

Community Police Commission (CPC)

January 8, 9:00 am In-Person & Via WebEx Conference Call

- **Welcome & Land Acknowledgement**
- **Take Attendance**

CPC Attendees:

Joel Merkle, Le'Jayah Washington, Lars Erickson, Raven Tyler, Erica Newman, Mark Mullens, Anthony Gaedcke, Tascha Johnson

CPC Absences: Jeremy Wood

CPC Staff: Dorian Waller, Dani Sullivan, Devina Wijaya, Eci Ameh, Taryn Darling

- **Review Agenda & Minutes**

Action: Motion to approve the draft agenda for 1/8/2025 and minutes from 1/8/2025

Moved: Yes

Seconded: Yes

Opposed: 0

Abstentions: 0

Approved by voice vote.

- **Community Police Commission Updates**

- **Co-Chair Updates**

In October, the CPC presented a gap analysis conducted by policy staff to identify vacancies on the Commission and highlight communities most impacted by policing that are currently underrepresented.

As a result of that recruitment effort, there are three new Commissioners that will join the CPC following Council action in late January. All three appointing authorities have been engaged and will be putting forward nominations for Council appointment.

Arlecier West is a senior human resources business partner from the King County Council central staff. She will be a Mayoral appointee.

Joseph Seia is the executive director of Oceania Northwest and previously served as a Commissioner. Joseph will be a CPC appointee.

Rabbi David Benchlouch holds a master's degree in clinical mental health

counseling from Bellevue University. Rabbi Benchlouch will be a Council appointee.

The Council will submit a reappointment package for Joel Merkel, as his term officially ended on December 31. Commissioner Newman and incoming Commissioner West has expressed interest in co-chairing the CPC.

To ensure new commissioners have the opportunity to participate, the co-chair election will be postponed until February.

CPC would move from its bimonthly schedule to meeting monthly to shift our focus to internal work such as staffing, Commissioner recruitment, and other operational priorities.

- **Executive Director Updates**

Acting Executive Director Ameh shared updates on new additions to the CPC team: Devina Wijaya Moser, who has joined as Executive Assistant, and Taryn Darling, the new Policy Director.

Additionally, recruitment for a Communications Director is currently in progress, and the Community Engagement Specialist position has been posted. CPC is actively working to build a strong team to support its mission and initiatives.

2025 CPC Staff Retreat

The CPC team is planning a staff retreat in the coming months to align with the commission's goals for the year ahead. This retreat will focus on onboarding new commissioners and staff, strengthening team connections, and refining our Vision, Mission, and Values. We'll also collaborate on a working plan that directly informs our strategic plan. More details to come.

- **Policy Updates**

Dani Sullivan presented on CPC's legislative priorities, referencing Ordinance 125315, which grants CPC the authority to develop and advocate for its own legislative agenda, independent of the city.

Last year, CPC staff requested a vote on a Statement of Values to guide legislative work related to law enforcement and community-focused bills for the 2024 legislative session. If the commission agrees, CPC proposes using the same values this year.

CPC's legislative efforts will prioritize accountability, independence, and community trust, ensuring support for laws that promote effective, constitutional policing while addressing community concerns in alignment with the Accountability Ordinance.

- **Commissioner’s Workgroup Updates**

- **Community Engagement Updates**

The Community Engagement Committee is developing a comprehensive community engagement strategy and gap analysis. This effort not only focuses on underserved communities but also examines engagement with district councils, particularly in Districts 2, 4, and 5.

The approach spans a broad engagement spectrum—from one-time interactions to ongoing participation, including regular attendance at meetings and potential involvement as CPC members. The goal is to ensure meaningful and sustained connections with communities most impacted by policing.

Dorian Waller shared a detailed engagement matrix that tracks ongoing connections with various advisory councils. One of these includes the LGBTQ+ Advisory Council, where he is scheduled to speak and present next month.

He also invited Commissioners to join any of the upcoming outreach events and encouraged those interested to take part in speaking or presenting. This is a great opportunity to strengthen relationships and expand CPC’s community engagement efforts.

- **Police Practices Work Group**

A recent survey on SPD's use of less-lethal weapons and crowd management showed widespread dissatisfaction and a strong push for reform. While the CPC does not support a full ban on less-lethal weapons, it strongly recommends stricter regulations on their use. This includes clearly defined zones of appropriate use and ensuring there are no exceptions that undermine these rules.

Following this discussion, the CPC passed a motion to send a letter to the City Council regarding the Crowd Management Ordinance proposal, advocating for these necessary reforms.

- **Department Updates**

- **City Council**

City council is working on amendments to the mayor’s proposed legislation on less-lethal weapons.

- **The Office of Inspector General (OIG)**

OIG published their 2025 work plan and hired a community engagement specialist.

- **Seattle Police Department (SPD)**

SPD is preparing to welcome a new chief in the coming weeks and is looking forward to Chief Barnes joining the department.

As for crowd management policy, there are currently no updates. SPD is waiting for the outcome of the legislative process, which may require revisions before any changes are made.

- **Executive Session**

Commission took action after Executive Session to remove Executive Director Ellis. The Commission then moved to appoint Eci Ameh as Interim Executive Director.

- **Adjourn**