

CITY OF NORWICH
Police Reform
Community Advisory Board (“CAB”)
Meeting Minutes
February 24, 2021
3:00 p.m.
Zoom meeting.

PRESENT

Police Chief Rodney Marsh
Assistant Police Chief Scott Burlison
Michael Ferrarese – District Attorney
Christine Rudy – First Assistant District Attorney
Police Officer Brandon Clarke – PBA President
Pastor Jen Westervelt
Adrienne Zornow
Missy Beers
Lynn Murray

Other

Introduction:

Lynn – Nancy wanted to know if we are putting in the plan shift-swapping? Pastor Jen – yes, it is in the plan and it is highlighted and was wondering if there was an update on the topic. It seems like the consensus was that should be a change that would not be as difficult to make but she is not sure. Asst Chief Burlison – for shift swapping, it is really an internal thing, we have talked about it we just have to do some final tweaking on it and does not see an issue. Pastor Jen – update the shift swapping policy to allow officers to swap shifts within the same pay period to increase officer wellness and save overtime in the budget.

Reviewing final proposal of the plan and who will be presenting to the City council. Tuesday March 2nd. CAB will be presenting to City council in person at City Court at 6:30 pm. CAB will meet a week from today at 3:00 pm to debrief as a result of the presentation and subsequent meetings will depend on our thoughts after that meeting. Public Forum updated to March 16th at 6:30 pm and council will vote on plan following public comment.

Final Review of Plan

Is it sufficient for team members who will be presenting to bring attention to the information that has been revised, added, or updated as opposed to going through the plan as a whole? Adrienne – we should just call out that was updated and questions the council had after the tentative plan was introduced. Pastor Jen – any concerns? Chief Marsh – are they going to have a copy before the meeting? Lynn – yes. Pastor Jen – As we are going through the plan you will see, while not uniform in color, the additions, revisions, updates, etc. are highlighted, should we denote those areas of the plan to the council when they receive the copy, or should we send them everything and we will just call it out during our presentation. Adrienne – we should just call it out during the presentation because it is going to be a PDF, we have a copy that is highlighted for our reference.

Added: a list of contributing members – reviewed the members names on the final plan.

Guiding Principles were added to the plan. Went over what guiding of principles are, the tenets of community policing and the four pillars of procedural justice. Adrienne – does it make sense to put those procedural justice things in that bullet form, thought that was clearer as a presentation? Pastor Jen – Yes. – Adrienne will present this section.

Who is interested in presenting on Tuesday? Pastor Jen, Melody, Adrienne, Missy, as we go through this, we can tentatively assign areas. Adrienne – should we go over the introduction section as part of the presentation? Pastor Jen – it might be helpful to define community policing because she thinks sometimes people hear community policing and they think you are talking about a neighborhood watch, she is thinking the paragraph right under the heading would be helpful to share, thoughts? Adrienne – she wants to make sure that the council and public understands our definition of community policing, so we have added to the plan.

Police Department Roles and Functions

Add a new Administrative position to support the police department with DEMS input, public relations effort, and office management. A detailed overview of the job duties and functions can be found using the link. As we look at the job duties, because it was modified from the Secretary II position, we were able to add the annual salary amount here in the document, that will not be the case for the dog warden position because that position is just a PDF, does it matter that we do not include the salary in the plan, but it is in the duties document? Lynn – it is OK with the way the plan we just need to be aware that the council might ask. Adrienne – last time they got the plan plus the linked documents and they should have it ahead of time, but they will be aware that it might be a question. Pastor Jen – Chief Marsh back when we put the bullet about the detective position in the plan you were optimistic in thinking this would be something that could be filled in the relative near future, do you have any updates on the detective position? Chief Marsh – interviews are starting Monday morning. Pastor Jen – how long does it typically take once interviews happen to make a hiring decision. Chief Marsh – within a couple of days they have to look at the duty schedule to see what people will need to be moved around depending on who is chosen. Pastor Jen- do we put in any type of update or do we just let this ride as it is and again be prepared to offer that information if it is requested. Adrienne – I think we leave it as is and if it is requested, we fill them in. Pastor Jen -Reinstate parking reinforcement animal control, so basically, we added it as a non-unit position with a proposed salary then we put the amounts depending on experience and we put the previous duties of the role and recommended that they be re-evaluated in order to expand the position to include animal control beyond dogs as well as special details involving set up and tear down of community events, thoughts? Adrienne – looks good. Presenting – Pastor Jen

