



**Community Policing Advisory Board
Minutes
WebEx Board Meeting
Thursday, March 25, 2021 7:00 p.m.**

Members Present: Rafael Borrás, Michele Egan, Jaime Espinosa, Bernadette Goovaerts, Lori Horkan, Chiara Jaffe, Matthew Perkins, Robin Prather, David Smith, Renoir Dawson-Finan, and Michael Scott. Donna Barns was absent.

Staff Present: Chief of Police Victor Brito, Senior Assistant City Attorney Ashley McFarland, and Police Executive Assistant Andrea Escher.

I. Welcome

Chief of Police Victor Brito opened the meeting via WebEx at 7:03 p.m. He welcomed everyone and congratulated them on being the inaugural members of the newly created Community Policing Advisory Board (CPAB).

II. Introductions

The Board members and staff each took turns introducing themselves, discussing their backgrounds, and their interest in joining the CPAB and what they hope this Board can accomplish.

III. Overview of the Purpose of the Board

Chief of Police Brito reviewed the Mayor and Council's expectations and purpose of the Community Policing Advisory Board. Chief Brito invited the members to visit the police department, take a tour, meet the staff and officers. He suggested the CPAB participate in the patrol Ride Along program, as well as provided the date for the upcoming Fair and Impartial Policing Training session scheduled for June 12, 2021.

IV. Proposed Meeting Guidelines

Chief of Police Brito went over the Open Meetings Act and other documents provided by the City Clerk to the Board prior to this meeting.

V. Review of Materials Submitted by Staff

Chief of Police Brito reviewed the packet of information submitted to the Board prior to the meeting, which provided an overview of the Rockville City Police Department.

VI. Discussion

Board member Goovaerts requested a breakdown of the types of crime in Rockville, an overview of what crimes take place, and if there is a crime map.

Board member Goovaerts requested a racial/gender breakdown of personnel in the police department.

Board member Egan asked Chief Brito to outline issues and areas of opportunities in the department for the CPAB to address.

Board member Espinosa suggested it would be helpful to spend time getting to know the issues others in the community are experiencing. He suggested inviting people from the Rockville community/neighborhood associations as well as organizations to attend a meeting to share their concerns. There was additional discussion among the Board that some of the community associations/groups do not represent the people who have legitimate issues, nor represent the bias the others have faced. The CPAB would like to find ways to identify those people and speak with them.

Board member Goovaerts stated she would like to find an alternative option for the use of handcuffs for police officers when they must restrain people.

Board member Dawson-Finan stated he feels community outreach, such as Coffee with a Cop, are very successful and the group should find more ways to do outreach with other organizations and groups.

Questions were raised by the CPAB as to the boundary limits in the city, and the role of Montgomery County Police and other agencies in Rockville. Chief of Police Brito provided a detailed explanation of the Mutual Aid Agreement between RCPD and Montgomery County Police, the types of crimes that Montgomery County Police investigates here in Rockville, specifically homicides, fatal traffic accidents. Chief Brito explained RCPD is not a full-service agency and due to its small size, there is not enough staffing to create those types of major investigatory units.

Board member Horkan noted that it is important for the CPAB to figure out what they should focus on. She noted that the theme of discussions with the Chief were, building a sense of trust in the community, needing voices, looking at stakeholders (youth organizations, seniors, etc.) and putting on their research hats to determine the best ways to identify and communicate with them.

Board member Egan asked whether actions/recommendations for the Rockville PD would also impact the other, multiple, jurisdictions that operated in Rockville.

Board member Perkins stated he would like the CPAB to look at officer wellness, and reducing isolation, that the officers should be embedded in Rockville, not just only seen when needed. He also stated it is important to focus on what is the role of the police in prevention of mental illness as well as homelessness. He also noted it is imperative for the police department to be transparent and collaborative.

VII. Voting of Chairperson

Board member Espinosa reminded the members if they want to serve as Chairperson, they must complete the Open Meetings Act training.

Board member Perkins suggested the Board consider nominating a temporary Chairperson for a few months while the Board gets to know each other. After some discussion, Senior Assistant City Attorney Ashley McFarland advised there is no reference in the City policy allowing a temporary Chairperson.

Motion: to appoint Lori Horkan as the Chairperson of the Community Policing Advisory Board for a period of one year.

Moved by Board member Smith, seconded by Board member Goovaerts, and unanimously approved.

VIII. Timelines and dates for meetings

Based on the available open dates on the City's Boards and Commissions meeting calendar, the first Wednesday of the month, the first Thursday of the month and the fourth Thursday of the month are the only options for a regular meeting of the Community Policing Advisory Board.

The Board unanimously agreed on the first Thursday of the month.

The Board agreed the next meeting of the CPAB will be Thursday, April 1, 2021.

IX. Future Meetings

Thursday, April 1, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, May 6, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, June 3, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Motion: to adjourn

Moved by Board member Espinosa, seconded by Board member Egan and approved unanimously.