

SUMMARY MINUTES FOR THE POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

January 11th, 2022

All attendees were participating virtually.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Due to not enough members being present for a quorum at the start of the meeting, Sgt. Staffelbach introduced the guest speaker, Kristen Hunter, Police Public Information Officer. It was decided to let her give her presentation first, with hopes that the other board meetings would soon join in the meeting.

Committee members present:

Betsy Ray, Mayoral
Diane Kulik, At-Large
Carol Ann Naipaul, District #2
Sonny Bass, District #5 (joined a few minutes late)
Gary Davis, District #3 (joined a few minutes late)

Absent

Kevon Gainer, District #1

City Staff Members present:

Police Chief Mark Holtzman, Staff Liaison
Sgt. Michael Staffelbach, Staff Liaison
Billie Jo Viverette, Board Secretary
Assistant City Attorney Donald K. Phillips
Camillia Smith, City Clerk's office
Kristen Hunter, Public Information Officer

Sgt. Staffelbach introduced Kristen Hunter, Public Information Officer for the Greenville Police Department. Kristen briefly discussed the new podcasts project that the Police Department has started. She explained that they have just recently started the podcasts. She discussed topics that they hope to discuss in the future in the podcasts. She stated that she posts new podcasts links every Wednesday. The link is accessible through any social media or podcasts apps; she stated just search for the Greenville Police Department. Sgt. Staffelbach explained to everyone the amount of time and work that Kristen spends working on the podcasts. Betsy Ray made a suggestion to discuss certain closed cases on the podcasts. Kristen said yes, it would be a good idea to discuss impactful cases. She stated that they welcome input and ideas of topics.

Sgt. Staffelbach stated that he would get a cheat sheet of the links to the podcasts and have Billie Jo Viverette, board secretary to send it out to everyone. Everyone thanked Kristin for sharing this information.

Sgt. Staffelbach stated that now the official roll call needs to be called. Betsy Ray called the roll again. All members present except Kevon Gainer, District #1.

Betsy stated before we approve the agenda, she asked if someone would make a motion to amend the agenda to include elections of officers. Diane Kulik made the motion to amend the agenda to include elections of officers. There was discussion on where to place the elections of officers on the agenda. After the discussion, Donald clarified that the motion is to add the elections of officers after the approval of the agenda but before the approval of the minutes. Motion was seconded by Gary Davis. Donald asked Billie Jo to call the roll call for the vote. The vote was passed by unanimous vote.

Diane Kulik made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Sonny Bass seconded the motion. Billie Jo called the roll regarding the motion. The vote was unanimous in approving the motion.

Donald read the by-laws concerning the elections of officers. Donald explained the process of elections. Donald asked for nominations for chair of the committee. Sonny nominated Diane Kulik; however Diane declined. Diane nominated Carol Ann Naipaul for chair. Carol Ann Naipaul nominated Sonny Bass for chair. Donald asked for any other nominations. Donald closed the nominations because of no other nominations. Donald stated that we have to vote on the nominations in the order that they were nominated. Donald asked Billie Jo to call roll call vote for the office of chair for Carol Naipaul. The vote was unanimous. Carol Naipaul nominated Sonny Bass for vice chair. Donald asked for further nominations. Because there were no further nominations, Donald closed the nominations. Donald asked Billie Jo to call roll call vote for the office of vice chair for Sonny Bass. The vote was unanimous.

Carol Naipaul asked for a motion for the approval of the minutes. Diane Kulik stated that she has a correction to be made. She said to change it to an addition to the minutes. Diane stated she volunteered to have gangs in February; but that her original pick is to have the K9 unit put on a meeting outside in either May or June. She stated that she discussed this with Mayor P.J. Connelly and that he stated that would be fine; he would be attending. Donald asked Diane if she was asking for a clarification of the minutes. Diane stated yes. Donald asked her to point out in the minutes where the clarification should be. Diane stated that it wasn't in there at all, but that it took place in the meeting. Donald proposed for Diane restate what she wants to be included in the meeting and then Billie Jo go listen to the recording to determine where to add this statement. Diane stated that she volunteered first for the May or June meeting, to have the K9 unit put on a meeting outdoors, maybe at the church. She stated that then no one volunteered for the February meeting, so she volunteered to do the gangs meeting in February. She stated that she also wanted to say that she talked to PJ to check to see if we could do the K9s outdoors, in May or June, and he thought it would be fine.