Opportunity for officers to seek more specialized training including but not limited to canine handling, narcotics, plain clothes street team and then after 3-5 years it is recommend that the council re-evaluate the staffing model of the police department to ensure it is meeting the needs of the community even when the department is fully staffed it is very likely some officers will be on leave, assigned light duty or otherwise unavailable, like any other essential agency like healthcare, our law enforcement agencies needs have plentiful staffing resources in order to meet their obligation to the community if those obligations are not being meet CAB recommends expanding the number of full time officers allotted in the current budget (20) or exploring the additional of part time police officers. Adrienne – She re-tooled that to reflect the priorities the group laid out last time with the preference of adding full time versus part time. Pastor Jen – feed back? Missy will be presenting this.

Community oriented policing – host community seminars for city residents focusing on de-escalation strategies, educating the public on their rights and responsibilities when interacting with police officer as well as raising awareness about department policies and law enforcement

protocols. Pastor Jen – lives in the Town of Norwich but is always in the City of Norwich she is not technically a city resident could she participate? Adrienne – she was trying not to use community in sequence. Pastor Jen – maybe we can say residents? Adrienne – yes. Melody will be presenting this.

SRO – should we draw attention to the: “it is the hope of CAB that the parties of involved in the decision-making process reach back out to the CAB”. Pastor Jen – she thinks with this topic in order for it to move forward we are going to need to see some increased communication among the three parties that are involved. She would like to bring it up again as a whole to remind the city council that it is going to be important for the School, City and NPD to connect on this topic. Adrienne – remind me of where it left off? Pastor Jen – the school is waiting for communication from the City and PD to talk about how this position is going to work. On the part of the City Council, it was left off that they had questions regarding funding that was their main concern. These are topics that the 3 parties must come together to discuss because she knows that the school is working on securing some grant funding to support such a position. Adrienne - she thinks we should point out that whether CAB continues as a board and/or is involved in those discussion we do recommend that we involve parents but that is our final recommendations in terms of the SRO, they have to get together and communicate and we are highly recommending that they involve parents in the decision-making process. Pastor Jen will be presenting.

Continue the community advisory board beyond 4/1/2021 – there are a few updates as far as wording. Adrienne – she worked on the wording because it seemed redundant. Pastor Jen – thoughts? Should we call attention to that part in our presentation? Adrienne – no I do not think we need too. Pastor Jen – the bullet that says explore the possibility of CAB fielding community members’ feedback of the Police Department. Although it is not CAB’s recommendation that the Board respond to the feedback, it provides the community an alternate method of voicing any concerns beyond going to the Police Department directly. Thoughts on this? Adrienne – would keep it directly as repeated so maybe we can come up with a different word, Pastor Jen – change wording to it would provide. Adrienne – the way I see this potentially working would be an email is sent to the CAB email address – we can say we received your feedback, and it has been forwarded to the appropriate party, it would not be CAB responsibility to do anything with that information beyond being a sounding board and passing it along. Pastor Jen – any other thoughts? Missy will present this section.

Whistleblower policy – recently adopted we thought it wise to mention along with the other policies, any concerns about this? No. Adrienne - Will be providing links to the policies to put in the plan. Melody will be presenting this section.

Reality-based training, officer attending policing, representatives from City has the officer attended the training to train our staff? Asst Chief Burlison – it will be placed on calendar within the next two to three months.

Chaplaincy program- going well.

Enhancement of the City’s PD website - addition of the service evaluation form and the policies being on the website. Any discussion? Adrienne- she put a link to the form in the plan. Pastor Jen – she thinks that it was done quickly by the Chief and it was not in our first plan and here it is completed in the second version. Chief Marsh – we got our first commendation using the new online form.

