



# POLICE REVIEW & ADVISORY BOARD

*A Department of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts*

## Minutes from the Meeting of December 4, 2019

**Board Members present:** Chair Ted Robitaille, Ann Coyne, Lucy Murray-Brown, and Beverly Sealey

**City Staff present:** CPD Commissioner Branvaille Bard, Executive Secretary Brian Corr, CPD Lieutenant Sil Ferreira, Project Coordinator Crystal Rosa

**Chair Robitaille called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.**

### Public Comment

There were no public comments.

### Review and Approval of Minutes

The Board unanimously approved the minutes of the October 30, 2019 meeting, on a motion by Board Member Coyne, seconded by Board Member Murray-Brown.

### Executive Secretary's Report

- Exec. Sec. Corr attended a legislative briefing by the Auditor of the Commonwealth regarding the recently released municipal impact study, "Municipal Police In-Service Training: Funding and Cooperation across the Commonwealth." Exec. Sec. Corr was a contributor to the report. Auditor Suzanne Bump used the recently enacted rental car surcharge to supplement existing financial support for the Municipal Police Training Committee (MPTC) while taking steps to bolster facilities, improve guidance on training requirements, and expand accountability. The study recommendations include:
  - That the Legislature establish a Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) system that would set minimum training standards, regulate training programs and curricula, and set standards for maintenance of police licensure or certification.
  - That the MPTC develop a long-term strategic plan to submit to the Legislature. The plan would identify current operational capabilities, highlight shortcomings in curriculum and capacity, and make recommendations to the Legislature on needed improvements to training facilities.
- Exec. Sec. Corr attended the first International Conference on Democratic Controls and External Oversight of the Police in Puebla, Mexico [*Conferencia Internacional Sobre Controles Democráticos de la Seguridad y Supervisión Externa de la Policía*], which brought together elected and appointed officials from all levels of government in Mexico, as well as NGOs, academics, law enforcement leaders, and internal affairs directors from across Latin America, the Caribbean, and the U.S. This conference is part of a long-term effort to initiate civilian oversight in Mexico, starting with the State of Puebla. Exec. Sec. Corr was the keynote speaker and facilitated an international panel of oversight practitioners and advocates as well as participating in the entire two-day conference. Exec. Sec. Corr detailed some of the challenges facing Mexico while omnipresent and absent in public safety. Law enforcement officers do not have pensions, living wages, life insurance, or bulletproof vests. Most law enforcement officers only receive two weeks of training out of the six weeks required by law. There is a long-standing culture of impunity for misconduct and corruption, and there is an epidemic of missing and murdered women whose cases are not effectively investigated by the police. Despite those challenges, Exec. Sec. Corr reported that this conference marked the signing of an official

agreement between the Government of Puebla, non-governmental organizations, and law enforcement agencies to work together to create the first civilian oversight in Mexico.

### **Professional Standards Unit Report**

Lt. Ferreira shared updates from the Cambridge Police Department:

- Lt. Ferreira announced that CPD is organizing the 13th annual Secret Santa for seniors. Locations accepting donations are at CPD Headquarters, City Hall, Public Health Department, and Cambridge Savings Bank.
- Lt. Ferreira also announced that CPD will be partnering with Cambridge Public Schools for the Youth Explorers program for middle school students (12 to 14 years old). CPD runs other youth programs such as the Public Safety Academy, Youth Academy, and the newly established Cadet Program.

### **Report from CPD Commissioner Branville Bard**

Commissioner Bard provided recounted the events of April 18, 2018 with a Harvard student.

- Commissioner Bard explained how he decided to get an external review of the findings from the Use of Force investigation. Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court Chief Justice Roderick Ireland reviewed the findings and wrote a report offering recommendations and recognizing commendations of CPD's conduct at the scene. Chief Justice Ireland concluded that CPD acted in accordance with training, state law, and did not use excessive force. The report showed that Chief Ireland did not have one negative comment regarding CPD's conduct at the scene and stated that it was reasonable for officers to try to subdue the student.
- Commissioner Bard explained that after the arrest of Professor Gates and the subsequent review committee and its recommendations, CPD has shifted from a legal centric model of protocol and procedure to be more centered on community policing, procedural justice and legitimacy.
- Commissioner Bard stated that there have been numerous trainings that have shown how community policing and legitimacy are priorities. Commissioner Bard noted that when Dr. Mahzarin Banaji, a Harvard professor and international expert on implicit bias, trained CPD, the officers were impressed by the information. Dr. Banaji trained the entire department in 2 sessions. Commissioner Bard added that during his restructuring of the department he chose to have a civilian appointed to the Professional Standards Unit despite the union's disagreement.
- Commissioner Bard also provided information on how CPD is structured. Specifically, Commissioner Bard described the focus of the Family and Social Justice unit to help fill the gap between social service and vulnerable populations, such as: youth, elderly, and homelessness. Commissioner Bard stated that the Family and Social Justice unit works toward prevention, intervention, and diversion.

### **New Business**

- Board Member Murray-Brown discussed her outreach efforts with Transition House, BARCC, Youth on Fire, and various tenant organization in public housing units. Per a suggestion from Board Member Sealey, Commissioner Murray-Brown has also been reaching out to Black churches.

### **Consideration of Complaints before the Board**

Board Member Coyne moved that the Board enter executive session pursuant to Section 21(a)(1) of the OML to discuss pending complaint PR-2019-005. The motion was seconded by Board Member Murray-Brown and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board entered executive session at 7:17 p.m.

### **Adjournment**

After the Board adjourned from Executive Session at 7:55 p.m., Board Member Coyne moved that the Board adjourn. The motion was seconded by Board Member Murray-Brown and approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

**Documents Used During the Meeting**

- Police Review & Advisory Board Minutes of October 30, 2019