

## NEWS RELEASE

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**CONTACT:**

Fé Lopez, Executive Director

(206) 684-5175

### **COMMUNITY POLICE COMMISSION IS READY TO MOVE FORWARD WITH ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM REFORMS**

(Seattle) – The work to reform the Seattle Police Department (SPD) and its accountability system is critically important. Achieving true reform depends on the commitment of many to make it happen—City leaders, the Chief of Police and the employees of SPD, the police unions, and the community. Mayor Murray's proposal announced today shows his firm commitment to achieving reform of the police department's accountability system. We appreciate the commitment also of other City partners in this effort.

Under the City's Memorandum of Understanding with the US Department of Justice, the Community Police Commission (CPC) was charged with recommending revisions to the Seattle Police Department's accountability system. In April 2014 it issued an integrated set of many carefully considered reforms designed to make the system as a whole work better.

These recommendations were informed by the contributions of many, including Pierce Murphy, the current OPA Director; Judge Anne Levinson, the current OPA Auditor; Mayor Murray's special advisor, Dr. Bernard Melekian; the City Attorney's Office; and others. Our advisors have largely endorsed the CPC recommendations.

It is very good progress that so many of the CPC's accountability recommendations are also being endorsed by the Mayor and that he and other City leaders are committing to seeing them through by ensuring that changes are made swiftly to necessary ordinances, collective bargaining agreements, and the City's legislative agenda.

The CPC is well aware of the substantial new responsibilities it will assume. We are confident in our ability to undertake the new work because we have a proven track record. In 2013 and 2014 an OPA manual was adopted which the CPC reviewed and approved; the CPC has reviewed SPD policies and training on use of force, bias, stops, in-car videos; and during the course of its work since early 2013, the CPC has conducted extensive community engagement.

The CPC has tackled hard issues, has always sought community input, and its deliberations have benefited from a range of perspectives offered by its diverse individual members. Most often it has reached consensus positions that value and honor that range of views, while never compromising its fundamental values. We believe our diversity, our commitment to seeking police and community perspectives, and our experience in balancing various interests will serve us well in our new role providing civilian oversight of SPD's accountability system.

The proposal today puts the City on the right road to reforming the police accountability system, but much remains to be done in the collective bargaining process, in making reforms permanent in law, and in ensuring practices are in place in SPD and in other City offices to support the intended reforms.

The CPC will continue to collaborate with the Mayor, the City Council, the Chief of Police, the City Attorney's Office, and others to achieve meaningful reform over the coming months. We will:

- ✓ Provide background and information now to the City's labor negotiating team prior to finalizing topics to be discussed in labor negotiations with the police unions;
- ✓ Testify in Olympia in the upcoming state legislative session on state law reforms needed to support good policing in Seattle;
- ✓ Help prepare police accountability legislation for consideration by the City Council in the 1st Quarter of 2015;
- ✓ Serve as a resource to Mayor Murray, Chief O'Toole, OPA Director Murphy and other City leaders in resolving outstanding issues to implementing reform measures, particularly those that do not require legislation or bargaining.
- ✓ Provide regular and periodic reports to City leaders and to the community on the progress being made.

We are pleased that the CPC's work over the last couple of years to help ensure Constitutional, effective policing will continue and that the CPC will become a permanent part of the city's system of oversight of SPD. There may not always be agreement about what needs to be done, but we pledge to do all we can to establish a police accountability system our community and our officers can believe in.

To learn more about the Community Police Commission, please visit [www.seattle.gov/community-police-commission](http://www.seattle.gov/community-police-commission).

*The CPC was established by the City of Seattle to provide community input on proposed SPD reforms. The CPC was mandated under a memorandum of understanding between the City and the U.S. Department of Justice, which details work to be done over three years to ensure bias-free policing and address the past use of excessive force. The CPC's charge is to represent a broad range of community perspectives, engage those communities directly to get critical feedback, and then recommend changes to SPD policies and practices.*

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