

Minutes of Hyattsville Police and Public Safety Citizens' Advisory Committee meeting on January 12th, 2022

[In attendance on the Zoom meeting](#)

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Chairperson Patricia Page called the meeting to begin at 19:37

In attendance on the Zoom meeting

- Committee
 - Chairperson Patricia Page
 - Secretary Joel Chan
 - Committee Member Jerome Brown
 - Committee Member Emily Strab
 - Committee Member Bette Dickerson
 - Committee Member Mai Abdul Rahman
- Council / Liasion
 - Council Member Rommel Sandino
 - Council Member Robert Croslin
 - Council Member Danny Schaible
 - Chief Jarod Towers

Agenda and Notes

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- Council Member Strab motioned that the agenda be accepted
 - Secretary Chan seconded the motion
 - The motion passed unanimously
- Approval of November minutes was tabled to next month

Updates from Chief Towers

- Chief Towers discussed the question of protocols for HPD capture of incident data.
 - All officers have bodyworn and car dash camera (forward-facing), and that the dept is working to also incorporate interior cameras to capture what's happening in vehicle
 - Data is stored in records management system (county wide, provided by county). Demographic data for traffic is in a software program used statewide, delta plus; those with permissions can pull report from system
 - There has not been a report since 2019; this was recently completed and posted
 - CALEA accreditation is posted every four years, last was 2017; HPD just got accreditation again, just posted on website as of yesterday
 - The annual report for 2020 is not yet completed; HPD is working to have rough draft ready by Friday; after that, will work on 2021; expect both to be completed and posted in 30 days
- Committee Member Dickerson moved to table the Chief's response to review and discuss at next meeting, since the Chief had prepared a report, but due to an email error, it was not sent to whole committee to review beforehand or have on hand for discussion.
 - Committee Member Emily Strab seconded the motion
 - The motion passed unanimously
- Chief Towers gave a staffing update
 - There are 48 total budgeted position; 33 of these are filled by active personnel; the remaining 15 are not all vacancies: some are vacant, and some are inactive.
 - There are 6 vacancies, at the deputy, lieutenant, and 4 officer positions. Someone is in the pipeline to be promoted to lieutenant within 6 months.
 - Of the remaining positions, 1 is on leave pending investigation, 5 are in training, 1 is on FMLA, 1 is on light duty due to off-duty light injury, and 2 are due to retirements, and 1 is an anticipated future separation (retirement sometime in mid to late 2022).
 - There are two lateral applicants that are at the end of the hiring process. A job announcement for entry level officer should be posted within 7-10 days, and they are looking for 3-4 to put in police academy class.
- Committee Member Strab asked whether acting positions come with pay.

- Chief Towers said no, there is a 7% pay raise during acting position (less than if they were promoted, maybe)
- Committee Member Strab asked what the plan was for filling the acting / open positions. Committee Member Dickerson echoed this question.
 - Chief Towers reported that he is actively identifying issues in talks with officers. There are 3 top priorities: 1) HR issue, 2) procedural issue with sworn staff (need to be tested, need materials, etc.), and 3) policies (so outdated, doesn't make sense to test against policies that are not in alignment with 21st-century policing). Policies is main bottleneck now, have timeline now (tmrw is deadline for draft updated policy): target March 14th
- Mayor Kevin Ward noted that treatment for rodents was initiated about 2.5-3 weeks ago, will continue, coordinating with e.g., north point, and want to adjust to other areas. Also, re: trash receptacles, his office is working to hold private property owners and business owners accountable for emptying cans on a timely basis (because city isn't responsible for those), and increase collection frequency back to pre-COVID levels. He has also talked with DPW about increasing collection frequency, and talked more to push private property owners (with citations) to hold them accountable for making needed changes
- Committee Member Bette Dickerson thanked the Mayor for his active attention

Discussion of Federal Covid monies

- Committee Member Dickerson raised the question of federal COVID monies and how they will be applied to public safety concerns in the city.
- Chief Towers reported that they had a senior staff meeting today, briefed by Mr. Brooks.
 - Frontline employees that are eligible need to earn less than the federal poverty line ~\$51k. Only 1 (civilian) employee is eligible in HPD by this criterion.
 - They are trying to figure out how to distribute more widely across dept
 - There is a max payout of \$2400 per employee
- Committee Member Dickerson suggested that the money could be directed towards mental health needs, e.g., training, specific handling
- The committee decided to send ideas by email to Chairperson Page in 2 weeks (by 1/26 midnight), who will then compile and send them back, to discuss at feb meeting
- Council Member Sandino clarified that there is some urgency on timeline re: emergency relief (pay idea, e.g., might be emergency relief). Patrick is gathering ideas and will present in feb to council to get those moving. longer-term ideas will be scheduling convos in feb and march - open to joining committee meeting in feb - can also schedule meeting just for city committee members

Election of officers

- Committee Member Dickerson moved that Chairperson Page and Secretary Chan be re-elected for 2nd year
 - Committee Member Strab seconded the motion

- The motion passed unanimously
- Committee Member Dickerson move that we have a vice chair, and nominated Committee Member Brown
 - Committee Member Strab seconded the motion
 - Committee Member Brown accepted the nomination
 - The motion passed unanimously

Outreach efforts

- Chairperson Page thanked those that helped with the sock and undergarment distribution- 400 pairs.
- Chairperson Page also congratulated the committee on our 2021 outreach efforts. - Ask that we continue work to outreach and purchase business cards to help our mission. Asked for emails with ideas for cards by Friday.
- Committee Member Dickerson also suggested having a calendar of events to best use cards.

Remaining meetings and items

- Committee Member Dickerson noted that for February meeting- DPW liaison should be assigned and identified. Chairperson Page said that mayor assured they would come to meetings when item was on agenda.
- Adopting a schedule - continue second wednesday. Will be off in August.
- Committee Member Dickerson asked Danny Schaible to share the final version of the Citizen Accountability Committee. Chair Page said she would email him to request the document be shared.

Closing

- Committee Member Dickerson moved to adjourn,
- Committee Member Strab seconded the motion.
- Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42.