

Public Safety Review Panel Notes--Wednesday July 8 @ 2:00

Members Present: Emily, Will, Maxine, Amanda, Caprice, Hilary, Tenzin, Jamie, Chief Ritter, Elizabeth

Mayor Read, ex-officio

Members Absent: Michelle, Bob, Ruby

Emily: meeting brought to order

Hilary: clarified the language and role of the governor's executive order

Suggestion: we need to discuss the council-approved resolution as the guiding document for the panel work

Panel introductions to the public members in attendance

Discussion of clarification of our mission; discussion of creating a mission statement for the panel

Public Comment (approximately 20 minutes)

Public Comment from Sarah Martin: questions about who is on the panel; questions about there being enough representation of non-profit groups; concerned about how the panel was assembled; especially concerned about low-income representation on the panel; inquired about whether or not downtown businesses and bars have been consulted for their perspectives (regarding the police interaction downtown); suggested the panel communicate widely with members in the community to gain their perspectives, especially immigrants and people of color; objects to the presence of the Sheriff in the City of Plattsburgh; stated that the New York State Police should not be in the City of Plattsburgh.

Public Comment from Aubrey Eldridge: she heard that the City is broke and inquired about if additional funds will be allocated towards the panel; Mayor Read clarified the budget--no funds are being allocated to the panel for their work.

Public Comment from David Yokum: discussed his own outreach within the community; he has spoken to college students; pointed out that the police have their faults and the community has their faults; discussed how he wants to show African-Americans in the community how to have a better relationship within the community; he is concerned about the police use of force; discussed the importance of having a good relationship with the police; he has reached out to hate groups.

End of Public Comment

Will: has questions about the panel mission statement; wants to know how data is collected; questions the police use of firearms (also the use of firearms with animals); would like information regarding the use of firearms with suspects.

Chief Ritter: explained why there is discharge of a weapon with an animal

Tenzin: requests that the panel have ALL documents from the Chief to educate ourselves and use the documents to formulate questions.

Hilary: suggested we discuss our mission; suggests starting with the Governor's Executive Order and the Council Resolution; reminded us that we talked last week about questions to use when creating a survey.

Caprice: wants clarification of our role.

Mayor Read: discussion of using the panel as a review panel on police conduct.

Hilary: cautions about going straight to process.

Caprice: let's start with the mission statement.

Hilary: we shouldn't be re-inventing the process.

Amanda: things are unclear.

Hilary: division of criminal justice hasn't given us a full picture yet; suggests we decide what information we want, get that information, and begin fact-finding.

Caprice: what documents do we need to do the work?

Tenzin: we need ALL documents from Chief Ritter.

Caprice: can we get statistical data from Chief Ritter?

Chief Ritter: he can find certain things if he knows what we need, especially if he knows categories and types.

Maxine: questions about whether or not that information is useful now, or if we should ask for it later.

Caprice: wants to know what is happening in this community.

Amanda: suggests splitting the panel into two working groups.

Mayor Read: suggested creating two data-gathering groups.

Maxine: suggested that the panel begin with policy then move to getting more information.

Chief Ritter: discussed the shared document in the Google Drive regarding steps to police reform.

Caprice: wants to know Chief Ritter's role in the panel.

Clarification on what working groups will be: community fact-finding and government/police fact-finding.

Amanda: determine what we learned (from the fact-finding group work), then determine where we go next--dovetail into policy.

Will: suggests we focus on what is happening in the community; what does the Governor's Executive Order want us to do.

Caprice: brainstorming--potential barriers and challenges; should also focus on assumptions.

Hilary: suggested a working group work with Chief Ritter.

Amanda: wants to explore why the Community Center closed.

Caprice: also wants to know why the Community Center closed.

Chief Ritter: explained that dispatchers were furloughed and the officer assigned to that location was brought back to the police patrol.

Hilary: wants to identify concerns.

Amanda: discussed fiscal problems.

Hilary: mental health and addiction services are on the front line.

David Yokum brought a point earlier regarding a "North Country Culture" that exists here.

Maxine: what is North Country Culture?

Amanda: not enough opportunities to interact with different cultures in the North Country.

Emily: disagrees with the statement that there is a lack of interaction with diversity and asked for clarification.

Caprice: also asked for clarification.

Emily: North Country forgets that we used to be more diverse, especially when the Air Force Base was open in Plattsburgh.

Tenzin: asked if we could get back to fact-finding.

Amanda: identified addiction as a leading cause of the foster-care needs in the North Country; police are the first point of contact in these situations.

Maxine: is it time for assignments?

Here are the areas the panel wants to explore for next week:

Domestic violence

Molestation

Drug addiction

Child abuse/neglect

Self-care needs for police

Low-income areas

Senior living, especially dementia patients

Caprice: suggests we all do some homework on the issues (listed above) and come to the next meeting prepared to discuss.

Emily: adjourned meeting (approximately 4:30) and will send out an agenda ahead of next meeting.

Next meeting: Monday July 13th @ 4:00 in City Hall.