

Commissioners Present:

Janet Jackson, Chair; Brooke Burns, Dr. Chenelle Jones, Dr. Vlad Kogan, Andrea Morbitzer, Erin Synk, Oleatha Waugh, Tiffany White, Dr. Reginald Wilkinson, Traci Shaw, Emily Buster

Commissioners Absent:

Tammy Fournier-Alsaada, Mary Wehrle, Matthew McCrystal, Jason Ridley, LaShaun Carter

Staff Present: George Speaks, Cmdr Bob Meader, DC Tom Quinlan, Lt Lipp, Bryan Clark

WELCOME

Chair Janet Jackson called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm and welcomed the Columbus Community Safety Advisory Commission (“Safety Commission”) to the 14th meeting of the group.

STAFF REPORT FROM BRYAN CLARK

- I. Report from the 2018 Comprehensive Neighborhood Safety Strategy – overall takeaway is that homicide rate declined in 2018 by 28% over 2017 rate.
 - A. SAFE STREETS
 1. 8,351 resident contacts
 2. 151 community events
 3. 279 felony arrests as a result of information gathered by Safe Streets team
 4. 103 firearms seized
 5. Double-digit percentage reduction in property crime and violent crime in target neighborhoods
 6. Mayor’s budget for this year includes \$900,000 extra dollars for the program
 - B. SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS
 1. 16 participated in first class; 13 in the second class
 2. Targets persons at risk for re-offending, by offering social services, job training, and more
 3. At this point, the program boasts a 0% recidivism rate for gun-related charges
 - C. APPS (Applications for Purpose, Pride and Success)
 1. Workforce Development
 - a. 114 young people were hired in the summer of 2018 to participate in nine weekly training sessions on topics such as cultural diversity, CPR/first aid and financial literacy, while working in different City departments
 2. COMMUNITY CENTER WITHOUT WALLS
 - a. Community-building recreation programs to the residents of Wedgewood
 - b. Over 2000 children participated in after-school and out-of-school programming, including soccer, foosball, group games, air hockey, pool, basketball
 3. NEIGHBORHOOD VIOLENCE INTERVENTION

a. Through street-level violence interruption and conflict mediation by trained violence intervention workers and neighborhood-based services, the NVI program builds relationships with high-risk youth – or known violent offenders – to guide them away from violence toward positive alternatives.

b. Defused 67 potentially violent incidents, enrolled 148 young people in its case management system, and had 42 interventions after gang-related incidents.

D. CRISIS INTERVENTION

1. The Columbus Division of Police partnered with NetCare to pair a mental health worker with a CIT officer. Two of these teams worked every day from 2p - midnight, responding to mental health emergency calls.

2. The project ran from June - October, 2018 and the team went on 1972 dispatched and self-initiated runs and provided 191 transports to are hospitals and other mental health resources.

3. Committed to the OneMind program, dedicated to improving police response to persons affected by mental illness. CPD was recognized as being fully compliant with the One Mind campaign in 2018.

E. NEIGHBORHOOD CRISIS RESPONSE

1. The Neighborhood Crisis Response team coordinates resources and responses from multiple departments, working together to create physical deterrents to crime, such as streetlights, nuisance code issues, housing stabilization, after-school programs, and porch lights.

2. Dollars invested include \$5K to clean and clear alleyways of trash and waste; \$750K for pedestrian lighting and sidewalks; and \$83.5 million for planning, design and implementation of comprehensive solutions that both mitigate sanitary sewer overflow and strengthen neighborhoods.

3. Neighborhood Safety Committees – three meetings in 2018; four planned for 2019

4. Clean Neighborhoods – focuses on illegal dumping, through prevention, enforcement, and education.

F. VIOLENT CRIME REVIEW GROUP

1. Comprised of 40 individuals from Mayor’s Office, Public Health, CPD, Public Safety, Rec and Parks, Development, Columbus CARE Coalition

2. Tasked with increasing communications and share data that will help us develop neighborhood specific strategies to reduce violence.

3. Rapid Homicide Notification System notifies members of the VCRG when a homicide occurs in the pilot neighborhoods (Linden, Hilltop, South Side) to provide an appropriate level of response with 48 hours to impacted residents and neighborhoods.

G. COLUMBUS COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY COMMISSION

1. Thank you for your work in this capacity!

Q: Is there a place we can go to see the plan for new lighting and sidewalks?

