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[in person] Police Board

Documenter name: Julian Gonzalez

Agency: Chicago Police Board

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Takeaways

- This was the first meeting where Kye Cooper was acting president, but the previous president is remaining on the board so that they maintain quorum.
- The Chicago Police Department is the only jurisdiction with a domestic violence response program and it is expanding to address other systemic issues.
- While there are positive strides in crime reduction and community engagement, CPD still hasn't met all the requirements of the consent decree.

Follow-Up Questions & Observations

- I noticed that the board and speakers tend to speed through votes and statistics and it seems to be a formality. The deliberations of the board happen during closed meetings
- I found it interesting how the Police Board passed a motion to allow the board members to attend this meeting on the phone, but this same rule doesn't apply to the City Council. Have there been talks to adopt a rule similar to this?

Pre-Research

- You can livestream this meeting [here](#).

- The meeting will take place at the Chicago Public Safety Headquarters at 3510 South Michigan Avenue in the City's Bronzeville neighborhood.
- The [Chicago Public Safety Headquarters](#) opened in 2000 and is a 5-story, multipurpose facility housing an auditorium, large screens to present visual imagery like live broadcasting, and so much more.
- [The Chicago Police Board](#) is an "independent civilian body that decides disciplinary cases involving Chicago police officers"
 - It should be noted that the Police Board meets once a month
 - [These meetings](#) require that the Superintendent of Police, the Chief Administrator of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability, the Chief of the Police Department's Bureau of Internal Affairs, and the Deputy Inspector General for Public Safety are all present.
 - The Superintendent of Police is Larry Snelling, [who stepped into this role in late September](#).
 - [The Chief Administrator of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability](#) is Andrea Kersten. Kersten first joined COPA as its Chief Investigative Law Officer and has been central to the office's operations for the last 5 years.
 - Yolanda Talley is [the Chief Administrator of the Civilian Office of Police Accountability](#) and she has been involved with the Chicago Police Department (CPD) for over 28 years.
 - [Tobara Richardson](#) is the Deputy Inspector General for Public Safety. She previously served on the Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission (TIRC), worked as the principal attorney at T. Richardson Law LLC and worked as the Assistant United States Attorney at the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Illinois and the Assistant State's Attorney at the Cook County State's Attorney Office.
 - [This link](#) contains links to the bluebook websites (which have the agenda and other materials necessary for the meetings), the livestream recording links, the transcripts, and community input reports of all the Police Board meetings going back to January 19th of this year.
 - This meeting's agenda is not available at the link yet.
 - Members of the public are welcomed and encouraged to attend and give their input and they have up to 15 minutes before the meeting to register to give comments.
 - In addition to receiving community feedback, the Board usually discusses disciplinary matters and receives reports from the Superintendent and the COPA Chief Administrator.

- After the meeting, reports of the responses to community comments will be posted for posterity.

Notes

- [Agenda](#) for today's meeting.

Meeting started at 7:32 pm

- 12 individuals present in person
- 2 individuals called in for the meeting
 - Motioned passed to let these individuals attend the meeting virtually
- Kyle Cooper introduced himself as the new president of the Police Board
 - The city council approved his appointment on December 13th.
- The Board unanimously voted to keep closed meetings confidential but that some portions of the closed meetings shall be made public upon approval
- The Board discussed the schedule of 2024 regular public meetings
 - Third Thursday of every month
 - These will be posted shortly on chicago.gov/policeboard
 - January 18th at 7:30 pm at same location will be the next meeting
- Motion passed to continue to have closed meetings
- These were very much decided this beforehand

- Aileen Robinson presented on services to support victims of officer involved domestic violence
 - Robinson has 24 years of being involved in CPD
 - CPD receives 570 calls regarding domestic violence service a day, which is standard across other large cities
 - When referring to police officers that commit domestic violence, Robinson said that "the reality is they're still members of our community and we need to hold them accountable."
 - Robinson said that the domestic violence program "meet[s] our victims where they're at"
 - They will:
 - Holding offenders accountable or will support victims as they step away from the case
 - "Walk that path with them."
 - Meet the victims in the city, the suburbs, or in a covert office
 - Provide the following services:
 - Crisis counseling: What was happening behind closed doors is now public, in public documents, at work, etc.

