

CIVILIAN POLICE REVIEW BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, December 19, 2022



CIVILIAN POLICE REVIEW BOARD

Board

Present Janet E. Jackson, Chair
Present Brooke Burns, Vice Chair
Present Gambit Aragon
Present Mark Fluharty
Present Dr. Chenelle Jones
Present Willard McIntosh, Jr.
Present Pastor Richard Nathan
Present Kyle Strickland
Present Rev. Charles Tatum
Present Mary Younger

Guests

Present Jacqueline Hendricks
Present Richard Blunt
Present Tiara Ross
Present Lara Baker-Morrish
Present Bethany Dickess

WELCOME

Chair Jackson called meeting to order at 4:10PM. Thanks to everyone for attending this special CPRB meeting. You may have learned from the media, this special meeting is for the board to consider the matters related to statements made by Mr. Aragon regarding the Red Oak event December 3, 2022. Additionally, you have been able to review the video of the December 6, 2022 board meeting. Mr. Aragon did not disclose during the board meeting the comments he had made on social media prior to the board meeting. Mr. Aragon did not disclose he had been personally involved with the security of the event. A two-thirds vote is needed to make a recommendation of removal from the board, to the Mayor for Neglect of Duty. We are required to follow the Bylaws and Pledge of Ethical Conduct. Mr. Aragon had agreed to follow the Ethical Conduct. We will discuss these important matters during the executive session. Mr. Aragon will be excluded from executive session.

Chair Jackson gave Mr. Aragon opportunity to address board before going into Executive Session.

Mr. Aragon-simple goal in life, to elevate the voices of our community. Believes right is right and that's a full stop. Hold the line down for our younger Americans. Accepted this board position for few reasons: to be a living testament to my community against the abuse of police, do my part to save black Trans lives, and to see firsthand what good this board can do. I didn't even make it two years on the board. I can emphatically say this board will not do anything positive. It wasn't lost on me that most of our time has been spent training and a lot of it was propaganda. I'm on the spectrum, have a problem with two things: I hate having to reread something that I've learned once before and I do not like to be lied to. I'm not a politician, I actually want to help my community. Your

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decision today forces my community to do what we've always done which is solve these problems for ourselves. Just wait, it's going to be wild. Thank you.

Chair Jackson-thank you to Mr. Aragon. In light of what has been presented today, do I have a motion to go into Executive Session to consider the removal of member Aragon from CPRB?

Kyle Strickland-quick question in terms of moving into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. I have concerns about the Executive Session as it relates to a personnel matter and how this applies to volunteer board members. Chair Jackson-we have the authority to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter. We will come back to the public before the vote, after the Executive Session.

Chair Jackson asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. Brooke Burns moved, Mary Younger seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Brooke Burns- yes

Mark Fluharty- yes

Chair Jackson-yes

Dr. Jones-yes

Willard McIntosh-yes

Pastor Nathan-yes

Kyle Strickland-yes

Mary Younger-yes

Rev Tatum-not yet arrived

Board dismissed for Executive Session at 4:20 PM.

Executive Session ended and public meeting re-adjoined at 5:56PM.

Chair Jackson- I'm not going to issue an apology to those still here but we needed to have a discussion. Plan to continue the meeting for some period of time. Board has concluded its Executive Session and returned to public session. Is there a motion for Mr. Aragon's



removal? Mark Fluharty made motion to remove Gambit Aragon from CPRB for neglect of duty, and seconded by Rev Tatum. Chair Jackson opened the meeting for discussion before the vote.

Kyle Strickland-one of the conversations the CPRB has to face is how we present ourselves to the public. At the end of the day, when we review cases we have to be impartial and objective on decisions made. As a member of this body, a lot of people have a lot of opinions of what this board should or shouldn't be. Someone's individual comments on social media has to be clearer because there isn't anything in place now. If this board determines that some of the statements are a violation of our policies and procedures, I think we can make that determination. Are we going to take the step, the action, to remove someone from the board for neglect of duty? I don't think we should take that stance. Everyone has diverse perspectives on this review board. It is up to us to uphold standards and not let our biases come in to play. If you can't acknowledge those biases then we shouldn't be on the board. Do not feel this issue rises to the occasion of removing someone from the board.

Chair Jackson-the motion would be to send the recommendation to the Mayor, these are the steps in the process. Motion to recommend to the Mayor to remove? Yes, Mr. Fluharty that is the motion. Lara Baker-Morris clarified this is the right process.