A: Emerald Hernandez, with the Department of Neighborhoods, is in charge of this project

Q: Could we get a bit more rigorous evaluation of each of the programs outlined in the report?

A: Yes, absolutely.

II. RETIREMENT OF KIMBERLEY JACOBS, CHIEF OF CPD

- A. Retirement date is February 8, 2019 – details of events celebrating Chief Jacobs’ service will be shared appropriately.
- B. National search will be undertaken, with plenty of opportunity for public input

SAFETY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Chair Jackson thanked Commissioner Moore Griffin for her work on the minutes from the December 13, 2018 meeting. Dr. Wilkinson moved to approve the minutes from the December 14 meeting as presented; seconded by Ms. Buster. Motion passed unanimously.

- Q: Could we get some clarification about the records retention policies as they relate to officer discipline?
- A: Destruction of records schedules are the same in the city charter and the collective bargaining agreement, but tracking of disciplinary actions still occur in the aggregate without the ability to connect the record to an officer.

REPORTS FROM THE SUBCOMMITTEES

- A. Hiring/Recruiting – no updates since last meeting – scheduled meeting for January 11, 2019
- B. Training – materials we have been waiting for from CPD have been received and next meeting will be scheduled after we’ve had time to review the materials
- C. 21st Century Policing – no updates
- D. Hot Topics – first meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2019 – study room 1 @ Northside Library
- E. Timeline for reports
 - 1. Full commission – April
 - 2. Notification – reminder to include Elon Simms in email notification so that his office can staff subcommittee meetings.

REPORT FROM CHAIR JACKSON

After months of reviewing current operational procedures and practices for CPD, we are beginning to move into the next phase of our work. Just a reminder of our charge from Mayor Ginther: to assist the City of Columbus in learning about those things that we should stop, start or do differently to improve the work of CPD. As you become more engaged in your work, please keep this charge in mind as well as best practices for police departments nationally.

PRESENTATION FROM MATRIX CONSULTING

Richard Brady, president and lead consultant on this project for Matrix Consulting, presented an interim report to the Commission.

- I. Scope of Work
 - A. Staffing – are sworn and civilian staffing levels optimal given the needs of the city, including high levels of community engagement?
 - B. Community Engagement – what are the optimal approaches and programs for community policing, community engagement and problem-oriented policing for Columbus?
 - C. Policies – are policies and practices aligned with best practices, especially critical police such as use of force?
 - D. Training – is the amount and type of training received appropriate the needs for Columbus Police personnel and the City?
 - E. Transparency – do complaint reviews and officer disciplinary processes reflect best practices, are data-driven and evidence-based?
- II. Activities to Date and In Process
 - A. Extensive input from law enforcement personnel through interviews and an employee survey:
 - 1. Over 150 staff interviews conducted with personnel from every rank and division

2. Draft employee survey has been developed – commissioners were given ample opportunity for review and comment just ahead of today’s meeting
3. Employee focus group meetings are being planned
- B. Input from the community through an online survey and conduct focus group meetings:
 1. Draft community survey has been developed – Public Values has been subcontracted to conduct this survey, from a statistically-valid and representative cohort. Work to begin in February.
 2. Community group meetings are being planned, facilitated by local firm, RAMA. Work to begin in February.
- C. In-depth data collection of CPD’s service levels, staff utilization, operations and management
 1. Draft descriptive profile has been developed and is being reviewed by CPD – sets the stage for questions, review, and transformation
- D. Activities to Come
 1. Community and employee focus group meetings – late January through February
 2. Community and employee surveys – late January through February
 3. Comparing the CPD to best practices in other larger cities – a draft comparative survey instrument is being developed.
 4. Detailed analysis of staffing needs, community partnerships, and internal support systems – to follow the steps outlined above.
 5. Continued collaboration with the City, the Police Division, and the Community Safety Advisory Commission.
- E. Focus of Community Input
 1. Two forms community input are being developed for this study:
 - a. community survey - a statistically valid survey designed to get representative views on policing from Columbus’ various communities and perspectives
 - b. community focus group meetings –at least four are being planned to provide an opportunity for more in depth input to the project team
 2. Principal focuses of this input are:
 - a. community relations – how is the CLO program is working?
 - b. police responsiveness – are they going call to call or is there any proactive policing going on?
 - c. proactivity and issue prioritization

Devon Clunis, project consultant for Matrix Consulting, leads a feedback session with the Commission members – Congratulations to the City of Columbus on its 28% reduction in homicides for 2018. This is a remarkable statistic!

