



Minutes

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

Wednesday, February 24th, 2021

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Virtual meeting via Zoom video

Commission Members present: Co-chair John Marshall, Co-chair Acooa Ellis, Councilmember Mitra Jalali, Ramsey County Board Chair Toni Carter, Ms. Chauntyll Allen, Mr. Derek Anders-Turner (designee for Ms. Suwana Kirkland), Mr. Ahmed Anshur, Mr. Cedrick Baker, Mr. Sami Banat, Mr. Jason Barnett, Rev. Dr. Ron Bell, Ms. Monica Bravo, Mr. Scott Burns, Mr. Elliot Butay (designee for Ms. Sue Abderholden), Ms. Chikamso Chijioke, Mrs. JoAnn Clark, Mr. Sam Clark, Ms. Sasha Cotton, Ms. Sierra Cumberland, Ms. Natalia Davis, Mr. Julio Fesser, Mr. Ameen Ford, Ms. Anna-Marie Foster, Ms. Simone Hardeman-Jones, Ms. Suwayda Hussein, Mr. David Squier Jones, Ms. Laura Jones, Ms. Clara Juneman, Ms. Farhio Khalif, Ms. Alicia Lucio, Ms. Wintana Melekin, Mr. Stephen Moore, Mr. Amin Omar, Mr. Frank Ortiz, Ms. Maureen Perryman, Ms. Amy Peterson, Dr. Suzanne Rivera, Mr. Mark Ross, Mr. Garaad Sahal, the Honorable Nikki Starr, Mr. Mario Stokes, Ms. Olyvia Rayne Taylor, Ms. LyLy Vang Yang, Mr. Teshite Wako, Mr. Jai Winston, Ms. Heather Worthington, Mr. Pheng Xiong, and Mr. Otis Zanders.

Members not present: Ms. Sue Abderholden, Rev. Dr. Ron Bell, Ms. Monica Bravo, Mr. Ameen Ford, Ms. Suwayda Hussein, Ms. Suwana Kirkland, Ms. Wintana Melekin, and Ms. Olyvia Rayne Taylor.

Special guests: Ms. Artika Roller and Ms. Shelley Cline.

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

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 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:

1. Alternative first response options to low-priority calls for service;
2. Approaches for ongoing community involvement in the City of Saint Paul's Community-First Public Safety Framework; and,
3. 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 continued to the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting. A motion to approve the minutes as written passed with 26 votes.

Co-chair Ellis invited a commission member to lead the group in a moment of mindfulness.

Chat and Connect

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

Co-chair Marshall sent members to breakout rooms at 9:13 am.

While members were in breakout rooms, Ms. Amanda Koonjbeharry greeted presenters and representatives from the city and county.

Co-chair Marshall welcomed members back at 9:23 am and invited them to share their reflections. Co-chair Marshall began by sharing his group's eagerness to begin crafting recommendations.

One group representative added that they discussed their concerns about youth, law enforcement, community safety, and the upcoming Chauvin trial.

Two other commission members shared that their groups were also thinking about the Chauvin trial.

Co-chair Marshall thanked the commission members for their thoughts and invited Ms. Koonjbeharry to discuss community feedback.

Community Report

Ms. Koonjbeharry greeted the commission and encouraged members to continue sharing the links to provide feedback.

She explained that a subset of commission members has been planning the town hall events, which will occur in several series and will seek to inform the community about the commission's charge; hear comments and insights from community members; and share and discuss discussions both initial and final recommendations.

Commission Updates

Ms. Kate Cimino explained the plan for honing the commission's mission and fulfilling the commission's charge for the next meetings. The first priority of the commission will be to assess the possibilities for an alternative response to Priority 4 & 5 call and to develop pertinent recommendations.

How we will proceed with the "office of violence prevention" segment of our charge:

The creation of a city-staffed violence prevention office & community engagement platform, while an equal priority, will be concurrently addressed with the understanding that the commission's charge is to *begin* consideration of these programs, not necessarily to provide cohesive recommendations regarding their creation and structure. The consideration of these programs, as part of the mayor's Community-First Public Safety initiative, will continue past the completion of this commission.

