

MEETING MINUTES

CIVILIAN POLICE REVIEW AND ADVISORY BOARD

Special Meeting

October 24, 2023, 12:00 p.m.

Online via Zoom

Minutes by Catherine Fonseca

Members present include: Richard Burks, Catherine Fonseca, Dady Dadyburjor, Robert Cohen, Rachel Fetty, Megan Gandy, Bryan Church

Non-members present include: Brandon Viola, MPD

1) CALL TO ORDER: Call to order at 12:06pm

2) OLD BUSINESS

A. Committee Reports

i. ByLaws Committee

Dady moves to vote on adoption of Article VIII.E versus Article VIII.F. Megan second. Motion carries.

In favor of adopting Article VIII.E are members Richard, Dady, Bob, Rachel, and Megan

In favor of adopting Article VIII.F are members Catherine and Bryan

Article VIII.E carries and will be permanently added to the bylaws

Dady moves to include mention of an annual meeting where the chief of police visits the board to debrief us on emerging matters and departmental priorities. No further discussion or opposition. Bob to include such a provision in the new version of bylaws under Article VII.

Discussion ensues regarding Article V.B.2. Question arises as to whether this disqualifies a seat on CPRAB if the person holds other board membership. Clarification that Article IV explicitly defines "Morgantown City Administration" which excludes uncompensated board membership.

Board recognizes Bob's diligent work on the bylaws and shepherding us through its various iterations.

Action: Bob to create a new version of bylaws, offer a small window (24 hours) to provide further comment, then will supply Ryan Simonton, City Attorney, a copy for review. At the upcoming regular meeting, Bob intends for us to vote on the adoption of the final bylaws.

ii. Training Committee

NACOLE has been unresponsive. Rich shares his disappointment in a webinar he recently attended sponsored by NACOLE, indicating it was not as relevant to our operations as he'd hoped. Rich shares that he would ideally like to find a training that speaks to our board's scope and limitations.

Megan observes that our board resembles more of an advisory board and could potentially expand the scope of our search to include similar advisory boards that are not necessarily attached to police, to ascertain how they operate and function.

Some discussion ensued about the possibility of contracting Jim Nolan of WVU to provide a training and if the bylaws permitted such a thing. Discussion ensued about expanding current bylaw language to be more permissive but also ensure the board is consulting credible experts in the field. Suggestion was made to review NACOLE's past webinar offerings for relevant, though not tailor-made, training (https://www.nacole.org/past_webinars) which are open access and free.

Action: The committee will discuss the matter in-depth, offline. Reminder that the committee comprises of Megan, Bryan, Catherine, & Rich.

iii. Community Outreach Committee

Megan observed that a December public forum would likely not get much attendance, given the number of holiday obligations folks have. Board agreed that a January date would be more appropriate to align with the public's availability as well as to allow the Board more time to plan.

The observation was made that the Community Outreach Committee is now only comprised of Megan and Rich, in light of Nicole's departure.

Action: Community outreach committee to discuss planning logistics offline. Reminder that the committee comprises of Megan, Rachel, and Bob. Nikki was formerly on the committee, but has since left the board.

iv. Statistics & Reporting Committee

Catherine presented new draft of proposed data points for statistical reporting, based off feedback from the board. She reports no response has yet been received by Jim Nolan. Board agrees that we should move forward with translating our data point wishlist with the corresponding labels used within the MPD system. We can always invite Jim to review at a later point as well, when he has more availability.

Rich brings up the issue of needing to tidy up the data to make it more legible for the public, rather than in raw file format. Agreement that the annual report could provide more user-friendly infographic summaries of data patterns observed, whereas quarterly publications would be in their raw format.

Action: Catherine to work with Rich and the MPD staff person who queries the reporting system to start mapping our data point list with their local categories. Catherine will also watch a data-related NACOLE webinar.

B. Case Study

Observations were shared among those who were able to view the materials supplied by MPD regarding the Sheetz Incident to be used for the case study. Some questions were raised regarding the reason behind the quantity of officers, at what point in the bodycam footage are behaviors observable to warrant charges such as obstructing a police officer, and why the intervention regarding temporary housing wasn't pursued further by the officer.

Some members of the Board commented they were generally impressed with the response of MPD, given a number of contextualizing factors. The incident seemed rather tame and the response appeared appropriate, particularly so for the first officers on the scene.

Action: Rich to deposit video files supplied by MPD to the shared drive. Rich should feel free to contact Catherine for technical support

Action: All board members are encouraged to bring, to the next regular meeting, final questions they have regarding the case study so that we as a Board can assemble and coalesce a cohesive set of questions for MPD during the review.

C. Board Vacancies

It is unclear what is stalling City Council when it comes to filling our vacant board seats. Rich to reach out to Councilor Brian Butcher, as our liaison to City Council.

3) ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 1:35pm

Upcoming meetings:

Regular Board Meeting on Thursday, November 9, 2023 (hybrid) from 12:00-1:30pm