

Community Outreach Subcommittee of the Northampton Policing Review Commission

MEETING AGENDA

Monday January 11, 2021

7:30-9pm

To join the remote meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/92735791973?pwd=WVQ2WU9kQ2lQSDM3U2hPSnJtZEVOZz09>

Meeting ID: 927 3579 1973 Passcode: 848401

Or by telephone, call: +1 929 436 2866

1. Call to Order
 1. Announcement of Zoom Recording
 2. Roll Call
 3. Approval of meeting minutes
2. Report back from Subcommittee members about possible organizations/advocates that should get the outreach document
3. Workshop and preparation of Outreach Document (using Carol's first draft)
4. Possible strategies to deploy the outreach document
5. New Business
6. Adjourn

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Javier Luengo-Garrido at 7:30pm

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ZOOM RECORDING

Commissioner Javier Luengo-Garrido made an announcement that this meeting is being recorded for the public record and would be available on Northampton Open Media, as well as, the City of Northampton website.

ROLL CALL:

Javier Luengo-Garrido Present

Daniel Cannity Present

Carol Owens

Approval of meeting minutes from December 30, 2020 is postponed until next meeting.

Public Comment

Hildegarde Freedman suggested advocating for doing one on one interviews with people of the commission who decides to interview people at K Hill housing.

2. Report back from Subcommittee members about possible organizations/advocates that should get the outreach document

Commissioner Dan Cannity named Wildflower Alliance which used to be the RLC as an organization Sean Donovan has been involved with. He named the Northampton Recovery Center, as well as the Western Mass BIPOC Advisory Council, founded by Jose AdAstra who has been working with houseless populations for a long time. He said these preexisting relationships can help start the process.

Commissioner Carol Owen named wanting to reach out to Safe Passage to see if they can identify anyone who would be willing to testify in any form. She said the Center for Women and Community is another organization that might be important. She said it might be worth asking to see if there were any staff that would be willing to give testimony on behalf of the service users.

Commissioner Dan Cannity suggested working with Elysa Kline who has experience with restorative justice as well as domestic violence and sexual assault work. He said she might know where the commission can do outreach.

Commissioner Javier Luengo-Garrido agreed there might be service providers and support people who might be able to advocate on their behalf. He also mentioned the Center for New Americans school and the International Language Institute. He said churches and shelters in Northampton are also important places to connect with. He wondered how to limit the bias of the person administering the interview and said he doesn't want interviewers to rephrase anyone's answers.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said it will be important to work with the people doing the interview on how to interview well.

Commissioner Carol Owen said it might be helpful to tell the interviewers and the participants that there are no right answers and that the commission isn't looking for right answers.

3. Workshop and preparation of Outreach Document (using Carol's first draft)

The commissioners edit the Outreach document.

Commissioner Javier Luengo-Garrido suggested adding language around the testimony being a part of public record. He said he thinks the document is honest which is important because of transparency.

Commissioner Carol Owen said the whole point of having a document like this is to be as transparent as the committee can in relaying what the process is as well as what the risks are because there has been a history of using vulnerable and marginalized people . She said it's important to be clear that people can opt out at any time.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said he has researched what the actual requirements are in order to protect people as the committee is asking people to be very vulnerable in a very turbulent time. He said especially when it comes to allegations against police officers specifically or multiple police officers, the fear of retaliation is very real. He said it's important for the committee to offer the most safety they possibly can.

Commissioner Javier Luengo-Garrido wondered whether the commission can add best practices for interviewers, as well as take note of who did the interview.

The commissioners discuss the logistics of contacting interviewers.

Commissioner Javier Luengo-Garrido offered to give his phone number if anyone needs to be in contact directly.

Commissioner Carol Owen wondered whether it may be inhibiting to contact the committee if they have feedback about the process or if they want to take their testimony back. She wondered whether it might be important to designate someone else to be the contact person.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said it might be easier for them to reach out to the person who did the interview because they've built up a relationship.

Commissioner Javier Luengo-Garrido said it will be important to make it clear to the interviewer to empower the person giving the testimony and making sure they know they have full autonomy over their narrative.

Commissioner Carol Owens clarified that the person offering testimony would both be able to contact the interviewer as well as anyone on the committee if they had any hesitations after the fact.

The commissioners agreed with Carol's statement to have both options.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said having the pathway be as open as possible will be important.

Commissioner Dan Cannity invited community member Ya-Ping to amplify her chat comment suggesting specific edits to the language of the document that would assist participants in feeling more supported and empowered.

The commissioners workshop the opening paragraph of the outreach document.

4. Possible strategies to deploy the outreach document

The commissioners discussed drafting an outreach email to organizations that were mentioned above, including local activists.

Commissioner Dan Cannity suggested turning these questions into a google form as well as a printable form so that city council members could share this with their constituents and so that it wouldn't be a requirement to attend a meeting to hear about the work. He named MANA and Touch the Sky as two other organizations the committee should connect with as they are building community in Northampton as well.

Commissioner Carol Owen suggested reaching out to a point person at Service Net who is setting up the shelter at the First Church.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said he's here concerning things about Service Net and how they provide their services so it might be important for the committee to establish what their commitments and policies are.

Commissioner Carol Owen said she recognized a possible conflict because if the contracted provider agency becomes the conduit to talking with very vulnerable people, those people are looking for, for example, shelter through these agencies, it might middle the relationship between them and make people fearful that there may be a potential agenda, or that it might feel transactional. She said she retracted her suggestion.

Commissioner Javier Luengo-Garrido said it's complicated to call them to the table because at the end of the day, he's always thinking in the back of his head if this testimony is real or just intended because they have high stakes on the table.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said organizations have to have engendered trust and that it will be important to communicate that respondents don't get anything out of it in terms of a transaction.

5. New Business

The commissioners discussed the next meeting date and time as well as the timeline for the final report.

6. Adjourn

Commissioner Dan Cannity motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:56pm. Commissioner Carol Owens seconded the motion. The motion to approve the meeting was passed unanimously.