



# POLICE REVIEW & ADVISORY BOARD

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*A Department of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts*

## **Minutes from the Meeting of December 1, 2021**

**Board Members present:** Chair Alexandra Fallon, Gina LaRoche, Lucy Murray-Brown, Beverly Sealey

**City Staff present:** Executive Director Brian Corr, Project Coordinator Crystal Rosa; CPD Acting Commissioner Christine Elow, CPD Director of Professional Standards and Training and Certification Unit James Mulcahy

**Chair Fallon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.**

### **Public Comment**

There were no comments from members of the public.

### **Review and Approval of Minutes**

On a motion from Board Member LaRoche, seconded by Board Member Murray-Brown, the Board approved the minutes of October 27, 2021, with Board Members Fallon, LaRoche, Murray-Brown, and Sealey voting in favor.

### **Executive Director's Report**

- Executive Director Corr reported that he helped to plan and participated in a two-day virtual conference in November, organized by the U.S. Department of State through the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. This was the fourth annual National Conference for Internal Affairs in Mexico, with more than 200 participants from state and municipal police internal affairs staff, government officials, and civil society organizations from across Mexico. ED Corr gave a keynote presentation entitled "The Scope and Purpose of Civilian Oversight after the murder of George Floyd," and facilitated panel discussion on "Lessons Learned: Supervision, Oversight, and Internal Accountability" and "Civilian Oversight: The State of the Field and Effective Practices."
- ED Corr reminded the Board that the webinars from the virtual portion of the NACOLE Annual Conference are available through December 31, 2021.
- ED Corr explained that the Executive Session of the Board to consider Complaint PR-2021-003 will be rescheduled to the next regular meeting of the Board in January, so that additional reports can be provided to the Board.

### **Professional Standards Unit Report**

Director Mulcahy shared updates from the Cambridge Police Department (CPD):

- CPD is working with the Middlesex Sheriff's Office for a third year in providing an enhanced use of force training. The training uses a multimedia simulation held inside a specialized tractor-trailer, which provides for an interactive setting where officers must make split-second decisions about how and when to deescalate or to use force – up to deadly force – in a protected environment.
- Director Mulcahy reported that the new Massachusetts Use of Force regulations are in effect as of December 1, 2021. CPD has initiated a three-hour use of force training for

officers to review the changes in the regulations.

- Director Mulcahy announced that four new cadets entering the CPD Cadet Program, which aims to expose young people to the police department as a career possibility. It is a two-year program that counts toward time working with the City of Cambridge. The applicants must pass a background check and interview to be enrolled in the program. During the pandemic, cadets have helped the City with vaccinations and the senior outreach efforts and vaccination clinic hotlines. The cadets rotate through CPD divisions to gain experience in many areas and receive both physical and classroom training. Cadets must pass the Mass. Civil Service Exam and maintain a passing grade in the program to enter the Cambridge Police Academy.
- Director Mulcahy described CPD's efforts recruiting Cambridge residents, including targeted advertising and through word of mouth in the community. An applicant must be living in Cambridge for one year before taking the civil service exam and receive a high enough score to be eligible for a background check.
- Director Mulcahy suggested the Board would benefit from the Department's Integrated Communications and Tactics (ICAT) training, developed by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). ICAT involves interacting with a machine to deescalate a situation. This training has helped officers reinforce the sanctity of human life and move away from the warrior mentality. Given the issues with social distancing, this training may have to wait until there are changes in COVID-19 protocols for in-person meetings and events.

#### **Discussion with Police Commissioner Elow**

- Acting Commissioner Christine Elow has worked with the Cambridge Police Department for 27 years. She was the first female Lieutenant and Deputy Superintendent in the history of the department.
- She believes in connecting with the most vulnerable and diverting them away from the criminal justice system whenever possible. She recognizes how police have contributed to the historical injustices in poor communities of color.
- She explained that CPD is focused on prevention and early intervention by connecting residents to services, and views arresting someone as a measure of last resort.
- Commissioner Elow used the acronym ACTS (Accountability, Community, Transparency, and Safety) to describe her philosophy regarding how CPD can build and maintain trust with the entire community. She is interested in community conversations and is looking to the Board for its ideas about how CPD can effectively reach out to hear from the community and build trust.
- She is working to fully develop and implement the Procedural Justice Dashboard conceived of by former Commissioner Bard, with the goal of compiling data from arrests and motor vehicle stops over the last 10 years, and continuing to do that going forward, and be reviewing trends and any disparities for the CPD to continue to improve.
- Commissioner Elow emphasized her commitment to using a trauma-informed lens when analyzing gun violence in Cambridge by looking at questions like: "What sort of trauma is in that person's life? Who does CPD need to work with? How does CPD prevent and intervene before there is violence?"
- She is also interested in looking at oversight outside of the usual complaint process by asking what CPD has learned from the complaint, whether or not a policy or procedural violation occurred? She is interested in integrating facilitated conversation and mediation into this work as well.

#### **Documents Used During the Meeting**

- Police Review & Advisory Board Meeting Minutes of October 27, 2021