

Minutes of Thursday, December 16, 2010 Meeting
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

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

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

Guests: OPA Director Kathryn Olson; SPD Captain Ron Wilson; Estela Ortega, El Centro de la Raza; Dorry Elias-Garcia, MEDC; Jennifer Shaw, ACLU, several citizens

The meeting was held at El Centro de la Raza.

Minutes – Minutes of the December 1, 2010 meeting were adopted.

SPD Community Relations – Captain Wilson handed out SPD’s community outreach plan and crisis communications plan. Both of these programs are in keeping with Chief Diaz’s “Road Ahead” program. Captain Wilson oversees community outreach, and strengthens community relations. He gets communities and department personnel together to work collaboratively on public safety issues, with the goal of reducing fear of crime. The Chief is committed to increasing resources to support this effort. Captain Wilson discussed the various demographic advisory councils (ten in number) and the community police academy, which they hope to expand, offering concentrated “snapshot” mini sessions. They are reviewing the demographic councils to determine their relevance and to determine if they can develop better systems. They are also involved in youth issues, working with SYVPI.

A new concept they’re working on is “living room forums” – literally, getting citizens to invite ten people at a time to their own homes to meet with SPD and discuss issues in this smaller, more intimate forum. They’re working with school programs, such as the emphasis officers, Seattle Youth & Families Initiative, SPD’s GREAT (Gang Resistance Education and Training) program works with youth – gangs, truancy, using, among other strategies, RSJI tools.

Capt. Wilson is working closely with SPD’s webmaster to update and improve their web presence, and to assist citizens to get more information on SPD’s work in the community.

Kathryn suggested that citizens review the policy recommendations on training, recognizing organization change, and training initiatives that she included in her annual report.

Estela stated that she was happy to see that officers were being shown “Race - the Power of Illusion”. She wondered how the public is informed about advances. Kathryn stated that she created a very brief overview of her report as a handout. Estela suggested that it would be better to get information out sooner, not just in large, infrequent reports.

David reported on the **Public Safety Committee Meeting of December 15, 2010**. The Board had little time to speak in any depth at the meeting, but David noted that the councilmembers showed interest in the Board’s work with the homeless.

File Review Program – The goal in reviewing sample cases is to get an idea of what’s involved in case review; to have regular and predictable file reviews. Michael informed the group of the history of case review in the past. The previous Board reviewed cases in general, becoming more topical with time. They had a structured template they used as they looked for systems issues. He further suggested that three members review cases routinely, with a larger group becoming involved with topical cases. David noted that data fields such as length of service, and various other dynamics of any particular case were often not available when

classifying cases, making further insight and categorization of cases very difficult. This will be addressed in part by the data project Tina's working on.

David suggested that 3 – 4 members review cases; the issue of how to request cases to get to the issues they want to review is still unanswered. He requested that all board members review the OPA cases that are currently available to them by the January 5 meeting.

Steve questioned the goal of ongoing review. David replied that it was the Board's responsibility by ordinance, and because it will show trends and improvements, especially when reviews are topical. He encouraged all to read two cases and report. David described to the group what it means when a case is "closed".

There was a discussion with the audience about when and how the community may appeal cases when they disagree with the outcome.

Work Group Reports – Melissa attended a Mothers for Police Accountability meeting with the Reverend Harriett Walden, and will share that group's meeting schedule with the Board.

No news from the Findings group, but David explained what the group's purpose was for the citizens in attendance.

Tina reported on the data project: They are developing a way to mine more data from reports. The current systems tracking officer performance are very "siloes" and needs infrastructure work. She expects an improved program within six months. This upgrade requires a lot of resources and IT expertise.

Tina also reported on efforts to extend outreach to a broader cross section of the public, raising the idea of using YouTube video to reach more people. We continue to look for ways to add to our stakeholders' contact list and may use it to distribute DVDs or other informational media.

Martha continues her outreach to diverse communities, trying to find out what various groups' experience is with SPD and ask for ideas to make it better. She is working on developing a questionnaire, and continues to identify and contact communities of interest.

2011 OPARB Meeting Dates and Times – Note the change in venue. If it is important to retain the same venues we've used in the past, we may need to look at changing the timing of Board meetings.

Public Comment – An overview of OPARB's charge was provided, along with a history of the entire system. Members were careful to clarify the difference between an employee discipline system (OPA) and the criminal process. Citizens in attendance were clear that it was very important to them for the board to meet out in the community. Many citizens are not comfortable going to City Hall. Perhaps brochures and other information could be placed in grocery stores or other areas in the community? Further discussion focused on how best to engage the public in this process.

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 January 5, 2011 at 11:30 a.m. in the Al Rochester Room, 2nd floor, City Hall.