

MINUTES

Community Police Commission (CPC)

September 20, 2017, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Seattle Municipal Tower, Room 1610

CPC Attendees: Enrique Gonzalez (co-chair), Isaac Ruiz (co-chair), Rev. Harriett Walden (co-chair), Emma Catague, Claudia D’Allegri, Lisa Daugaard, Colleen Echohawk, Jay Hollingsworth, Cpt. Joe Kessler, Ofc. Kevin Stuckey,

CPC Absent: Melinda Giovengo, Rev. Aaron Williams

CPC Staff: Fé Lopez, Anne Bettsworth, Minty LongEarth, Betsy Graef, Karen Chung

CPC Staff Absent: Tracy Whitlatch

Review Agenda and Approve Minutes / Announcements

Moved, seconded, and passed (8-0-2): “To approve the 09-20-2017 agenda as amended and to approve the minutes from 09-06-2017.”

Public Disclosure Request

Four public disclosure requests have been submitted to the CPC. Staff handed out instructions for searching and gathering materials for the requests, and will work closely with the City, City Attorney, and requestors to fulfill the requests.

DOJ/Monitor Update

DOJ Update – DOJ is preparing a response to the Monitor’s compliance report. In its response, the DOJ will provide an update on where the City is with complying with the terms of the Consent Decree in each of the ten areas that the Monitor has assessed. The City’s deadline to file a response is Friday, September 22. The DOJ and CPC are expected to file their responses by October 6. While the DOJ will not be filing a motion for termination, this could still be an important milestone that marks the transition from a third party assessing and auditing the police department to the City owning the reform process.

Monitor Update – No update.

Policy Workgroup

Executive Session

From 9:33am to 10:42am, the commission entered executive session to discuss the Monitor’s compliance report.

City’s Settlement with Cynthia Whitlatch Update and CPC Request for Information

On August 30, it was reported that former police officer Cynthia Whitlatch, who was fired in 2015 for biased and overly aggressive policing over the 2014 arrest of an elderly African-American man named William Wingate, reached a settlement agreement with the City and would receive backpay and have her status changed from “terminated” to “retired in lieu of termination” so she can receive her full pension.

Per the CPC’s authority to request information on closed cases to review them to identify areas for systemic reform, the commission requested all files related to this case from SPD, OPA, and the City Attorney’s Office so it can review and understand why there was a settlement agreement and identify gaps in the system, in policy and with personnel, that led to this outcome.

The CPC received a response from OPA and received OPA’s documents related to investigation and plans to meet with OPA at a future CPC meeting. Staff and commissioners are reviewing OPA’s files.

The CPC has not received a response from the Chief of Police or the City Attorney’s Office and will follow up on its request for files and documents and set up a meeting with the general counsel for SPD and a representative of the City Attorney’s Office.

Action Item – Call SPD and the City Attorney’s Office to follow up on the CPC’s request for files, then write all a formal letter as a follow-up.

SPD’s Interactions with Native Communities

Commissioner Colleen EchoHawk received an email from Leonard Forsman, chairman of the Suquamish Nation regarding the recent arrest of Eagleson Williams. The letter brought forth the need to discuss how SPD officers interact with people from Native communities, and how the commission can encourage officers to utilize better de-escalation skills and recognize the trauma experienced by Native communities as we are right now on their territory and we have an obligation to uphold justice for them.

The OPA opened an intake based on the CPC’s conversation regarding the case. The CPC will respond to Chairman Forsman via email to inform him of this development, and to encourage people to interact with the OPA investigative process, as well as to request a meeting to discuss this and other issues related to policing and Native communities.

Action Item – Respond to Chairman Forsman’s email to inform him of the OPA’s investigation and to discuss issues related to policing and Native communities.

Strategic Planning

The CPC was created to be a temporary body under Consent Decree. Now, as a permanent body and a key partner in the police accountability system in Seattle, the commission is embarking on a strategic planning process to help create a mission, vision, and implementation plan with the help of an external strategic planning consultant to ensure that the work of the CPC meets community expectations. To identify a consultant, the CPC sought individuals who could help guide this process via a racial equity lens and began an informal request for proposal process. The commission voted to approve the strategic planning proposal of New Transitions Consulting, with Norma Timbang and Scott Winn, and added Commissioners Emma Catague, Kevin Stuckey, and Joe Kessler to the Strategic Planning Workgroup. The Commission expects

to start the strategic planning process in October and complete the process by the December 6 CPC meeting.

Moved, seconded, and passed (10-0-0): “To approve the strategic planning proposal by New Transitions Consulting (Norma Timbang and Scott Winn).”

Transition Team Update

OPA Director/IG Search Update

The search committee met and discussed the qualities they desire in the IG and OPA director roles. The committee also discussed the results of the community survey they deployed to seek community input on the search process. The committee has not started to review job applications. The next committee meeting will occur during the first week of October.

Robart Order Regarding Legislation Implementation

Judge Robart’s order indicates that the City could start implementing parts of the police accountability legislation that it feels are not subject to collective bargaining. The Court will conduct a review of legislation once the collective bargaining process is complete.

Budget

The mayor’s budget will be presented to City Council on September 25. The CPC will ask its budget office representative to attend a CPC meeting to advise the commission on how it can interact with the city’s budget process.

Action Item - Ask budget office representative to attend a CPC meeting to advise the commission on how it can interact with the city’s budget process.

CPC Photo

The CPC ended its meeting early to take a group photograph for the website.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

Action Item – Call SPD and the City Attorney’s Office to follow up on the CPC’s request for files, then write all a formal letter as a follow-up.

Action Item – Respond to Chairman Forsman’s email to inform him of the OPA’s investigation and to discuss issues related to policing and Native communities.

Action Item – Call SPD and the City Attorney’s Office to follow up on the CPC’s request for files, then write all a formal letter as a follow-up.

Action Item - Ask budget office representative to attend a CPC meeting to advise the commission on how it can interact with the city’s budget process.