

Northampton Policing Review Commission: Spending and Contracts Subcommittee

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 26th, 2021
5:00PM - 7:00PM
Remote Meeting

To join the remote meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/93384818258?pwd=Ykt5czF2VlFqMklwckFUYlJWWFpIZz09>

Meeting ID: 933 8481 8258 **Passcode:** 054796

Or by telephone, call: +1 929 436 2866

1. Call to Order
 - Announcement of Zoom Recording
 - Roll Call
 - Approval of meeting minutes
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes
3. Public comment: 30 minutes
4. Further research and discussion on data acquired on policing in Northampton
5. New Business
6. Adjourn

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Josey Rosales at 5:09pm.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF ZOOM RECORDING

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:

Daniel Cannity Present
Michael Quinlan Present
Josey Rosales Present

2. Public Comment

Community member Ya Ping Douglass mentioned at the last commission meeting, there were calls to have the report include different viewpoints, and some of which would look into reforms. They said they'll be sending articles about the ineffectiveness of implicit bias training.

They said they are confused about how much time commissioners have been listening to organizers, a lot of which are black women. They said it's so frustrating to try to collect proof and scientific evidence to back up the ineffectiveness. They asked the commission to take a stand and represent the abolitionist organizers. They wondered why white commissioners aren't listening to black women who align with the Brattleboro report as well as articles which back them up.

Community member Rye Buckely agreed with Ya Ping. They said they've seen the same reform ideas come up again when it was some of the first and clearest research the commission started with. They said it was disappointing imagining the other commissioners aren't doing the research they should be. They really appreciate the members of this subcommittee for the diligent research they've done for the community. They said it was encouraging to see the powerful statements the committee members made, in particular from Commissioner Josey. They encouraged the subcommittee not to recommend anything that relies on the detail work because any sort of reforms that relies on that money will rely on policing continuing to exist in the system.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

4. Further research and discussion on data acquired on policing in Northampton

Commissioner Michael Quinlan asked if anything from the data the committee received, stuck out for folks.

Commissioner Dan Cannity looked at vacation and sick leave, training. He said sick leave and personal time are easy to calculate. He said he's unsure the commission can accurately account for vacation time because there's almost 100% difference between people who just started versus people who have been working for the NPD for a long time. He said what matters more is the call log. He said he looked into body cameras and said the data only showed what the rules would be if Northampton got body cameras.

Commissioner Josey Rosales said legally speaking there is very little to be done with the contracts until the next negotiation section which might be in July 2022. They said the city of Northampton has a lot of managerial power over the NPD: transfers, funding, hiring. They said the city of Northampton is capable of a lot, which is good news in terms of posing recommendations.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said nothing in the contracts specializes anything about staffing levels. He suggested that the committee could suggest a different ratio of emergency responders to peer-led/civilian responders and that it could be a collaboration across multiple organizations. He said the committee might want to look more at the call volume in the logs. He said the removal of firearms was mentioned in the Brattleboro report and that

police would

still have access to tasers and mace even though we know those can be lethal as well. He said when looking over the contracts he didn't see anything that said anything about what the police are using.

Commissioner Josey Rosales said there might be room to put a system in place to demilitarize the police in general and maybe gain money back in the process. They said Northampton police doesn't need to be geared up for SWAT-level events.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said the committee might need to look into what the state requires. He mentioned the Alternatives committee is looking into detail work. He said moving detail work away from the department and moving it toward civilian flaggers makes sense. He said they might be able to change who does that detail work and specify some portion of detail work funding toward anti-racist initiatives in the city or toward microgrants, as there's nothing in the city contract with patrol officers that would limit that power.

Commissioner Michael Quinlan mentioned in the DA report, there were thirteen trials over a two-year period, six of them being traffic violations. He said that doesn't seem like many considering the amount of traffic stops. He was surprised there were only thirteen trials. He said none of them looked like they required an armed response. He said it's confusing that this police work leads to so few trials.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said very little things go to trial because there's not a lot of crime in Northampton.

Commissioner Michael Quinlan noted there were two violent assaults in the last handful of months. He said right now with the NPD structure as is, the police were able to respond, but that it was for two events. He said that is not an overwhelming amount. He said if Northampton can't study emergency response, no one can in terms of being a relatively safe city with a pretty conscientious population.

Commissioner Josey Rosales said when sifting through the data, it's clear that large numbers of incidents go unanswered and unreported because some people don't feel comfortable calling the police.

Commissioner Dan Cannity suggested comparing the contracts in terms of language with other departments in order to start the interrogation of the collective bargaining agreements with the police.

Commissioner Michael Mc Quinlan said the city counselors have gotten the The Brattleboro report. He said he's looking into this work being done in Albuquerque, Berkeley and Brattleboro.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said San Francisco one is a multimillion-dollar reinvestment plan which is a different scale than Northampton. He said the NPD data doesn't explain why five people were chosen as the number of officers to be on duty. He said he doesn't remember seeing anything about officer staffing in the data.

Commissioner Josey Rosales suggested the committee outline steps for a program, for example saying, given the information the committee has, the committee sees the NPD should be defunded, and the money be reinvested toward peer-led programs with the continued emphasis on observing the effectiveness. They said there needs to be

community-led accountability to continue this work.

Commissioner Michael Quinlan agreed. He said in June, Mayor Higgins put together a coalition to write a sustainability plan for Northampton and it gets reviewed every 5 or 10 years as it is recognized more information will be available. He said this is ongoing work for a community like ours. He said he agrees- finding a different way to do this work like a paid stipend that would continue to study policing and crisis response. He said it will be an ongoing discussion.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said summarizing what the committee does know to let the commission know what they've been working on would be helpful to increase collaboration. He said the NPD has a lot of officers who have resigned. He wondered where the money would go at the end of the year if there's a vacancy. He said if the department has vacancies to fill, if they aren't filled, the funds get diverted to another organization.

Commissioner Michael Quinlan said any money that doesn't get spent gets returned to the general fund and it gets put into the stability stabilization fund.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said EMS contracts, as well as other groups like ServiceNet have some language the committee might want to have included in terms of accountability of contracts. He said he's found some accountability language but none that he's loved. He said if the committee uses Civilian oversight as the baseline, it will be important to note what can be added at the city level. He said the NPD, and the union will have a lot of feelings about it and there would have to be negotiation with the city about where accountability lives.

Commissioner Michael Quinlan mentioned the board of health naming racism as a public crisis. He said putting offices together to deal with issues can help this cause so greatly.

Commissioner Dan Cannity said specificity around reallocation of the funds that were cut will be important. He said the committee will want to make sure the recommendations are concrete enough as well as list out community concern and that it should include as well as what the cost of a new department would be.

Commissioner Dan Cannity discussed the commission's overall timeline.

The commissioners discussed the next committee meeting date.

5. New Business

ADJOURN

Commissioner Josey Rosales moved to adjourn. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:34 PM.