

Community Task Force on Policing Meeting Minutes

Date: March 3, 2022

Time: 6:00-8:00pm CT

Attendees:

- **Task Force Present:** Tish Calhamer, LeJewel Crigler, Charles Horton, Sherman Blair Jr., Danise Habun, Shimon Blanchard, Marcus Banner, Kevin Zaldivar, Aubree Flickema, Cynthia Rivera, Ismael Cordova, Corey Battles, Penelope Williams, Walter Blalark, Joshua Brockway
- **Task Force Absent:** Karen Arreola, Carroll Bailey, Marcus Bradley
- **Kearns and West:** Sara Omar, Larry Schooler, Bushra Bangee,
- **Councilmembers:** Councilmember Tish Powell
- **Elgin Police Department:** Commissioner Ana Lalley

Meeting Objectives:

- Review Subcommittee progress and recommendations
- Discuss Task Force Engagement and Next Steps

Agenda

Time (CT)	Topic	Minutes
6:00 – 6:02 pm	Call to Order, Roll Call, and Agenda Review	Meeting started 7:03 PM
6:02– 6:05 pm	<p>Public Comment <i>Any member of the public who wishes to address the task force may do so via Elgin City Hall</i></p>	<p>Public Comment</p> <p>Sheryi Liske, Member of Elgin</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) The Civilian Review Board (CRB) should have strong subpoena powers and redress if officers are not disciplined as recommended. Highly recommend a lawyer on the CRB. (2) Do not change the recruitment requirement for police officers to have a high school diploma and GED. (3) Reallocate the budget from the police department to other human service agencies and departments in the city. (4) Elgin Police Officers to discontinue the wearing of their weapons and paying overtime for officers to attend community engagement events. (5) Reevaluate the trainers in the police department. (6) Provide statistics on disparities (7) Continue to encourage the task force members to speak up during the meetings. <p>Emails from the Public</p>

		<p>Kearns and West staff spoke about the emails that were received from community members. There were 2-3 emails from community members expressing concern about lowering the education requirements for police officers from a bachelor's degree to a high school diploma or GED.</p> <p>Email address for the public to submit comments to the task force: policingtaskforce@cityofelgin.org</p> <p>A task force member made a suggestion that emails received from the public body should be shared with the public body. Any redactions should be made prior to the meeting.</p>
<p>6:05 – 6:10 pm</p>	<p>High-level Recap of Activities to Date</p>	<p>The facilitation team provided a recap of subcommittee activities completed to date. Each subcommittee has met an average of 4-5 times and has identified a series of recommendations.</p>
<p>6:10 – 6:50 pm</p>	<p>Subcommittees Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Review subcommittee recommendations to date</i> ● <i>Discuss next steps</i> 	<p>Subcommittee: Civilian Review Board presented by Task Force member Battles and Haven</p> <p>Recommendation: Creation of a Civilian Review Board</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. City of Elgin should establish a CRB to provide oversight and accountability for the Elgin PD <p><i>Membership</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CRB shall have 9 members 2. No less than 5 members shall be African American/Black 3. No more than 5 members should reside west or east of the Fox River 4. There will be representation of persons who are younger than 25 years of age 5. There will be representation of persons who have had encounters with law enforcement. <p style="text-align: center;">Task Force Comment</p> <p>A task force member asked if there were any recommendations for the inclusion of Asian or Hispanic members. Reply: This is what the subcommittee has come to a consensus as of right now.</p> <p>Taskforce members recommended representation of younger people from our high schools and middle schools; specifically 1 from high school and 1 from middle school.</p>

Task force members agreed that there should be a lawyer on the task force especially with the subpoena and sensitive information involved. Task force member Battles followed up with the question: should lawyer have voting power and should they be on the CRB? The task force member stated that the Lawyer should work in a consultant capacity, but should have voting power if African American or Hispanic.

Another task force member inquired about how to ensure that the CRB does not become dominated by individuals from other police departments and how would the task force ensure that the membership has a real civilian review process?

Reply: No member should be a representative of law enforcement and should have a familial relationship with law enforcement. We have not fine-tuned the language, but that is something we will need to consider. We need to get clear clarification on associations with police officers on CRB.

Subcommittee task force member mentioned that what we were looking at regarding associations only extended to spouses and children, nothing beyond.

