



City of Seattle



Special Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 13, 2019 | 1 – 1:30 PM

Conference Line

Commissioners Present: Chris Brown, Michael Garrett, Kari Lerum, Sabel Roizen, Katrina Sanford, Byram Simpson, Deepa Sivarajan, Joseph Suttner, and Manuel Venegas

Commissioners Absent: Alejandro Castillo, Latosha Correll, and Wayne Rocque

SOCR Staff: Janet Stafford

Meeting Minutes recorded by: Deepa Sivarajan

Guests: Oscar Cerda (SOCR), Kyla Blair (Mayor's Office)

Welcome and Introductions

Public Open Comment

1. Kyla Blair (Mayor's Office): Update on where things are now with court order around policy accountability:
 - a. City has been working with DOJ on filing that must go in this week, in response to court order sent out a few months ago asking City to formulate a methodology around accountability regime
 - b. City decided to bring in consultants who work in accountability to improve on what City has already been done
 - c. Judge Robart has asked that the methodology be created, and consultants have worked on this along with community partners including Community Police Commission and some community outreach
 - d. Initial draft methodology created and consultants received feedback from those groups and other community groups including Chief Seattle Club, Seattle Indian Health Board, Black clergy and more
 - e. City has made changes to original methodology based on what was heard from community; willing to distribute a draft to LGBTQ Commission

- f. Brief due to the Judge Robart on Thursday, August 15, 2019; once submitted, at judge's discretion to review
- g. Questions/comments from commissioners:
 - i. Michael Garrett: How will our commission and other commissions be explicitly involved in the feedback loop in the future?
 - 1. Kyla Blair: Dominique Stephens did reach out to folks; time frame was tight because of the court order.
 - ii. Jessi Murray: The time frame given to us for meetings was in one case less than 24 hours and in all cases less than 48 hours, for meetings that took place during business hours. This is unacceptable as a form of outreach, especially for volunteer-based organizations. Moving forward, that can't be the norm.
 - 1. Kyla Blair: Understood, we did the best we could with the time we had.

Letter on Police Accountability

- 1. Discussion today is around whether to sign onto a letter written by community organizations including the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)
- 2. Recommendation is that Seattle's Accountability Ordinance passed in 2017 be better enforced, given that there has been years of work on accountability developed by stakeholders and community groups
- 3. Questions/comments with commissioners:
 - a. Chris Brown: I know we've been having this discussion for months and I want to reiterate something that I've said in the past – I think we should have open and transparent communication throughout the process with all parties, including with Seattle Police Department (SPD) and Mayor's Office. The more transparent we can be, the better the dialogue will be. I know there are folks who have chosen to not include SPD and the Mayor's Office and I want to encourage us to keep them in the loop.
 - b. Byram Simpson: I do think it's important that this process include all stakeholders including the Mayor's Office and the folks who work every day within SPD and the judicial system. I think at this point, what I'm seeing is that the Mayor's Office has been quite involved and has themselves been selective about who to include – as was mentioned earlier, we were technically invited to participate in meetings last week, but with only a 24-hour time frame. I don't know how that can be the fault of the court order or Judge Robart, who ruled in May, while we were only contact in August.
 - c. Katrina Sanford: Although I appreciate the Mayor's Office wanting to take time to make sure that the "right people" are involved in this process, I want to say as a person of color living in Seattle that this is a matter of life or death. This is not simply a matter of writing a letter; this is about very real and urgent and something that people of color face every day. I myself have had some experiences that are not great, and I want to make sure that the urgency is addressed.
 - d. Michael Garrett: What I'm hearing is that we want our voices to be heard and for the opportunity to provide meaningful impact within a reasonable timeframe.
 - e. Deepa Sivarajan: I want to thank Katrina for speaking up and second what she said. It's strange to me that we're talking about transparency and the Mayor's Office being a "stakeholder" in this process when the Mayor's Office has a great deal of authority to act. I agree that all parties should be at the table, but I think the Mayor's Office is responsible for reaching out. There's a power dynamic here, and it's disingenuous to criticize our commission when we've been nothing but transparent about our interest in being involved in this issue. This *is* a matter of life or death for people of color, as Katrina said.

- f. Byram Simpson: I want to speak to the transparency issue – the initial reaction from the Mayor’s Office to the court order was that the City *was* in compliance and that the ordinance simply needed some tweaking, which was not at all transparent. The reforms made as a result of the consent decree mean nothing without accountability and enforcement, so it’s
 - g. Jessi Murray: We did invite the Mayor’s Office to come and give a longer update at our Thursday meeting or at a future meeting. I would like to view this as not a halting point but as an opportunity for future discussion. I have seen multiple instances of boxes being checked that are checked because of technicalities instead of meaningful engagement.
 - h. Byram Simpson: I want to talk about how this work is aligned with our workplan. Part of our workplan is about addressing the housing and homelessness crisis in the City. Racial injustices in policing are a well-known factor in increasing housing insecurity and homelessness, so I want to reiterate that this is aligned with our workplan.
4. Motion to sign on to the letter with other organizations to let the Mayor know how we’re feeling about police accountability and the process. **Motion passes (100%)**

Announcements, Reminders, & Roll Call for Next Meeting

- 1. Deepa Sivarajan will not be at the meeting on Thursday, August 15, so Chris Brown will take minutes.

(END 1:30)