



## MINUTES OF A QUARTERLY MEETING

**APPROVED**

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### CIVILIAN POLICE REVIEW BOARD

**DATE:** Wednesday, May 29, 2024

**TIME:** 5:30 p.m.

**PLACE:** Urbana City Council Chambers  
Urbana City Building  
400 South Vine Street  
Urbana, Illinois 61801

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ricardo Diaz, Chair; Tony Allegretti; Katrina Kindle; Peggy Patten; Ashley Withers

**ALSO PRESENT:** Carla Boyd, Human Rights and Equity Officer; Tom Unzicker, Human Rights Specialist

#### **A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Ricardo Diaz called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. The Recording Secretary took roll and a quorum was present.

#### **B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mr. Diaz asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda. Tony Allegretti moved to approve. Ashley Withers seconded the motion. The motion carried on a voice vote.

#### **C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND CALENDAR**

##### **1. Approval of Minutes of November 29, 2023 and April 5, 2024**

Mr. Diaz asked if there were any changes before approving two sets of minutes. Mr. Allegretti moved to approve the minutes of November 29, 2023, and April 5, 2024. Ms. Withers seconded the motion. The motion carried on a voice vote.

#### **D. PUBLIC INPUT**

There was none.

#### **E. OFFICER'S REPORT**

Carla Boyd's report highlighted:

- Status of complaints
- She has drafted an "annual report" to cover the years 2020 to 2023, and requested Board Members go to the portal to review the report and add their comments
- She responded to ten Freedom of Information (FOIA) requests and processed each of them
- The Southeast Urbana Neighborhood Annual Meeting is May 30th. Chair Diaz and Member Peggy Patten will join Ms. Boyd, along with Human Relations Commission Chair Panthen.
- Work on an updated CPRB brochure continues and awaits an updated message from a new chair

Board Members' Follow Up:

- Mr. Diaz stated that he completed his statement from the Chair for the Annual Report, and he will put it in the portal for review
- It was determined that Board Members should review and contribute to the report throughout June in order have a good draft ready in July
- Members requested adding a budget item for a generic business card
- Jettie Rhodes Day in June is an opportunity for volunteers to table. Members will receive an updated calendar of upcoming events soon.

**F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**1. Review of 2024 Meeting Schedule**

Wednesday, September 25, at 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 20, at 5:30 p.m. (different week)

**2. TASER Review**

Lt. Dave Smysor presented a video from December 2021. Following the video, board members sought to clarify that the TASER did not land due to a heavy overcoat. The Lieutenant described how in this, and in similar cases, a “wrestling match” occurs. There is great concern because officers carry guns, and the possibility that someone being non-compliant might have a weapon also.

In response to a question from Ms. Patten about the quality of a video due to it being particularly dark, Lt. Smysor explained that the body cameras are purposely not set up for infrared or night vision, which would convey an unnatural scene compared with what the officers can see.

The second TASER incident presented occurred in September 2022, and had body cam videos from two vantage points. Following the presentation of the videos, Mr. Allegretti asked about officers having access to TASERS, as three waited for a Sergeant to arrive on scene. Lt. Smysor explained that there are currently 14 TASERS for the entire department. Some individual officers have an issued TASER; no devices rotate between shifts.

During discussion about the use of TASERS vs. pepper spray, Lt Smysor noted pepper spray hurts for hours and impacts those around an arrestee. The intense pain of a TASER lasts for five seconds in the process of incapacitating an arrestee.

Discussion continued about several aspects of police interactions with the public: While police provide referrals for victims of domestic violence, other agencies – including hospitals, social services, and courts – take the lead in providing referrals to an arrestee.

Mr. Diaz stressed that when police make a demand such as telling a driver to get out of a car, there must be compliance.

Ms. Patten inquired whether the use of a TASER becomes a “go to” method by officers. Lt. Smysor responded that Board Members see all video involving TASERS, including both displays and discharges. However, responding officers successfully de-escalate most of their stressful interactions with the public. Lt. Smysor added that their departmental reports now ask about all displays of TASERS due to previous input from CPRB.

**3. Suspended Cases – Follow up**

Carla Boyd summarized what she had found about suspended cases. Mr. Diaz expressed his wish that all cases receive proper resolution. He stated that City Council could assist with the update of the ordinance to include clarifying the parameters of suspended cases.

**4. On the Record**

Mr. Diaz presented a series of topics to capture Board Members views at this, his final meeting on the Board:

**a. First-Hand Account**

Ms. Patten indicated her comfort with the inclusion of a person's home video and calling it a first-hand account complaint. All other board members agreed.

Mr. Allegretti recommended that the Board vote each time on accepting a video not associated with an identified complainant or a first-hand witness. Other members expressed an interest in considering all available information.

**b. Exclusion of Ex-Felons and Former Law Enforcement from the Board**

Ms. Kindle, Mr. Allegretti, Ms. Withers support allowing ex-felons to participate on the Board. Ms. Patten would like to see both exclusions removed, but perhaps with some caveats. Mr. Diaz agreed with Ms. Patten, saying he believes that only by removing both exclusions simultaneously could a change pass the City Council.

**c. Appealing Administrative Matters**

Regarding the Board in the future considering matters concerning non-sworn police employees, Mr. Allegretti does not want the board to take part in that process. Ms. Withers agreed, but stated the public needs to better understand the complaint process. Ms. Kindle suggested an exception could stem from a non-sworn officer making an error that impeded a sworn officer's investigation.

**d. Suspension of Cases**

Ms. Kindle and Mr. Allegretti suggested that the two-year time seemed arbitrary. Ms. Boyd stated that amount of time likely stems from the length a time to file a court case following an arrest. Some discussion occurred about not suspending a case due to the threat of a lawsuit or if it should continue until there is an actual lawsuit.

**e. Recurrent Requestors Need to be Handled Differently**

Discussion occurred about Freedom of Information (FOIA) time constraints. Ms. Boyd stated she has limited time for most requests, but additional time can be available for voluminous request and repeat requestors. Ms. Patten recommended review of previous meeting minutes since this topic has recurred.

**f. Appointment of Chair**

The mayor appoints the Chair of this Board and a Vice Chair. The Board Members unanimous believe the Board should appoint its own Chair.

**g. Use of Force Committee**

The Police Department expected to have a civilian on their committee. No one received an invitation. Board Members think the civilian member should come from this Board.

**h. Quorum and Attendance**

Is a procedure needed to remove members with too many absences from meetings? Most members seemed to feel that the such a move would not be helpful until a full Board is in place.

[At this point in the meeting, a technical problem with static emanating from the audio system in the ceiling interfered with the meeting conversation for the next 13 minutes.]

**i. Requiring a Complete Police Log for Portal**

Peggy had discovered material in the portal that needed logging to ensure everyone could find the information. Discussion urged requiring regular updates to the log.

**j. Ensuring Material Gets Added to the Portal**

Police personnel place videos of all discharges of TASERS in the portal. Should displaying of TASERS also be in the portal?

[Just before Ms. Kindle needed to depart the meeting, the Board Members paused to take group photos of Mr. Diaz's last meeting.]

Board Members determined they would request a portion of TASER display videos for review each year.

**G. NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

**H. BOARD INPUT AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**1. Applicants needed for Board vacancies**

There are three openings now with the departure of Mr. Diaz.

**2. Next scheduled meeting: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.**

**3. Chair Vacancy**

Ms. Patten suggested the mayor consider Mr. Allegretti appointed to fill the Board Chair vacancy. Mr. Allegretti expressed interest. Ms. Withers and Mr. Diaz also encouraged the appointment.

**I. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas D. Unzicker  
Recording Secretary