Recommendation:

Terms

1. Have first group of CRB members be:
 - 5 members for 3 year terms
 - 4 members for 2 year terms
2. Have board members serve two year terms
3. CRB members shall serve no more than 2 consecutive terms
4. Task Force will provide recommendations/input to the Mayor and City Council on appointments (The Mayor and City Council make the appointments).

Task Force Comment

A task force member recommends not having the Mayor and Council approve the CRB. Instead, the task force member recommended creating a process through public election to nominate and elect CRB members.

Two task force members agreed with this recommendation on not having the Mayor or the Council approve the task force members. This could become political if it includes the City Council and Mayor. To

		<p>ensure that this board remains apolitical it should not be appointed by the City Council or the Mayor.</p> <p>Two task force members agreed with holding elections, but if elections are not feasible then utilizing the current task force to make the appointments.</p> <p>A task force member suggested creating a community recommendation process where members of the community nominate individuals for the CRB.</p> <p>The same task force member inquired about the task force: If we utilize the current task force to make appointments, what happens after the first year? Will the task force continue to stay intact and have oversight power?</p> <p>Reply: We have not gotten this far in our discussion, but that is something that the subcommittee will consider.</p> <p>A task force member stated that it would be impactful for the city if this task force had oversight and other powers.</p> <p>A task force member disagreed with electing individuals to the CRB. The task force member stated that If you look at the statistics of our local elections, in a good election year there is a 9% turnout. Elections can be counterproductive to getting Elgin members part of the nomination process.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p><i>Training</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Require members of CRB to receive training in the Open Meetings Act before they take office as a Board member- Require the members to receive training in EPD Policies and Procedures- Require members to receive training in use of force policies after taking office.- Require members to receive training in diversity and equity before or after taking office.- Enable members to receive optional training in firearms simulation.- Enable members to participate in the Ride Along Program with police officers. <p style="text-align: center;">Task Force Comment</p> <p>A task force member stated that training can be a way of influencing opinions and there should be caution in having law enforcement train</p>
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members of the public. There is power in having members of the public see policies without previous context and with a fresh perspective.

Another task force member followed up by saying that the purpose of the Civilian Review Board is for the community to oversee how the Police Department treats members of the community with respect. We do not need to get into the technicalities of policies and procedures, but instead, review how the police department is treating members of the city with respect and dignity.

One task force member raised the concern about the recommendation process. They stated that they were unsure about the process today. They asked if the task force was voting on any of these recommendations today and instead taking the task force's feedback back to our subcommittees to discuss more in-depth?

Reply: Chief Lalley asked for more time to take in and understand the recommendations and provide formal responses to them.

A task force member requested having external task force subcommittee members comment on recommendations and ask for internal CRB subcommittee members to not speak during the recommendation share out.

A task force member raised the question around training again and said that the CRB should have training in the police department's policies and procedures so that they have a full understanding before making recommendations or finding fault in policing issues.

Another task force member recommended that the CRB be trained in the Open Meetings Act. All other trainings can influence proper review. Instead of training, CRB can get orientations or overviews. If CRB members want more in-depth understanding in one area they can.

Recommendations:

Procedure

- CRB works with Chief to determine disciplinary action; Chief has the final say and will discuss the reasoning for decision if it differs from CRB.
- CRB action will be public.
- The CRB shall have subpoena powers to call witnesses as part of its determinations.

Task Force Comment

A task force member asked about what authority the CRB would have when there is a difference between the Police Department and CRB

