

Minutes of Thursday, November 18, 2010 Meeting
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

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

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

Guests: OPA Director Kathryn Olson, OPA Auditor Anne Levinson, Melissa Bartholomew, OPARB nominee, UW School of Social Work student, Nancy, citizens Michael Fuller and Miss Richard

Public Comment – Ms. Richard and Michael Fuller offered comments. Ms. Richard provided a letter to Director Olson.

Minutes – Minutes of the November 3, 2010 meeting were adopted.

Strategic Plan – The strategic plan was adopted.

File Review at OPA: Kathryn Olson reported that two closed investigations involving allegations of excessive force will be available for Board member review after Thanksgiving. Individual members should make an appointment through Sonja Lalor in Kathryn's Office and should allow at least two hours for review. The purpose of this is to familiarize all members with the structure of investigations and to provide a measure of the effort required to review files.

Outreach to Diverse Communities – Kathryn will reschedule Captain Ron Wilson, head of SPD community relations under Nick Metz, and Captain Steve Brown as well, to speak to OPARB. Because the December 1 OPA meeting will be very short, due to the noon NACOLE group meeting, Kathryn will try to schedule them for the December 16 meeting at El Centro.

Work Groups – Martha went to Orion Center, which is one of several services and facilities operated by Youth Care. She talked with the director and a board member, and met with some of the kids receiving services. She handed out a questionnaire and hopes to meet with clients or a client liaison to ask how encounters with police have been viewed. She also would like to determine if people know how to make a complaint if they have concerns about SPD.

Martha wants to expand outreach to the homeless, specifically the mentally ill. An example is the recent attempted abduction of a 3-year old by an apparently mentally ill person. Escalation apparently occurred when police showed up – is that a common thing? What are the factors?

The above case again raises the question of whether or not OPARB should issue statements on emerging cases. For example, the domestic violence community just issued a statement to the City Council. This is item 2C on the strategic plan. George and Martha will work on this and make suggestions to the group. Michael suggested that the members think about what the community is seeing and hearing, and what the impact is on them. Looking at it this way is different from making statements about individual cases. There is a huge gap between perceptions and actual processes and events. The public may be wondering where OPARB stands on various incidents.

David reminded the board that they can convene additional meetings in addition to their regular meetings in order to give the public a forum to discuss recent incidents. Kathryn stated that it was helpful to hear constructive ideas, and to try to make that a focus, rather than simply inviting people to vent. Martha wants the public to know the board is aware and concerned. Michael suggested affiliating with other group such as the Human Rights Commission. Both the public and SPD have a shared experience; we should look for opportunities to find common areas.

George feels the public wants a forum to vent and OPARB can provide that. Given that the video is just out about the police abusing a 17 year-old African-American male, George wants to provide that avenue for the public. An alternative is for members to attend established community meetings. David suggested that yet another option is to draft a statement addressing recent events and feelings in general. Members are certainly free to look for opportunities to engage with the public through established groups; there is no need for a quorum to make a decision about attendance.

The OPA Findings work group has not yet been able to meet.

Tina updated the group on the data collection work group. She has meetings scheduled post-Thanksgiving. She is drafting a matrix of data and AIM capabilities and a wish list for her next steps.

New work group – Tina will have the outline of Strategic Plan section II.B. and a proposal for going ahead with II.A. She has a tentative meeting with SPOG around December 29.

The meeting was convened at 5:30 p.m. and adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Notes taken by Nancy Roberts.

The next meeting will be held December 1, 2010 at 11:30 a.m. in the Boards & Commissions Room L280, City Hall. This meeting will be very short in order for members to attend the NACOLE group meeting at noon.