



# POLICE REVIEW & ADVISORY BOARD

*A Department of the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts*

## Minutes from the Meeting of March 29, 2017

**Board Members present:** Ann Coyne (chair), Laurance Kimbrough, and Ted Robitaille.

**City staff present:** Executive Secretary Brian Corr, Project Coordinator Crystal Rosa, and Deputy Superintendent Paul Ames.

**Member of the public present:** Ashley Herring

***The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m.***

### **Public Comment**

Ashley Herring, a full-time organizer for Black Lives Matter Cambridge, posed questions about navigating the city website and how the Board provides updates of ongoing community incidents and on its work.

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

The Board reviewed the minutes of February 22, 2017, regular meeting and approved them unanimously on a motion from Board Member Kimbrough, seconded by Board Member Robitaille.

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

- Executive Secretary Corr reported that the Police Executive Research Forum was retained by the City to lead the search process for a new police commissioner, and provided copies of the job description and a profile of the position, noting that the application deadline was April 7. There have been multiple focus groups with residents, community organizations, clergy, city staff, and elected officials to solicit recommendations, identify important areas of work, and raise any concerns that should be taken in consideration in the hiring process. Exec. Secretary Corr attended one of the sessions and noted that there were comments about the importance of the collaborative way that the police work with City agencies and nonprofit organizations, as well as concern about the recent incident that took place with Sgt. Thomas Ahern and Mr. Cleon. The goal is to select a new police commissioner by the end of the summer with the new person in place in the fall.
- Board Member Murray-Brown has conducted various outreach visits around the community and will update the Board when she is present. Her last visit brought questions about immigrants, immigration, and how to ensure that people are aware of Cambridge's Sanctuary City status and that people feel comfortable coming forward with any concerns or complaints about the police.
- Board Member Kimbrough reported that his work on developing an anti-racism training for Cambridge Police officers has continued and he will be collaborating with Dep. Supt. Ames, Exec. Secretary Corr, and staff from the Boston nonprofit organization Community Change in developing the training. Board Member Kimbrough noted that during a visit to the Museum African American History he saw a display including copy of a poster printed in 1851 cautioning people of color in Boston about watchmen/police officers who were also paid slave catchers. This print reminded Board Member Kimbrough of the historic link between policing and slavery.
- Exec. Secretary Corr presented in Washington, D.C. at an American Constitution Society Symposium on Policing in a New Political Era. Other speakers included: former White House staffer

Roy Austin, Jr., who led President Obama's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing; former Dept. of Justice Civil Rights Division attorney Cristy Lopez, who led the investigation into the Ferguson, MO Police Department; and NYU Law School Prof. Barry Friedman, author of *Unwarranted: Policing without Permission*.

- Exec. Secretary Corr was a panelist for WGBH's The Forum at the Harvard School of Public Health discussing state and local perspectives on Race and Policing.
- Exec. Secretary Corr will present at a seminar for local police, community activists, and government officials in White Plains, New York, organized by the Westchester Coalition for Police Reform. No municipality in Westchester County has civilian oversight, and the coalition formed in 2012 after an incident where police were called to provide assistance to a military veteran with mental health issues who was in crisis, but ended up shooting and killing him when officers thought that there was a hostage situation because the man was hearing voices and speaking back to them.
- Exec. Secretary Corr reported that Cambridge has been asked to host a regional meeting for the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) on July 21 or 24. The meeting will be a one-day event with a keynote speaker, four informational sessions for oversight practitioners, as well as highlighted programs in the host communities. There are usually between 50 and 80 attendees at these meetings, and this one will target oversight agencies and practitioners from the Northeast, including New Haven, Philadelphia, New York City, Albany, Syracuse, and possibly Canada.

#### **Professional Standards Unit Report**

- Dep. Supt. Ames stated that Dep. Supt. Elow has been presenting information about the federal Secure Communities Program in "Know Your Rights" trainings coordinated by the Cambridge Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship at local faith communities.
- Dep. Supt. Ames announced that there will be a community meeting organized by MIT regarding policing. Cambridge Police Command Staff will be available to share policies and procedures as well as hear concerns and community issues.
- Dep. Supt. Ames reported that CPD's door-to-door outreach campaign will start again next week and continue through the end of May. CPD staff and officers will partner with Department of Human Service Programs staff to provide information about the police and social services in Cambridge.
- Dep. Supt. Ames announced there will be a Quarterly Stakeholders Meeting on April 13, 2017. This multi-disciplinary group comes together for the sole purpose of building stronger collaborations and developing strategies designed to address homelessness from a multi-layered coordinated approach.
- May is Bike Safety Month and there will be outreach and tabling in the community educating residents on bike safety for cyclists and drivers.
- Homeless Court is canceled for the month of May. This is an alternative court session designed to resolve misdemeanor offenses, non-violent felonies and outstanding warrants. The goal is to encourage fast social reintegration and a self-supporting life for homeless individuals.
- Dep. Supt. Ames also explained that the Community Dispute Settlement Center is offering a mediation training on [Bystander Intervention](#). This five-day training addresses how to intervene in situations of public aggression and how to peacefully confront racism, sexism, LGBTQ-phobia, Islamophobia, or anti-Semitism with people that you know.
- Dep. Supt. Ames also noted that The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) released a [statement](#) regarding immigration and law enforcement, stating in part: "Penalizing communities by withholding assistance funding to law enforcement agencies and other critical programs is counter-productive to our shared mission of reducing violent crime and keeping our communities safe."

#### **New Business**

No new business.

**Consideration of Complaints before the Board**

Board Member Robitaille moved that the Board go into executive session to review complaints pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 30A, §21(a)(1). The motion was seconded by Board Member Kimbrough, and approved by unanimous vote. The Board entered executive session at 7:20 p.m.

**Reconvened in Regular Session**

The Board reconvened in regular session at 7:40 p.m.

**Adjournment**

Board Member Kimbrough moved that the Board adjourn. The motion was seconded by Board Member Robitaille and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.