Informing the victim and educating them, answering any questions, addressing concerns

- Medical advocacy: emergency orders of protection, taking them to the hospital, matching them with shelters, making sure they are safe.
- The program wants to make sure that the victims are "emotionally, educationally, and physically in a place of safety"
- The program has new services such as:
 - Victims of officer sexual misconduct, which is now 2 years old
 - Victims who are non targets of search warrants
 - What this means is individuals who are tangentially affected by search warrants and are traumatized because of it.
 - An example Robinson stated was an elderly woman whose nephew was living on her couch. The search warrant was for her nephew, but wasn't aware that it was going to occur and was very traumatizing for her.
 - Support for families of persons who died in police custody
- In the next year, this program hopes to grow from 5 domestic violence advocates to 22.
- When explaining why victims file a complaint and then back out, Robinson stated the following reasons:
 - Police culture: a complaint disrupts this paradigm especially if the offender has connections to the police.
 - Loss of a job: the police officer being put on leave may affect the family as a whole because they won't receive pay and may cause economic stress.
 - The credible threat of a police officer committing suicide should they follow through with the complaint and the individual loses their job or is put on leave.
- A board member asked if offenders are still held accountable if the victim chooses not to fulfill the process.
 - Robinson stated that they are still held accountable even if the victim backs out, as the process has already been initiated.
- Another board member asked what percentage of victims choose not to show up to hearings.
 - Robinson stated that 15% show up, the rest choose not to.
- A board member asked if the victim doesn't show up, does the pattern of

abuse repeat?

- Robinson answered that without intervention and accountability, that pattern does tend to repeat.
- Another question was asked regarding any processes for offenders.
 - Robinson answered that it is not ethical for the organization to work with offenders
 - There are state mandated programs for offenders which are available
 - There needs to be an option for individuals that choose nonviolence
 - Robinson stated that there are no other police departments or jurisdictions with similar programs such as the one Chicago has pioneered.
- Police disciplinary cases were next on the agenda.
 - These were deliberated on and discussed in closed meeting
 - Patrick Brown --> off duty crash and was recommended to be suspended.
 - Cusack and Wolff seconded this decision.
 - 6-2, passed
 - One individual recused herself from the decision to avoid the perception of a conflict of interest
 - Second case was recommended to be discharged from CPD but resigned prior to the hearing and it was recommended to rescind the punishment since the officer was no longer under their jurisdiction.
 - Unanimous decision to pass motion
 - The next case to be deliberated upon was regarding 4 officers who failed to report misconduct in 2006. The recommendation was that they be discharged from CPD
 - Board member Wolff agreed that Chief superintendent did not meet the standard of evidence and the case needs to come before the police board for them to review all aspects of the evidence.
 - The final case was regarding Chief Administrator Roman and it was recommended that he be discharged for use of excessive force on February 9, 2021.
 - The superintendent did not agree that he used excessive force
 - It was opined that the superintendent did not meet the burden of evidence and it was recommended that the case come before the board to review all aspects of the evidence.

- The next portion of the meetings was regarding disqualified Chicago Police District applicants - background examination disqualifies them and they can appeal with the board
 - These deliberations occur during closed meetings.
- 4 different applicants were discussed in this meeting.
 - Motion passed that each receive an appeal
- Superintendent Snelling gave a report regarding the work that has been accomplished this year:
 - Reduction in shooting and homicide in 2023 compared to 2022
 - 369 fewer shootings than last year
 - 86 fewer homicide victims
 - 576 less traumatic incidents
 - 21% reduction in vehicular hijacking
 - Cleared more than 200 case reports
 - \$1 million in stolen merchandise
 - Family liaison office held community peace walks and resource fairs for those affected by violence
 - Opened two additional employee assistance programs, one on the north side and the other on the south side
 - Public safety training center on the west side of Chicago was opened this year
 - Reform: The department met some of the requirements of the consent decree, but not all of them.
- COPA (Civilian Office of Police Accountability) Chief Administrator Report
 - 350 complaints and notifications in November, 72 remain within COPA's jurisdiction
 - Most of these were regarding improper search and seizure
 - This specific complaint type made up 35% of all complaints
 - 144 cases closed, 30% had some form of sustained allegations
 - Audit from office of inspector general with mixed reviews
 - COPA has a dedicated team for domestic violence and sexual misconduct
 - COPA's department for sexual misconduct and domestic violence has "decades of combined experience"
 - When a survivor isn't able or willing to participate, have to find what other evidence can hold up

- The last portion of the meeting was reserved for public speakers
 - The first speaker:
 - He requested that the board continues to legitimize small groups that try to work hand in hand with the work the board tries to accomplish
 - He said that it is easy for the board to isolate itself or not associate with small groups, but that they should continue to participate with these groups
 - He stated that the board and these groups should "show the police officers in good light" so that the public can see them.
 - The second speaker
 - She stated that the board shouldn't focus on the "cloud stuff" but the "stuff down here"
 - She said the board should prioritize the nitty-gritty work.
 - She recommended that the board should get out and participate at the ground level or else their participation on the board is "hollow"
 - Request to be authentic when dealing with the public and "see what the officers are dealing with"
 - She also stated that the police should expand the family liaison program
 - The last speaker was not present
- The board thanked former president Foreman for his service on the board. He's been on the board for more than a decade. He is still sticking around as a board member so that the board maintains quorum.
- Motion to adjourn at 8:25 pm

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