		<p>regarding disciplinary action. Recommends giving the CRB the power of redress.</p> <p>Another task force member raised the concern about what would happen if the Chief of Police has a different perspective than the CRB? What will be the redress line?</p> <p>A third task force member requested the CRB subcommittee to explore creating a process of redress when there is a difference.</p> <p>A task force member then asked how would the CRB lead to reparations in Elgin? Reply: Task force members stated that reparations were a better conversation for the Racial and Other Profiling Disparities subcommittee.</p> <p>A task force member asked Chief Lalley if the CRB would have access to the information that the police department and the lawyer will have access to?</p> <p>Chief Lalley responded: When an internal investigation is conducted, a third-party/independent law firm does an outside investigation and all evidence as part of that case is given to the third party. Once the investigation is done the case comes back to the Chief and if the allegation is sustained then discipline is warranted. The Chief then allows the officer to make a case with them if it is warranted. The Chief makes a decision on disciplinary action. Disciplinary action can include a written reprimand, suspension, or termination. This disciplinary decision is then sent to the legal department to ensure everything is in order which moves it to the final stage where the City Manager signs off on any disciplinary decision.</p> <p>A task force member followed up with the question of if redacted information also be available to the CRB? Would the CRB need to sign off on NDAs?</p> <p>The Chief responded and stated that there may be some sensitive information that is not released, but most information will be available for CRB to ask questions and ask for more information on.</p> <p>A task force member explained that a problem with CRB's across the country is that they do not have power. In order to have power, the CRB needs to be able to investigate independently and on its own.</p>
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6:50 – 7:00 pm	Break	Break 7:01 - 7:06 pm
7:00 – 7:30 pm	<p>Subcommittees Discussion (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Review subcommittee recommendations to date</i> ● <i>Discuss next steps</i> 	<p>Subcommittee Recommendations: Racial and Other Profiling Disparities (7:36 PM)</p> <p>Taskforce member Horton introduced the subcommittee by stating that they did not make any recommendations because it would not have been fair to make these recommendations until they met with some police officers. Although they do not make any recommendations, they did discuss some topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How can we acknowledge that racial profiling has existed for a long time and learn from what has attempted to be done about it in the past? - How is Elgin Police Department (EPD) measuring/tracking racial profiling? - What steps can EPD take to reduce and eliminate racial profiling? <p>Ideas discussed by the committee (no consensus was reached yet):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An ordinance banning stops for minor infractions as the only reason for a stop (<i>Researchers suggest if you reduce the scope/discretion of what officers use as the basis for suspicion or reasons for stops, then it is likely that disparities in stops will go down</i>) 2. An integrated “Community Institute” for Reducing Racial and Other Profiling Training (<i>This would bring the community more into the training and orientation process for police and create a regular on-going feedback loop for community input into strategies for reducing disparities through dialogues with the community and police.</i>)

3. Reducing barriers/impacts of stops on African-American and Latino communities (*within the purview of City of Elgin state law*).

Subcommittee leader and the University of Illinois, Chicago representative Joe, stated that one of the motivations of this subcommittee was to take in the input from other task force members.

A task force member inquired about receiving data on how many Black police officers are currently in the Elgin police department.

Another task force member stated that the task force wants to get the data of how many black officers and white officers are on the force and their own data on how much each officer stops people.

Chief Lalley responded by saying that the transparency site has this statistical data. Chief could get the data requested, but it would take some time.

Another task force member asked about how much discretion the police officers have to write offenses? The subcommittee wants to speak with police officers to understand their mindset. Want to know the statistics of the officers to help us get a bigger picture of the police department.

A task force member explained that they know there is bias, but we want to get an understanding of where that bias is coming from and if there are trends in the bias to identify “bad apples.”

Another task force member warned and stated that they have to be careful when looking at statistics. Do not just look at the numbers but at the percentages.

A task force member stated that there were members of the public on the transparency website who were unable to find statistics under recruiting. They asked to get exact numbers of African Americans who are currently working for the Elgin police department.

Chief shared her screen to show how to get to the recruiting data statistics on the transparency website.

Transparency Site: <https://epdopendata-cityofelgin.hub.arcgis.com/>

Another task force member said that they know there is a bias in the Elgin police department. It is not just individual officers, but if they look at the arrest numbers 26% of arrests were African American members while African Americans make up 6.3% of the population. The task force member stated that the city needs to ask what are the assumptions

		<p>that are built into the practice of policing? These assumptions can be drawn from analyzing the stops that come in.</p> <p>A task force member requested the subcommittee to look into working with Chief Lalley on establishing easier ways of reporting and collecting the data.</p> <p>The Chief stated that the Officers are trained to ask additional questions which is taught through our Fair and Unbiased training which covers implicit bias.</p> <p>Another task force member asked if it were possible to see if they can get the information on where the stop happens and the radius of where they reside. How far did they get stopped in comparison to where they live? That can help us understand which neighborhoods are being overpoliced.</p> <p>A different task force member stated that he gets stopped every year and often within his own neighborhood, therefore he agrees with the recommendation.</p>
7:50– 8:00 pm	Wrap-up and Next Steps	<p style="text-align: center;">Closing Comments and Questions (7:50)</p> <p>Taskforce members encouraged the facilitation team to push the task force to meet more frequently and for longer periods of time so that we can encourage more robust conversations and give more time for task force members to speak.</p> <p>Another task force member requested the Racial and Other Profiling Disparities subcommittee meet with the police officers all at once and choose a day where members can meet all at one time.</p> <p>Other task force members agreed with the above request for the sake of transparency and following the set rules.</p>