Sonny stated that at the last meeting he said he was going to talk to PJ about doing the meetings in person. He said he did and he did confirm that either in late February or early March they would start letting meetings be in person. Sonny stated that I think that's what Diane is talking about. Donald stated I think that Diane wants to make sure her addition to the minutes is accurately reflected. Diane stated correct. Donald stated that I think it needs to go to the bottom of page 3 of last month's minutes. Donald stated that I propose that Billie Jo listen to the recording of last month's meeting, and tonight's meeting. He stated to make sure

that it is accurately reflected in the minutes, and then the minutes back for consideration at the next meeting. Donald asked if there was a motion to direct Billie Jo to listen to the minutes from the last meeting and tonight's meeting and to accurately reflect the requested amendments as proposed by Diane Kulik for inclusion in last month's minutes for consideration at the February meeting of the PCRC. Diane made the motion. Carol Naipaul seconded the motion. There was some discussion. Then Carol Naipaul asked Donald if she heard right that it might be possible to hold meetings in person with social distancing. Donald stated that her question does not pertain to this motion. He stated let's vote on this motion first, and then we can discuss your question. Billie Jo called roll call on the vote. The vote was unanimous.

Carol Naipaul asked if someone would read the mission statement. Betsy Ray read the statement.

Carol Naipaul asked if there were any questions or comments at this time. Diane asked if Chief Holtzman was still with us. Diane asked Chief if he would explain seeking changes to the firearm rule. Chief Holtzman explained in the past criminal charges on city ordinances were mostly civil offenses with no jail time. He stated that discharging a firearm was included in those offenses. He stated that this past December the legislature made a rule that basically took away the ability to charge with a criminal offense, any of the city code violations. He stated that was unless the city codes were updated to a misdemeanor. He stated so we had to go back and review city codes. He said that discharging a firearm was one code that they want to keep as a criminal offense. He stated that it has to be brought before council for a first and second reading; and that he wanted this information shared with the public. He stated that the council will get a chance at the end of January and the beginning of February to listen to it and make a decision.

Diane asked does that include bb guns; does that include rifles and hand guns. She asked if this was all guns. Chief Holtzman stated its all firearms and weapons. He stated that he doesn't have the statue but that he needs to review in regarding to air pistols. Donald stated right now as it stands it is a misdemeanor. Donald said that with this proposal it could be a misdemeanor, as well as a civil penalty as an enforcement option. Donald read the statue and he stated that it does include all weapons. He also said that the statue states that anyone who permits their minor child under the age of 18 would be guilty of the misdemeanor. Donald stated that the language did not change but just that the penalties are in conformance with this new statue that the Chief is referring to.

Betsy asked if the civil penalties are equal to a fine. Donald stated that's right. He said that keep in mind when someone is charged criminally, there are criminal costs to be paid. He said that this is a civil fine, so the charge and cost is noncriminal. Betsy asked could they be coupled together. Donald said yes, that they can be.

Sgt. Staffelbach asked Gary Davis, who is new if he had any questions for the group. He stated he did not. Sgt. Staffelbach stated that he would work with one of the gang officers to prepare for next month's meeting. Diane stated that she wants to talk with Sgt. White about some things she wants to have covered, because she has some questions. Sgt. Staffelbach said okay, I'll follow up also.

Sgt. Staffelbach advised Gary that he encourages the board members to make contact with their communities to see if there are any questions. Sgt. Staffelbach asked Sonny if he had questions or concerns. Sonny stated that his biggest concern is when we can go back and meeting in person. He said again that he spoke with Major Connelly, who stated that the goal is for committees to go back to in person meetings by the end of January or the first of February.

Sgt. Staffelbach asked Betsy Ray for any last comments. Betsy said no, that she just appreciates people willing to step up and be the officers.

Sonny asked Donald and Sgt. Staffelbach if anyone has heard anything from District #4. Donald stated that he has not. He stated that's a question for the city clerk's office. Diane stated that she has spoken with Valerie with the city clerk's office, who stated that Mr. Cherry moved to Winterville and no longer in that district. Sonny said thank you. He said I have two applicants and asked if he should give those to the city clerk's office. Donald stated that yes, they can help them with the applications. Sonny stated that he'll give them a call tomorrow.

Sgt. Staffelbach encouraged everyone to go to their communities and recruit people to get involved.

Sgt. Staffelbach congratulated Carol Naipaul and asked if she was ready to move forward. Carol Naipaul said thank you; and thanked each member for their assistance and contribution. She also asked Sgt. Staffelbach to make contact with her concerning next month's meeting. She thanked everyone for giving her a chance to lead this committee.

Chief Holtzman thanked everyone for their hard work and participation.

Carol Naipaul thanked Chief Holtzman and Miss Hunter for their contribution. She asked if anyone had any more questions. She stated if not, we're ready for a motion to adjourn the meeting tonight. Betsy Ray made a motion to adjourn; Diane seconded the motion. Billie Jo called the roll call for the vote on the motion. The vote was unanimous.