.

Proposed topic schedule for next week, Officer Clarke was asked to give us some insight on the purpose of the union. If there are any questions about the contract, we would need to bring them up during this

session. It is important that we read over the contract before the meeting and send any questions to the whole team so we can plan for a discussion with Officer Clarke, Chief Marsh or Asst. Chief Burlison.

On December 9th we will circle back to training and education, leadership and culture and the mission statement.

On December 16th we will discuss the community survey results and re-visit any further issues on the police survey and supporting our officer's wellness and wellbeing.

As we look at our list one specific question is about Lexipol. Does anyone have any questions with what we want to discuss about that topic? There were no questions that were brought up. Pastor Jen made a statement regarding Lexipol and conversations that have happened. If there are any questions about specific policies or the system, we need to address them. If the committee has any questions, please email Pastor Jen so that Chief Marsh can be prepared to discuss with committee.

Pastor Jen asked if there were any concerns with dates and topics that are being proposed and there were no concerns.

Accessing current status of our plan and identifying next steps. We are at a point where we should go back and decide what we are going to propose to the City Common Council. What are the important topics, what is realistic and what should be a long-term goal?

Determining the Role of the Police and Staffing, Budgeting and Equipment.

Do we prioritize what positions are the most important and who should get involved in the final details? Example: We have discussed adding positions for parade and public events, traffic control, animal control, parking violations, secretarial/public relations, and data entry. This is not realistic for all positions to be accepted by the City at one time. Do we feel it would be wise of us to prioritize or suggest one position and which position should that be? We also need to figure out if we talk with the Director of Finance or get a job description together? Do we see one that is a higher priority over others?

Missy stated that the first 4 of 5 could be combined into one position.

Pastor Jen noted that it could be one position that would consist of the parade, public events, traffic control, animal control and parking violations.

Lynn was asked her thoughts, she thought that a parking/dog control position would be fine, but the parade and public events would be too much for one position.

Missy asked if it could be two part time positions instead of one full time position. Lynn said that was a possibility.

Officer Clarke, Chief Marsh and Asst Chief Burlison were asked what position would be helpful.

Officer Clarke would like to see a secretarial position added to help with paperwork and ensure that the officers are back on the streets patrolling. The officers said that having an animal control officers and someone to complete parade and public events, but they felt a secretary would be the best position

Asst Chief Burlison said that someone to do paperwork and the DEMS would be an asset to the police department it would free up the officers and the Chief. He also talked about the need for an animal control parking enforcement officer that would most likely generate revenue for the City.

Pastor Jen wanted to know if it would be feasible to advocate for two positions. The Mayor and Lynn said yes.

Pastor Jen questioned what would need to happen next, does team need to write job descriptions? Do we have positions currently? Who will oversee looking into that?

Officer Clarke has phone calls into different agencies about the Citizen Police Academy and would be willing to ask about job descriptions for a Secretary and Park & Bark Officer. This will be put on the agenda for next week.

MCAT discussion at 3:30 pm with MCAT team and Ruth Roberts.

The discussion centered around mental health and police reform.

Return from meeting at 4:12 pm

Next Step

Officer Clarke is going to ask around about job descriptions related to Secretary, DEMS, and public relation and the Park and Bark.

Ruth Roberts will be looking into MCAT and telemedicine.

Shawn and Lynn will be discussing Dr. Harper's request to meet with the committee regarding mental health and telemedicine.

Section II – Community engagement

Activities that the committee has come up with so far are: Neighborhood watch, Citizens Police Academy, and the School Resource Officer.

What additional information do we need to gather to get these moving forward and what are any concerns that the committee has? How can we address the concerns?

Examples of community bases activities would be: Open houses, coffee with cops, carrying stickers to distribute to children, reinstate bike patrol, basketball games and ride a long.

Asst Chief Burlison noted that the Police department is doing ride a long and handing out stickers to children. Bike Patrol would be getting the right staff and being fully staffed but he believes that bike patrol is a good thing for community policing.

Pastor Jen said that open house, basketball games and coffee with cops needs to start with the police officers. Officer Clarke commented that each officer is different, and it would depend on that officer's comfortability with each activity. He has had conversations with the officers, and they are more than happy to do community events.

Pastor Jen wanted to know if there were any team members that would be interested in working with the police department to start doing coffee with cops, open house, a food drive? We will re-visit next week.

Asst Chief Burlison stated that coffee with cops is a national program and that we would need to get with different restaurants in the City to have them host the event. Pastor Jen said that the Police Department could use the CV Free Space on Silver St. Asst Chief Burlison will looking into the coffee with cops' program and report back next week.

Mayor Sastri will be talking with Alderman Doliver regarding the neighborhood watch program.

Officer Clarke will be looking into the Citizens Police Academy and job descriptions.

Pastor Jen asked about the School Resource Officer or adopt a school program. She wants the members to document any concerns and email them to the team so that research can be done. This subject will be re-visited next week.

Strategies to reduce racial bias and build trust.

Pastor Jen asked the members to look at the final proposal on google drive. Are there any additional resources? Would Lexipol have any policies? Chief Marsh noted that there is a policy from Lexipol and that would be the first policy that is completed.

Proactive Approach to communication

Team members will need to address what a proactive approach to transparency and building trust with the community looks like. An example would be an external organization that is involved with a police officer's use of force. What would this plan look like so we can solidify the plans? Missy wanted to know if there was a board that reviewed Officers use of force situations? Chief Marsh noted that if there is a gross violation, he must bring to the Public Safety Commission that is built into the Common Council.

Adrienne would like to schedule a date to meet with the public and common council to discuss our plans. She was hoping to do this late December of early January.

Closing

Tuesday meeting will involve solidifying what we have discussed and confirming where we are going from here.

Next meeting December 1, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom or in person at City Hall

Closed meeting at 4:35 pm