



POLICE REVIEW & ADVISORY BOARD

A Department of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

Minutes from the Meeting of January 31, 2024

Board Members present: Chair Alexandra Fallon, Maria Arlotto, Gina LaRoche, Beverly Sealey

City Staff present: Executive Director Brian Corr; CPD Director of Professional Standards, Training and Certification James Mulcahy; CPD Sergeant Michael LeVecque

Chair Fallon called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Public Comment

John Hawkinson stated that he had been viewing the December 2023 meeting via Zoom and that during the meeting he had wished to obtain a copy of a draft review of the draft CPD policy on internal affairs investigations being discussed by the Board. He said that despite “raising” his virtual hand it was super hard to obtain a copy compared to if he had been attending a meeting in person, and that because the Board did not acknowledge his virtual hand at that moment, he was not sure his hand had been seen. He stated that Exec. Dir. Corr sent him the document after the meeting, but he was not very happy with the process. He further stated that when he reviewed the document, he believed it indicated that the Board had discussed the draft CPD policy and that it therefore must have been considered by the Board and was confused about why the draft CPD policy was not a public record.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The Board voted by roll call vote to approve the minutes of December 12, 2023, on a motion from Board Member Sealey, seconded by Board Member Arlotto, with Board members Arlotto and Sealey and Chair Fallon voting in favor and Board Member LaRoche abstaining.

Executive Director’s Report

- Exec. Dir. Corr shared a draft of the online complaint form being developed by the City’s IT staff and noted that it included his last set of edits.
 - Board members asked a number of questions regarding any limits on the amount of text a complainant could enter using the form, any limitations or restrictions on uploading documents, photos, or other files, and made suggestions regarding additions to the form.
 - Board members emphasized their desire to launch the online complaint form with an announcement in the City’s daily email update and use that as a jumping-off point for an outreach initiative and offered advice to Exec. Dir. Corr about the most effective way to make that happen.
- He reported that the training with the CPD’s Clinical Services Unit has been rescheduled for March 15 and confirmed that Board members would receive an electronic invitation to attend.
- He explained that the Board’s work to review a number of CPD policies would need to be paused for the time being. He explained that he had spoken with both Chair Fallon and CPD Commissioner Elow, and that based on the requirement of collective bargaining and policy implementation, the Board’s policy review work is being paused and the timeframe for continuing that work is uncertain as the bargain process does not have a specific timeline. He

noted that he is working with them to ensure that Board has meaningful input and that individuals board members can still review policies.

Report from Board Chair Fallon

- Chair Fallon reviewed a presentation she had prepared on setting goals for the Board and its work in 2024. She provided an overview and as different subject areas came up, board members and staff shared their thoughts and ideas.
- Regarding Outreach, Chair Fallon noted that the outreach effort at the Cambridge Jazz Festival had a low return on investment.
 - Exec. Dir. Corr suggested that outreach to community organizations and neighborhood groups could be more fruitful. Board Member Arlotto suggested that being able to share an online complaint form through social media, and Board members discussed the value of conducting in-person outreach at events and meetings versus using social media such as Facebook and NextDoor.
 - Board Member Sealey reminded the Board that there had been a major storm the day of the Jazz Festival, noting that it was important to take that into consideration. She stated that the Festival was not well attended, the spot that the festival organizers assigned to tables was out of the way, and that she and Chair Fallon did not have giveaways to attract people as did other tables. She noted that the Board should do it again when there is good weather.
- Regarding Training, Chair Fallon introduced the topic by noting the importance of continuing education for Board members.
 - Board Member LaRoche expressed her interest in participating in ride alongs with police officers during both daytime and night shifts. She also noted that Exec. Dir. Corr has been informing the Board of training available from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). Chair Fallon stated that she would add ride-alongs to the Board's goals.
 - In response to a question from about whether the Board had discussed having a training from the Emergency Communications Department (ECD), Exec. Dir. Corr stated that the Board had presentations from ECD and the Community Safety Department (CSD) during a Board meeting, and Chair Fallon expressed interest in having CSD come back to present after they had begun taking calls from ECD.
 - Chair Fallon noted the importance of identifying specific dates for presentations at Board meeting and for trainings.
 - In response to a question from Chair Fallon about whether Board members could come to the joint CPD/Northeastern University Police Academy and observe the scenario-based portions of CPD's ICAT training, Dir. Mulcahy stated that they have just started the newest class of cadets at the Academy and that it will continue for 19 weeks, so they could be an opportunity to do so.
 - Board Member Sealey stated that CPD now has a Facebook page, and that NACOLE had recently offered training about conducting community outreach.
- Regarding amending the Board's rules to modify the requirements for filings complaints within 60 days of an incident, Chair Fallon noted that in the past, Board members had found the language about waiving the late-filing requirement to be vague and challenging to interpret, and asked whether the Board members still saw this as a priority.
 - Board Member LaRoche noted that perhaps an online complaint form would make it easier for individuals to file complaints, thereby making the current timeliness requirement less burdensome, and that it may make sense to see the impact of the online form before moving ahead with that.
- Regarding the meeting schedule for the Board for the year, Chair Fallon reviewed a proposed schedule in the presentation she had prepared, noting that it could be helpful to add an additional Board meeting in August or early September.

- Board members discussed challenges with that idea due to summer vacations, and raised the issue of whether it was always necessary for the Board to meet when there was not a complaint and investigation to be considered in executive session. Dir. Mulcahy and Sgt. LeVecque noted that there were complaint investigations underway and that as other types of investigations are being concluded, the Board could be expecting to review them at upcoming meetings.
- As the discussion concluded, it was suggested that it would be helpful to have all members of the Board weigh in and that a summer meeting might only need to occur if there were a pending complaint and investigation that the Board needed to review. Chair Fallon stated that the Board could revisit this in May when it will be clearer what the need for additional meeting will be.

CPD Professional Standards, Training and Certification Unit Report

- Dir. Mulcahy reported that the start of the year has been busy with the new class of cadets at the Academy. He stated that he is currently teaching Constitutional law, to be followed with criminal law and criminal investigations. He noted that the current class consists of a great group of student officers who are very engaged.
- He reported that the CPD Cadet Program has a new cadet who was just sworn in: Cadet Didio Da Costa. Cadet Da Costa graduated from CRLS, has been studying at Framingham State University, and is fluent in multiple languages, and it is anticipated that after the Cadet Program he will take the police examination. Dir. Mulcahy also noted that two prior cadets are in the current Academy class and is an indication that the program is successfully bringing in young people who were raised in Cambridge, and that and almost all the cadets have gone on to the Academy and then joined CPD.

Consideration of Complaints before the Board

- Board Member LaRoche moved that the Board enter executive session pursuant to Section 21(a)(1) of the Mass. Open Meeting Law to discuss complaints PR-2023-001 and PR-2023-009 pending before the Board. The motion was seconded by Board Member Arlotto and approved by a unanimous roll call vote. The Board entered executive session at 7:08 p.m.

Adjournment

At the end of the executive session, the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 p.m., on a motion from Board Member LaRoche, seconded by Board Member Arlotto.

Documents Used During the Meeting

- Police Review & Advisory Board Meeting Minutes of December 12, 2024
- Cambridge Police Review & Advisory Board Goal-Setting for 2024