Gambit Aragon-what is the point of this meeting if the Mayor already asked for my resignation. Lara Baker-Morrish-at this point the board is discussing this matter, you have a conflict of interest and cannot participate in the conversation. You are permitted to be here and listen.

Brooke Burns-want to distinguish between what Gambit Aragon referenced and what the Mayor recommended. Part of what the board has focused on is from an ethical standpoint, professional conduct standards, and failure to disclose at the last meeting that he had firsthand knowledge of the event while attempting to get the board to vote. Our bylaws all mention these things. Our meeting was in response to the social media postings, not the Mayor.

Rev Tatum-regarding the Mayor's statement versus my decision. My decision is based on the evidence presented to me, what we signed when we first came on the board about being unbiased. Everyone has a certain amount of biases but we have to check those



things.

Willard McIntosh-understand what member Strickland is saying but with the comments made earlier, I am under the impression that Mr. Aragon no longer wanted to be on the board. I thought we would hear an apology or maybe what was meant by some of the things posted. If what he said is going to effect the integrity of the board, then we have to do what we have to do.

Mary Younger-we need to maintain our credibility. The citizens of Columbus voted for us, they want us here. We are diverse and come from different backgrounds. We have to treat CPD the same as we do as anyone else, treat everyone equally. We can't have a bias or prejudice against anyone.

Pastor Nathan-second what Rev Tatum said. My decision and comments in Executive Session are not in response to the Mayor. This information was brought to my attention by the board Chair. In the eyes of this community, can this board continue with a member that said "F the police"? Member Aragon drew a line in the sand saying here is where I am, this is who I am. That communicated a lack of objectivity, not planning to be unbiased. We must be willing to check our biases at the door, not coming in with a hostility or advocacy for the police or a particular group in the community. Public statements have raised a red flag.

Dr. Jones-something to be said about diversity and opinion. We all signed a code of ethical conduct, we all have agreed to our duties. A social media policy would definitely be clearer cut but this is a public facing body. We signed things that said we would behave in a certain manner. There was a violation with the ethical conduct. We want diversity on the board and this is all a very unfortunate situation.

Chair Jackson-I believe everyone has spoken. Mr. Strickland you have another question or comment.

Kyle Strickland- there will come a time when this review board will have to address these types matter. This will happen again in the future. As a public facing body, representing the community and providing different perspectives we haven't even gotten through the first set of cases. If Mr. Aragon was a member of the IG's office, this would be a different story. There are checks in place on top of the individual decisions we make. To make a decision to



remove a board member based on a violation of policies and neglect of duty without maybe having other steps in place, do we have a discipline process in place? I don't think we have the processes in place. This issue warrants a process to be in place. A case of malfeasance, it's a different story. Malfeasance could be removal but neglect of duty seems like an odd recommendation. Don't think we have the policies in force to move forward with this. We haven't even talked to Mr. Aragon as a board. This action sets a precedent and do not think we should move forward with it.

Chair Jackson-a couple of comments. I have said we'd be in a learning process since our board convened. Mr. Strickland, we will have the ability after taking today's action we can add other steps in the future, not just based on one members opinion but collectively.

Kyle Strickland-speak directly to board members here. I really hope the decision we make going forward, we think about the type of board we can showcase. When there is a decision like this, that we as a board can put processes into place to set standards. I think it is a rash decision for removal prior to processes in place. As a board I would recommend either a no vote or abstaining from this decision.

Mark Fluharty-we all accepted responsibility to represent this board. Review these cases with credibility. It's not easy but once your credibility is gone, it's gone. Other people will make that same decision.

Chair Jackson-member Strickland you have shared your views on everything that has come before us. Do you want to specifically discuss credibility?

Kyle Strickland-credibility does come into question to be able to make a decision.

Mark Fluharty-under Roberts Rules of Order I've called for the question.

The Chair will now indicate the discussion has concluded and will call for the vote. Once again this is a roll call vote.

Brooke Burns- yes

Mark Fluharty- yes

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Chair Jackson-yes

Dr. Jones-yes

Willard McIntosh-yes

Pastor Nathan-yes

Kyle Strickland-no

Mary Younger-yes

Rev Tatum-yes

Chair Jackson-motion passes and will be referred to the Mayor for recommendation of Mr. Aragon's removal.

Motion to adjourn by Mary Younger, and Pastor Nathan seconded. Unanimous vote to adjourn.