Ms. Cimino laid out the commission's goals for the recommendations regarding violence prevention office:

- Determine whether to recommend and Office of Violence Prevention;
- Consider what to name such an office;
- Identify the office's general programmatic focus;
- Suggest where the office would be housed within the government; and,
- Suggest whether to include an ongoing community advisory function connected to the office.

Commission members will be able to share their thoughts on these questions via survey.

During future meetings, representatives from the Harvard Government Performance Lab (GPL) will present their findings from a national scan and exploration of a potential Office of Violence Prevention in Saint Paul.

A final survey of the commission will be conducted in April to understand members' thoughts on these questions. Results will be shared with the commission and will be incorporated into recommendations.

Commission members are invited to continue their involvement following the conclusion of the commission. Members can reach out to Andrew Bentley directly at abentley@hks.harvard.edu.

How we will proceed with the P4-5 alternative response segment of our charge:

In keeping with our focus on alternative response to low-priority calls, the objective of this meeting today will be to identify specific types of Priority 4 and 5 calls for service that Commission members want to address and develop a recommendation for alternative response.

Ms. Cimino presented a review of the information has been presented to the commission about the current response to Priority 4 and 5 calls. *See Addendum A.*

Ms. Cimino dismissed the commission for a break at 10:25 am.

Ms. Cimino reconvened the commission at 10:32 am.

Prioritization Activity

Ms. Koonjbeharry led the commission in a consensus workshop to help the commission begin to identify which specific call types they felt were most in need of an alternative response. Ms. Koonjbeharry explained: following a review of the call types within Priority 4 and 5 calls, members will identify the 10 call types that they feel are most in need of an alternative response and which call types they needed to learn more about. They will then be asked to refine their list to the most important 5. Commission members will be split into small groups and each group will deliberate and ultimately decide on which four call types they feel most strongly about. Commissioners will share and discuss these lists.

Ms. Koonjbeharry began by reviewing the call types, as shown in *Addendum A*. Members identified their top 10 and top 5 call types. Ms. Koonjbeharry dismissed members into small groups at 10:55am.

Ms. Koonjbeharry reconvened the meeting at 11:17am.

Ms. Koonjbeharry invited commission members to share their groups' conclusions.

Group 1

- **Juvenile**
- **Disorderly conduct**
- **Welfare check**
- **Narcotics**

Group 2

1. **Assist citizen** (5 votes)
2. **Welfare check** (4 votes)
3. **Juvenile** (4 votes)
4. **Disorderly conduct** (3 votes)
5. *Category: Vehicles* (2 votes)
6. **Disturbance/noise complaint** (2 votes)

Group 3

1. *category: Nuisances*
2. *category: Vehicles*
3. **Juvenile**
4. *general: Opportunities to decriminalize*

Group 4

- *category: Persons in Crisis*
- **Child abuse**
- **Violation of an order for protection**
- **Juvenile**

5. **Welfare Check**
6. *general: Theft, Burglary, Robbery*

- **Civil problem**
- **Motor vehicle theft**
- **Graffiti**

Group 5

- **Juvenile**
- **Welfare check**
- **Disturbance/noise complaints**
- **Assist citizen**

Group 6

- **Juvenile**
- **Civil problem**
- **Welfare check**
- **Disorderly conduct**

Note: Some groups ranked their results while others did not.

A member of Group 2 noted that moving the response to vehicle-related calls away from police could free up some of the many police resources devoted to vehicle-related calls.

A member of Group 5 highlighted that by focusing on call types that make of a large portion of calls for service, the commission could make a big impact by a narrow list of frequent call types.

Presentation

Co-chair Marshall introduced Ms. Artika Roller, the executive director of the Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault (MNCASA), and Ms. Shelley Cline, the executive director of the Saint Paul & Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (SPIP).

Co-chair Marshall welcomed Ms. Roller and Ms. Cline.

Ms. Roller and Ms. Cline presented about how public safety intersects with domestic and sexual violence. *See Addenda B and C for details.*

Co-chair Marshall thanked Ms. Roller and Ms. Cline for their presentations.

Questions and Close

Co-chair Marshall thanked the commission and concluded the meeting at 12:02 p.m.