

**Minutes of Thursday, February 17, 2011 Meeting**  
**5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.**

David Wilma, Chair:	P	Steve Freng, Member:	P
Melissa Bartholomew, Member	P	Martha Norberg, Member:	P
Tina Bueche, Vice Chair:	P*	Pat Sainsbury, Member:	P
George Davenport, Member:	P		
Michael Pendleton, Consultant:	P		

*(Absent = A, Present = P, Excused = E, \* = by phone)*

Guests: Anne Levinson, OPA Auditor; Kathryn Olson, OPA Director

**Minutes** - The minutes of the February 2, 2011 meeting were adopted.

**Report from the Auditor** – Anne discussed her participation in the Stranger Forum, held in City Hall’s Bertha Knight Landes room on February 3. She clarified that suggestions offered at the end of panel by Pam Masterman-Stearns had been proposed and considered by the two blue ribbon panels that created OPA and then enhanced it. The Seattle system, with a civilian director, civilian auditor and the OPARB is one of a variety of structures used in various cities.

**Report from OPA Director** - Kathryn discussed a group that was formed after the John T. Williams shooting that includes a DOJ Indian relations representative, the president of the board of directors of the Chief Seattle Club, and members of other selected groups. An urban summit is in the planning stages. Kathryn has been hearing from people that the OPARB system should be revamped in a variety of ways, and she’s open to hearing suggestions. She looks forward to opportunities in the coming months for OPA and OPARB to address the public’s understanding of Seattle’s system and continue to improve accessibility.

Kathryn stated that they expect to finalize the OPA investigation on Ian Birk in two weeks. She anticipates that the Firearms Review Board and criminal investigations will provide a complete record. OPA will re-interview witnesses only if there are additional questions.

**Stranger Forum** – The group agreed that the public does not understand the current oversight system, or the role and powers of the board. Some are clearly dissatisfied with the length of time it takes for cases to reach a conclusion, especially where there is a possible criminal prosecution, and with the laws and processes that make it difficult to charge an officer. Anne made the distinction between being dissatisfied with the officers’ behavior and dissatisfaction with the accountability system. It does not seem that the Stranger meeting was productive. The importance of OPARB educating the public and increasing understanding of the overall system in advance of high-profile incidents is clear. The group felt stung by the allegation that the board is “irrelevant”. It was noted that the public distrusts SPD and the accountability system, and have bad perceptions about both. As has been recommended in past reports, we need to continue to work on making the system easier to navigate. When the board reaches out, we need to ask the public for the specific steps they envision that will make things better for them. We need to determine specific, constructive ways to communicate with the public, and to define the board’s role in current events.

Melissa met with George and Martha prior to this meeting to discuss a strategy for a new Community Engagement Model work group. They want to determine how to best use the board’s power to convene and facilitate effective meetings. One idea is to bring a broad spectrum of stakeholders together for a series of meetings, and ultimately assist them in developing their own community engagement programs. A more effective model may be to bring together those who are truly affected by an incident, as compared to those who bring high emotion and no direct stake in determining a positive approach. The board’s strategic plan calls for both outreach and dialogue and public education.

## **Reports from Work Groups -**

**Diverse Communities** – Martha stated that SPD has obtained federal funding for a mental health professional to work with SPD. Officers could call to talk to the resource to obtain advice on how to deal with an individual or situation on a case-by-case basis. Martha thought it would be interesting to track the use of this new resource. She also stated that she will be watching to see the effect of the new trespass law that was to be implemented by January 1, 2011.

**Data Mining** – Tina reports slow progress. She wants to defer a report to the next meeting, but is encouraged that reports will be more three-dimensional and useful in the future.

**Classifications and Findings** – The next meeting is in March.

**Closed File Review** – Pat has begun to develop the matrix for reviewing files, and will have a draft to Melissa, George, and Michael soon.

**Other** - The Latino/Latina Bar group, the Loren Miller bar group, and the Native American bar association have not yet contacted Melissa to discuss the possibility of meeting with the Board.

**Training** - Michael discussed the books about holding difficult meetings as they were passed out to members. Standing in the Fire's approach is to look at the rush of emotion from the inside out, and noting the difference in outcome when you anticipate that rush, and when you do not. Resolving Identity-Based Conflict takes a more scientific, academic, external, outside-in approach. Its merit is in the long-term. David proposed that the group read both books by the end of March so they can discuss them as a group. Michael was asked to look at the information in the Force Science report more closely to report back about how it might relate to use in Seattle. Michael will try to get customer feedback from people who attended the Force Science training.

The Board discussed the consultant contract in closed session.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10.

Notes taken by Nancy Roberts

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 2 at 11:30 in the AI Rochester room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at City Hall.