- I. What are the most important policing issues in Columbus? What are the highest priority issues?
 - A. Perception of safety vs. reality in urban areas of the city
 - B. How can we be better at engaging the child and teen populations?
 - C. How can we be better at engaging the immigrant populations?
 - D. Can we do a better job at community policing? How do we improve the community engagement piece with communities who are afraid of interacting with the police? How do we overcome a historical, adversarial relationship between the police and the African-American community?
 - E. Time and technology – although technology has improved policing in many aspects, it also slows us down in terms of filing reports, leaving less time to engage with the public.
 - F. In terms of income disparity, how are we policing the most affluent as opposed to the most marginalized?

G. How can we improve transparency?

II. What is the Police Division doing about these issues – both positive actions and those needing improvement?

A. We need to expand and improve the Safe Streets Program, so that officers are spending more time on the street with residents in dialogue and non-police interactions. How can we move these excellent programs quickly into other neighborhoods?

B. How much time do sergeants spend on administrative issues – keeps them out of the neighborhoods and behind a desk too much?

C. CIT training is crucial to improving police response – more officers need to be trained and needs to be updated and refreshed. Officer Shaw commented that she was CIT trained in 2005, before the opioid crisis, without an update to the training. Mr. Clunis commented that he agreed – 70% of what officers do during their shift is not what we would consider traditional police work, and a significant portion of it is dealing with people in mental health crisis. The CIT training is critical for any police department moving forward.

D. Diversity in the police department – how does the community assist in rectifying this issue?

E. TAPS program (adolescent development training) – more officers need to participate in this program to improve relationships with teenagers.

F. Neighborhood Safety Committee - good initial response from this process

G. This commission is doing good work and we would like to continue after recommendations are made to do follow up on the work.

H. Police Division needs to take the lead on community engagement efforts

I. Training and probationary period in comparison to other departments?

J. Outreach efforts need to be expanded after dark in most vulnerable communities.

III. What roles should the Police Division have in addressing these issues?

A. Communication, cooperation, collaboration and transparency around all issues that we've addressed. Not enough of the general public knows about the innovative programs that are already happening and we must meet them where they are.

B. Recruitment efforts and hiring individuals in and from the New American communities will go a long way to improve police/community relations in these populations.

C. How will having a new chief in the future impact the results of the study? We recognize that this is a blueprint for the new chief. This division is very open to change and the new chief will benefit from having access to this work.

IV. What needs to be done within the CPD and the community to address the highest priority issues?

A. Full employment, poverty, education are issues that needs to be addressed by the entire community before the needle will move on any of the problems we've discussed here today.

Q: How is "best practice" defined by the consultant?

A: Our definition of best practices has been developed over a number of years through a myriad of projects, studies and work done with dozens of police departments throughout the country. For example, we are doing a staffing needs analysis for this project – based on our research from years of experience, is CPD utilizing its patrol officers in the most efficient way possible. Do they have any time to be proactive or are they just running from call to call. Do investigators have too big a caseload to be able to work creatively to solve the cases they are assigned?

Q: Will the community surveys be available in other languages for our Spanish-speaking and Somali-speaking populations?

- A: That need has not been identified in the contract, but we will work with the city to accomplish that if that is determined to be necessary.
- Q: How do you deal with minority populations who might be reluctant to participate in surveys of this type.
- A: Subcontractor will randomly select phone numbers in different parts of the city and will call as many people as need be to reach the number of responses to make the survey statistically viable.
- Q: Is there a plan to reach out to the 14-23 year old population during the community meeting or focus group process?
- A: Yes.
- Q: Will the recommendations be time-phased so that we can have some short-term impacts, as well as long-term and longer-term recommendations?
- A: Yes, it will be time-phased. Some issues may take longer than others due to implementation constraints, such as budgetary concerns and personnel issues.

A member of the public in attendance asked if there would still be a public session for comment on the commission's work. Also, could the website be updated more regularly so that the public can be informed of future meetings.

A commissioner asked about educational opportunities for the community around the topic of the separation of law enforcement and the judicial system. Perhaps an organization like the League of Women Voters could step into this role?

Our next meeting is Wednesday, January 23 from 2p-6p, location to be determined.

Meeting adjourned by Chair Jackson at 3:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Moore Griffin
Recording Secretary