Mandated trainings – we did not mention use of force and firearms in our first version will it be helpful to mention use of force because so much has been discussed about that. She can call those out in the plan. Adrienne – use of force for sure, is the firearm training state mandate already. Pastor Jen- did we only list trainings that were not state mandated. What is required by the State? Asst Chief Burlison – Firearms is required, since we are not accredited, we do not have to follow NYS accreditation trainings, but he tries to

follow the guideline which is 21 hours, and he tries to stay within the requirements for accreditation. Pastor Jen- because we are not accredited the only state mandated training would be the firearms? Asst Chief Marsh – firearms and article 35. Pastor Jen- we will call out use of force. Pastor Jen will present this section.

Update the shift-swapping policy – do not need to say anything about the policy because it is already there, and it is moving forward in the police department.

Business Cards – Automatically supply business cards to City Police Officers and Leadership without any direct or indirect cost to the individual. CAB recommends that officers carry their business cards on them while on patrol and responding to calls. As best practice, CAB further recommend that officers voluntarily supply their business cards to members of the public after any interaction has taken place. The business cards should list the officer's name, rank and badge number, the contact information for the police department, as well as the PD's website address. Thoughts? Chief Marsh – works for him. Pastor Jen – will that be difficult as far as budget to make that change so it is not coming out of clothing allowance. Chief Marsh – no, we just need to find the place with the best price. Missy will be presenting.

City officials work closely with Union officials to ensure that the newly adopted City policies reference above work in tandem and not in conflict with policies outline in the union contract. This is important because CAB understand it, policies in the Union contract currently take precedence over policies generated by the City's HR Department. Does this language work? Lynn – yes. Melody will be presenting.

Include information regarding Department complaints received in the Annual Report. The table offers a sample format to consider and would be subject to Union approval. Chief Marsh – can you cut and paste and email so that it can added to current annual report. Adrienne – can you explain Chief what not sustained complaints versus exonerated complaints? Pastor Jen will be sending Adrienne the shared information from Chief Marsh with the explanations. Adrienne will present.

Obtain NYS Accreditation for the Norwich City Police Department. PD leadership is currently working with Lexipol and attending relevant training opportunities in order to move this goal forward. Missy will be presenting.

This is our plan, are we missing anything? Adrienne – do we need to identify that this is the end of the plan. There is not a conclusion and she does not think we need to write a conclusion, but do we need to somehow identify that is the end of the plan. Missy – should we just say something like does anyone have any questions or does someone want to make a statement. Adrienne – she is talking in the word document like what Jen is typing because it overlaps to the other page and it looks like something was left out. Pastor Jen typed in “this concludes the City of Norwich Police Department Collaborative Improvement Plan”.

Adrienne – question about agenda, will we be the first to present? Lynn – yes presentations go first.

Adrienne – When we debrief next Wednesday, she is looking to know what CAB's responsibilities are after the public forum and the Council vote, she is curious what may or may not be asked of the group. Lynn – this is the first time this has happened we will have to all hang in their together and figure it out. Adrienne – are recommendations themselves going to be numbered so they can make motions based on the numbers. She is trying to think logistically in that way.

Publicity – is there anything more we need to do? Evening Sun, Pennysaver, Facebook, community members are encouraged to communicate with CAB via email name and address needed. So, if people are not attending in person that would be another option. Do we need to have any discussion? Lynn – we have wording for public forum and the Deputy City Clerk will be advertising in the appropriate places. Did we decide who would be responsible for reading the emails in the public forum. I am OK with reading them if no one else wants to. Lynn will be reading any emails sent to CAB. Adrienne – are you able to share the wording with CAB so that members can share on their social media? Lynn – she will share the advertising wording with the CAB members. Lynn – I will be sending the draft to the council, correct? Adrienne – yes, it will be the addition of the plan plus the parking enforcement position and the Administrative Assistant documents. She will provide via PDF so nothing can be altered.

Next meeting March 3, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom