



Minutes

Citizens League City of Saint Paul Community-First Public Safety Commission

Wednesday, January 6th, 2020

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Virtual meeting via Zoom video

Commission Members present: Co-Chair John Marshall, Co-Chair Acooa Ellis, Ms. Sue Abderholden, Ms. Chauntyll Allen, Mr. Cedrick Baker, Mr. Sami Banat, Mr. Jason Barnett, Rev. Dr. Ron Bell, Ms. Monica Bravo, Mr. Scott Burns, Ms. Chikamso Chijioke, Mrs. JoAnn Clark, Mr. Sam Clark, Ms. Sasha Cotton, Ms. Sierra Cumberland, Ms. Natalia Davis, Mr. Julio Fesser, Ms. Anna-Marie Foster, Ms. Simone Hardeman-Jones, Mr. Liban Ibrahim (designee for Mr. Garaad Sahal), Mr. David Squier Jones, Ms. Laura Jones, Ms. Clara Juneman, Ms. Alicia Lucio, Ms. Wintana Melekin, Mr. Stephen Moore, Ms. Maureen Perryman, Ms. Amy Peterson, Dr. Suzanne Rivera, the Honorable Nicole Starr, Mr. Mario Stokes, Ms. LyLy Vang Yang, Mr. Jai Winston, Ms. Heather Worthington, Mr. Pheng Xiong.

Members not present: Ms. Suwana Kirkland, Mr. Amin Omar, Mr. Garaad Sahal, and Mr. Teshite Wako, Mr. Ahmed Anshur, Mr. Ameen Ford, Ms. Suwayda Hussein, Ms. Farhio Khalif, Mr. Frank Ortiz, Mr. Mark Ross, Ms. Olyvia Rayne Taylor, and Mr. Otis Zanders.

Special guests: Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, Councilmember Mitra Jalali, Ramsey County Board Chair Toni Carter, Ms. Nancie Pass, and Deputy Chief Matt Toupal.

Staff & staff support present: Ms. Kate Cimino, Ms. Amanda Koonjbeharry, Mr. Jacob Taintor, and Ms. Madeline McCue.

Proposed outcomes for this meeting

- State commission charge and proposed goals.
- Time for Commission members to connect with other Commission members via small groups.
- Understand City of Saint Paul and Mayor Carters public safety initiatives and how the Community-First Public Safety Commission ties into that work.
- Approval of December 16, 2020 Commission minutes.
- Reach consensus on Guiding Principles.
- Receive information on priority 4 and priority 5 calls, understanding of how Ramsey County Emergency Communications Center (RCECC) works with the Saint Paul Police Department and Saint Paul Fire Department.

- Understanding of current initiatives through the Saint Paul Police Department and response protocol for priority 4 and priority 5 calls.
- Discuss future subcommittees.
- Time for questions.

Minutes

Co-chair Ellis called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

Opening and Approval of Minutes

Co-chair Ellis welcomed the commission and reminded members of some of the logistical elements of the meeting. She reviewed the proposed outcomes for this meeting (*see above*). She also reviewed the commission's charge, as specified by the City of Saint Paul to make recommendations to the Mayor and the Saint Paul City Council regarding:

- Alternative first response options to low-priority calls for service;
- Approaches for ongoing community involvement in the City of Saint Paul's Community-First Public Safety Framework; and,
- Consideration of the creation of a city-staffed office to integrate the initiatives and strategies of the Community-First Public Safety Framework.

Co-chair Ellis acknowledged the recent officer-involved shooting and death of Dolal Idd in Minneapolis. She held space for those who were grieving and noted that this commission's work may be informed by this event.

Co-chair Ellis continued to the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting. After reviewing Roberts Rules of Order, a standard structure in formal committees, she asked if commission would like to make any changes to the minutes.

A few members requested changes to their titles and introductions. These changes were made without contest.

Co-chair Ellis moved to approve the amended minutes; the motion passed with 32 votes.

Co-chair Ellis invited Ms. Koonjbeharry to lead the commission in a moment of mindfulness. Ms. Koonjbeharry led members in a brief exercise focusing on awareness of the self and presence in the moment despite the trying circumstances of this time.

Chat and Connect

Co-chair Marshall introduced the next activity, in which members would be split into small breakout rooms to discuss what stood out to them from the last meeting and what thoughts they were bringing into this meeting.

Co-chair Marshall sent members to breakout rooms at 9:24 am.

While members were in breakout rooms, Ms. Cimino and Ms. Koonjbeharry greeted representatives from the city and county and clarified some logistical questions.

Co-chair Marshall welcomed members back at 9:42 am and invited them to share their reflections.

Commission members noted the importance of mental health, particularly in how it intersects with homelessness. They shared their appreciation for the diversity of the commission and expressed interest in the activities of their fellow members. They expressed their concern about current events involving police response and the importance of re-establishing trust in institutions. They noted the importance of the perspective of youth.

Following a brief adjustment to the schedule, Ms. Cimino introduced Mayor Carter.

Mayor Carter thanked the commission for their work. He emphasized the importance of the commission's work to help the city figure out how to invest resources to create a diverse portfolio of public safety strategies. He explained the two aspects of the City of Saint Paul's Community-First Public Safety framework, a broader effort that spans well beyond this commission:

1. **How the city responds to crime and crises.** The immediate response to a crisis can be either an emergency response or a crisis intervention. The work of this commission is to help identify which types of calls for service should be responded to with a form of crisis intervention rather than a police response, and how that crisis intervention should occur.
2. **How the city proactively prevents crime and crises.** The city will have to balance crime reduction strategies targeted at individuals with strategies targeted at communities. (The City's efforts in this area are not within the scope of this commission.)

Co-chair Marshall thanked the Mayor for his explanations. He invited members to ask questions.

A member noted that instead of referring to "social workers" as a crisis intervention response, the commission should be aware of Minnesota's mobile mental health crisis teams, consisting of a wide variety of mental health professionals who can respond to crises.

In the chat, commission members inquired about whether the response teams would be members of the community they are serving. Members also expressed their interest in solutions for housing issues and low priority calls involving youth, as well as responses for higher priority calls.

Ms. Cimino highlighted how the work of this commission is merely one aspect of the City of Saint Paul's multifaceted Community-First Public Safety Initiative, and how the scope of this commission was limited to emergency responses to priority 4 and priority 5 calls.

The mayor confirmed, noting that the proactive responses were being carried out by other initiatives. Mayor Carter clarified that the objective of this commission is not to create a global

response model, but to figure out how to respond to priority 4 and priority 5 calls, which are largely routine, non-violent, and non-urgent situations.

In response to a member's question, Mayor Carter clarified that the commission's work could improve response times for high-priority calls. He agreed that more proactive solutions will be needed for an array of issues, especially as the city grows.

A commission member questioned how City of Saint Paul categorizes calls as "priority 4" and "priority 5" and noted some of the outdated wording used in the definitions posted online. The mayor agreed that examining the categorization of some situations was within the scope of this commission, and other commission members noted that the police had updated their language.

Mayor Carter explained to the commission that he needed concrete recommendations for the 2022 Budget.

Following a question by Ms. Koonjbeharry, Mayor Carter clarified that the specifics of the framework he presented were not official but were how he personally was thinking about the system. He also raised the possibility that the commission could recommend a transition period to a new system.

Co-Chair Marshall thanked the mayor for his time.

Mayor Carter expressed his appreciation for the members of the commission and highlighted how each member was individually selected for this commission.

In the chat, commission members asked further questions. A commissioner inquired about whether a Venn diagram would be a better structure, with an "overlap" for calls in which there should be a proactive investment but there is also a threat of escalation (e.g., drug activity). Another commission member asked about how tax incentives could be leveraged to encourage large businesses to create restorative responses to shop-lifting cases.

Co-chair Marshall invited Ms. Cimino to review the guiding principles.

Review Guiding Principles and Community Report

Ms. Cimino reviewed the updates to the commission's Guiding Principles that were suggested by members at the first meeting (*see packet*). She explained that since these principles were malleable and would be revisited throughout the commission, this document would be approved by consensus rather than by vote.

With no objections, the Guiding Principles were adopted. They will be published online.

Ms. Cimino next discussed the various methods through which the community could provide feedback to the commission, including the comments form, the email address, and the voicemail line. As there has not yet been any feedback to be reviewed by the Commission, Ms. Cimino concluded the segment.

Ms. Cimino dismissed the commission for a five-minute break at 10:30 am.

Presentations by Ms. Nancie Pass and Mr. Matt Toupal

Co-chair Marshall welcomed the commission back at 10:36.

Co-chair Marshall introduced the next two speakers. Ms. Nancie Pass is the Director of the Ramsey County Emergency Communications Center and has worked in public safety dispatch services for 29 years. Mr. Matt Toupal is the Deputy Chief of Operations for the Saint Paul Police Department. He oversees three police districts in Saint Paul and has been a member of the Saint Paul Police Department for 32 years.

Ms. Pass presented about the workings of the Ramsey County Emergency Communications Center, which receives and dispatches emergency responders to 911 calls. She discussed how the dispatch center is staffed, how calls are passed between employees, how calls are categorized and prioritized, and how calls are dispatched to different departments of emergency responders. *See Addendum A for details.*

Mr. Toupal presented about how officers received dispatched calls, how officers respond to different types of calls, how 911 callers can directly report activity online, and how calls are classified and how those classifications may change as situations develop. *See Addendum B for details.*

Co-chair Marshall invited the commission members to ask questions. *See Addenda A & B for details.*

Co-chair Marshall thanked them for their presentations and invited Ms. Cimino to introduce the subcommittees.

Subcommittee introductions

Ms. Cimino thanked the presenters and invited members to post any further questions in the chat.

Ms. Cimino explained how subcommittees would proceed.

Three subcommittees would meet largely during regular meeting times:

- 1. Outreach** – This group will support all outreach efforts related to our three public/community town halls – specifically helping with the town halls meeting design, promotion, participation, and feedback review. In addition to our town halls this group will provide input and next steps on all community feedback we receive through the voicemail, email, and comment form.
- 2. Research** – This group may review data collected about alternative response models in other cities; research what an office of violence prevention could look like; explore technology that may support better emergency response; and assess risk and feasibility of recommendations being considered by this Commission.
- 3. Inclusion** – This group will intersect with the other groups to ensure that we're being as inclusive as possible, looking at perspectives or experiences that should be included

(e.g. unsheltered, mental health, disability, youth, substance use/addiction, etc.); help identify topics we should focus on. Group may suggest organizations, data sets, or speakers to bring in to the Commission.

Ms. Cimino noted that members will be able to list their preferences for subcommittee placement in the forthcoming meeting evaluation form. Subcommittees will meet at the next commission meeting.

Feedback review

Ms. Koonjeharry thanked members for completing their meeting evaluations from the previous meeting and encouraged members to complete this week's evaluation, in which they could provide suggestions for future meetings.

Close

Co-chair Marshall laid out the proposed general timeline for the commission: he expected some themes to emerge in the February, more granular details to emerge in March, and the commission to be crafting recommendations in April. He thanked the commission for their time.

Co-chair Ellis checked that there were no further questions, thanked the commission, and concluded the meeting at 11:55 a.m.