

Minutes of Hyattsville Police and Public Safety Citizens' Advisory Committee meeting on May 19th, 2021

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In attendance on the Zoom meeting

Chairperson Patricia Page called the meeting to begin at 19:33

- Committee
 - Chairperson Patricia Page
 - Secretary Joel Chan
 - Committee Member Bette Dickerson
 - Committee Member Jerome Brown
 - Committee Member Taylor Wilder
 - Committee Member Emily Strab
- Council / Liason
 - Council Member Robert Croslin
 - Liason Deputy Chief Scott Dunklee
- Other
 - Resident Sophie German
 - Resident Sandra Elvin

Agenda and Notes

Approval of Agenda

- Secretary Joel Chan moved, Committee Member Bette Dickerson seconded

Approval of Minutes from April meeting

- Committee Member Bette Dickerson motioned to accept
- Committee Member Jerome Brown seconded
- 0 objections

Status of incoming police chief

- Put out announcement again since last time, including many local departments
- Should be narrowing list of applicants down
- Doing interviews
- Interview panel will include someone from this committee
- Probably will take about another month and a half or so

Reaction to video that took place on 12/5/20 in Windsor, VA?

- Q: What did you see? What incidents require police officers to have their guns drawn during a stop? What are you doing to ensure that our police officers are giving specific commands?
- Had discussion with command staff about it
- Came to conclusion that if first officer might have been too consumed with it, if secondary officer would have taken over, could have had a different outcome; this is what we teach our officers, de-escalation training, to do just the opposite of what happened
- Listening to backup officer would have calmed things down

Q & A

- Council Member Robert Croslin: Was it a senior officer on the scene?
 - Liason Deputy Chief Scott Dunklee: yes, seems like first officer was more senior, need to make sure junior officers are able to keep senior officers in check when appropriate
 - Council Member Robert Croslin: what if senior officer doesn't want to give up control?

- Liason Deputy Chief Scott Dunklee: a difficult situation, might recommend to call supervisor to come out to help
- Chairperson Patricia Page: does it help to signal (e.g., with blinkers) if you don't feel comfortable stopping right away?
 - Liason Deputy Chief Scott Dunklee: yes, slowing down, turning on indicators, can help signal that you're not trying to get away
- Chairperson Patricia Page: part of the problem seemed to be conflicting commands given to the person
 - Liason Deputy Chief Scott Dunklee: important part of training to avoid conflicting commands. one concrete piece of training for that we are looking to get approved is VR simulations to see things from both the officer's and the person's perspective (to get a sense of how confusing commands can be experienced)
- Committee Member Bette Dickerson: this seems like an important example of a case where a civilian oversight committee would make sense

Civilian Oversight Committee

- Committee Member Bette Dickerson moves to accept the edits to the draft motion
 - Discussion: two new members (Committee Member Taylor Wilder and Committee Member Emily Strab) have just joined and have not yet had a chance to review the draft motion. Would like to have some time
 - Committee Member Bette Dickerson moves to table vote on accepting at next meeting, pending review by two new members
 - Secretary Joel Chan seconded the motion.
 - Motion passed with 0 objections
- Another issue about proactivity: how much lead time do we need to review items coming from council and others?
 - Principle: no time pressure to make a decision, unless there is a documented request for a decision deadline coming from the whole council and mayor (e.g., coming through the clerk's office)

Outreach: how to socialize the committee more

- Ideas from Chairperson Patricia Page to develop materials for outreach, and plan community walks
- Committee is generally supportive
- Committee Member Bette Dickerson: are we able to have informal discussions before we bring things to the formal meeting

- Council Member Robert Croslin: ok to do that, just be careful about the Open Meetings act (e.g., make sure you don't have quorum)
- Committee Member Emily Strab: for example, iterating over design of outreach materials could be done offline and brought back to committee for discussion/approval

New Police Recruits/Training

- Maryland Commission on Police Training
- Lasts 6 months, goes through 99 hours of constitutional/criminal law, procedure, 25 hrs community relations, 60 hrs crisis intervention training
- After basic training, do ride alongs with senior officers for hundreds more hours
- And ongoing training requirements until you retire
- Can have your position suspended if you lapse in training requirements
- Committee Member Bette Dickerson: what do you think is missing?
 - Liason Deputy Chief Scott Dunklee: scheduling is a challenge

Closing

Committee Member Bette Dickerson motion to adjourn at 20:32

- Secretary Joel Chan seconded
- Motion passes with 0 objections