



# POLICE REVIEW & ADVISORY BOARD

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*A Department of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts*

**Minutes from the meeting of April 29, 2015**  
***(Draft subject to approval by the Board)***

**Board Members present:** Mertin Betts (Chair), Ann Coyne, Laurance Kimbrough, Beverly Sealey

**City Staff Present:** Executive Secretary Brian Corr, Dept. Supt. Steve DeMarco, Project & Outreach Coordinator V. Muna Kangsen

Meeting called to order at 6:03 PM.

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

The Board reviewed the minutes from the March 25, 2015 meeting and approved them unanimously on a motion from Board Member Coyne, seconded by Board Member Kimbrough.

### **Executive Secretary's Report**

NACOLE's annual conference will take place from October 4 through October 8, 2015 in Riverside, California. Registration for the conference has begun. Executive Secretary Corr is organizing two workshops during the conference. *Building a Road Map to Community Trust* will explore successful strategies to build trust between the police and community with panelists who are engaged in this effort in Los Angeles. *Racial Reconciliation, Truth-Telling, and Police Legitimacy* will feature panelists from the National Network for Safe Communities and their work with communities to combat violence and community disorder, reduce the use of arrest and incarceration, and rebuild relations between law enforcement and distressed communities by addressing historic tensions, grievances and misconceptions which affect community/police relations.

Corr has been working as part of the Safer Homes, Safer Community Initiative to reduce the number of guns in Cambridge. This effort is a collaboration between the Cambridge Police Department, Public Health Department, Many Helping Hands, the Cambridge Black Pastors Alliance and the Peace Commission. On June 13, 2015 from 10 am – 3 pm, people can anonymously exchange guns for gift cards at two locations: Greater Boston Vineyard Fellowship Church in North Cambridge and Pentecostal Tabernacle in the Area IV neighborhood. Guns will be checked for criminal activity, but no one will get in trouble for turning-in a gun. Gift cards will be offered to people returning guns. Assault rifles and shot guns will fetch larger amounts and smaller amounts will be given to people returning hand guns. This "gun buy-back" program is based on a public health perspective, rather than the more familiar anti-gang-violence approach that Boston has used with Operation Ceasefire.

### **Professional Standards Unit Report**

On Thursday, May 7, the Cambridge Police & Department of Human Services Neighborhood Door-to-Door Campaign will continue their joint door-to-door outreach campaigns at Walden Square Apartments and the Jefferson Park housing development in North Cambridge. Additional door-to-door outreach will take place in Washington Elms, Newtowne Court and Cochran Park housing developments on May 20. DHSP personnel and CPD officers meet residents and hand out information, looking to engage with the public, providing helpful information and other resources.

May is Bicycle Awareness Month. The City of Cambridge is planning a number of events around bicycle safety awareness. A majority of respondents in a 2013 survey conducted by the City's Community Development Department said their primary concern was sharing the road.

Ten new Cambridge police recruits will take their physical exams soon. The Department has built a mock training course, similar to the one used by the state, to help the recruits prepare for the physical exam.

The memorial for MIT Police Officer Sean Collier, killed in the line of duty in the wake of the Boston Marathon bombing, was dedicated today. The memorial is located at the corner of Vassar and Main streets.

### **Presentation by Dr. Yoshiki Kobayashi**

Dr. Yoshiki Kobayashi is an Associate in the Program on U.S.-Japan Relations at Harvard University's Weatherhead Center. He is the former Chief of Kochi Prefectural Police for the National Police Agency in Japan. As police chief of Kochi Prefecture, commanded approximately 2,000 officers. Kobayashi joined the police force after graduating from the University of Tokyo. He came to the United States last year to conduct research on civilian oversight of law enforcement. Dr. Kobayashi has taught public safety in Japan and is likely to return to teaching when he completes his research in the United States.

#### *Public Trust in the Police in Japan*

The crime rate in Japan is lower than that of the U.S.. Japan has strict gun control laws hence fewer gun-related crimes. Community policing and hotspot policing have also contributed to the reduction in crime. Despite this reduction in the crime rate, public trust in the police remains very low. Public trust in the police in Japan is lower than that of nations in the industrialized world including the U.S. Trust in the police varies in relation to race, gender, and age in the U.S. But Japan is more homogenous, yet the lack of public trust in the police remains low. This can be attributed to several factors, including the politicization of the police force and lack of trust in the civilian oversight system, and believe in the culture and values of the police.

#### *The Police System in Japan*

The police system in Japan is quasi-national. Japan is made up of 47 prefectures, somewhat equivalent to states in the U.S. The National Police Agency is a policy-making organization, but is also responsible for supervising and coordinating prefectural police forces. The head of the prefectural police force is appointed by the National Police Agency, rather than the governor of the prefecture.

The National Policy Agency is under the control of the National Public Safety Commission, which reports to the Prime Minister. The National Police Commission is made up of 5 members who are appointed by the Prime Minister and approved by parliament. Commission members are usually former journalists or jurists. The National Police Commission does not intervene in the day-to-day operations of the prefectural police.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Police, which is the biggest force in Japan, has about 40,000 officers. The prefecture of Kochi, one of Japan's smallest prefectures, has as about 2,000. Each prefecture maintains its own police academy and trains its own officers, based on standards established by the National Police Agency. Many officers join the force after graduating from university. Police forces in Japan lag behind their US counterparts in regard to gender diversity. Women make up about 10% of the police force in Japan.

The structure of the police force in Japan is informed by reforms that were made after WW II to depoliticize the police force. The relationship between the police and the communities they are

protect are distant compared to the relationship between the police and the community in the US. The ratio of police officers to citizens in Japan is 1 to 500. The population of Japan is approximately 130 million – a bit more than one-third that of the United States.

#### *Civilian Oversight in Japan*

The complaint system in Japan is underutilized. In 2009 for instance, ratio of complaints to population nationwide in Japan was 0.8 complaints per 100,000 residents. This can be compared to 93.7 complaints per 100,000 residents in New York City, 108.4 per 100,000 residents in Chicago, but only 2.2 per 100,000 residents in Tokyo. There is little awareness of the civilian oversight system and very little outreach to educate communities about its existence.

Civilian oversight of the police at the prefecture level is done by the Prefectural Public Safety Commission (PPSC). The PPSC is responsible for drawing up basic policies for the prefectural police force, reviewing specific misconduct cases and dealing with complaints from citizens regarding police activities. The PPSC does not have authority to intervene directly in individual investigations or specific law enforcement activities of the prefectural police. The majority of complaints filed with the civilian oversight board revolve around rude and discourteous behavior.

In a professionally conducted survey, the civilian oversight system in Japan received low grades in many of the categories on which it is evaluated, including: openness, integrity and accountability.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM