

COMMUNITY POLICE COLLABORATIVE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 13, 2022 – 7:30 PM
Virtual WebEx Meeting

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call Meeting to Order CPC Chair Lawson-Muhammad called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

2. Roll Call

Members

Stephanie Lawson-Muhammad *Chair*

Sara Wakefield *Vice-Chair*

Alix Baudin

Richard Stephen Bell

James Davis

Annemarie Maini

Jocelyn Ryan

Josh Tinkleman

Non-Voting Members

Trustee Bobby Brown

Trustee Donna Coalier

Acting Chief Stephen Dolinac

Sgt. Richard Lombard

Lt. Ernesto Morillo

Lt. Eric Moore

Announcement: While addressing a technical difficulty, Trustee Coalier noted to CPC members and the public that South Orange's cannabis ordinance is under discussion. It was recently tabled to work through several issues and CPC members are encouraged to look at it and provide feedback to the extent that it overlaps with policing in South Orange.

3. Approval of Minutes Minutes tabled as adjustments requested by Ms. Maini and Ms. Ryan have not been finalized; minutes to be distributed and approved via email following the meeting.

4. Topics

Updates from South Orange Police Department: Acting Chief Dolinac updated CPC members and the public about SOPD responses to a recent study that indicated racial profiling on the part of officers in South Orange Village. These responses included an internal affairs investigation and coordination with the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and legal counsel. CPC members asked a number of questions related to SOPD's policies and actions related to racial profiling and requested updates to this investigation specifically and policies to address racial profiling generally. Acting Chief Dolinac also introduced CPC members to Lt. Ernesto Morillo, an SOPD officer who is working with the CC&J program.

Update on SOPD Chief Search: CPC Chair Lawson-Muhammad met with Village President Collum to discuss the role of the CPC in the selection of the new South Orange Police Chief. CPC members will be given the opportunity to ask candidates questions and Trustees and the Village President will be invited to observe. CPC Member Richard Steven Bell will coordinate efforts to seek public input on questions that should be asked of candidates. The timeline for this discussion is yet unclear but a February ad hoc meeting is likely.

Overview of New CPC Committee Structure and Overarching Goals for 2022, Preview of CPC Committees - Approach, Goals and Structure: CPC Chair Lawson-Muhammad presented a proposal for new committee structures and overarching goals for the CPC, based on prior discussions at our annual retreat and a ranked choice survey sent to voting members of the CPC. Proposed chairs of the committees briefly discussed their plans for the newly formed committees.

- **Committees As Proposed:**
 - Data and Publication: Sara Wakefield (Chair), Joshua Tinkelman, and Alix Baudin.
 - Community Care & Justice: Stephanie Lawson-Muhammad and Brendan Gioello.
 - Jayme Ganey, newly hired director of the Community Care & Justice program was introduced and described her relevant history and background, as well as her goals for the program. CPC members welcomed Ms. Ganey to the CPC.
 - SOPD Operations: Annemarie Maini (Chair), James Davis
 - Community Engagement: Richard Steven Bell.
 - Liaison to Maplewood Community Board on Police: Jocelyn Ryan.
- **Annual Objectives:**
 - Work with SOPD to become a more data-driven organization to help drive operational improvements
 - Support CC&J efforts to transform the SOPD culture and optimize how South Orange dispatches services to address calls for service taking into account solutions recommended by CC&J
- **Discussion of Committees and 2022 Goals:** CPC Members and guests discussed a variety of challenges related to achieving these goals including: developing trust between SOPD and the CPC, the lack of a clear liaison within the SOPD for CPC members to coordinate with, setting clear expectations about the scope of the CPC mission, and how South Orange Village can better support this work.

5. New Business

- **Budget Requests:** CPC Members Maini and Davis reviewed SOPD budget requests for the upcoming year and asked a variety of questions related to appropriations. Acting Chief Dolinac (and Sgt. Lombardi) responded to questions about storage tanks to fill vehicles, traffic counters, hiring requests related to an IT professional and additional officers, and fixed license plate readers.
 - CPC Chair Lawson-Muhammad requested that CPC Member Maini's questions about the budget be included in the minutes of the meeting. They are appended at the bottom of this document.

- 6. Public Comments** None
- 7. Executive Session** Started at 9:35 PM
- 8. Adjournment** Adjourned 9:46 PM

Next Meeting Date:

February 10, 2022
Virtual WebEx Meeting

APPENDIX: CPC/SOPD Budget Feedback (CPC Members Maini and Davis)

Acting Chief Dolinac,

Thank you for sharing the first round of 2022 SOPD budget requests and supporting documentation.

James Davis and I have reviewed the documents and would like to offer some feedback and hopefully expand the conversation.

We have framed them in two buckets:

limiting scope of policing (similar to the code enforcement work earlier last year)
and clarification on operations.

This is also a mix of budgeting preferences as well as understanding police operations.

We can plan to discuss at our meeting on Thursday, but any feedback you can provide beforehand would be appreciated.

Thank you.

Annemarie and James

Limiting Scope

2022 Capital Request - UST Repair (\$45,309)

The SOPD is proposing replacing the two underground fuel storage tanks (one gas and one diesel.) The current tanks do not comply with DEP standards.

We would like to start with the basic question of whether or not having an on-site fuel facility is best practice for SOPD and what are the alternatives?

We would like to suggest that the police department consider the manpower necessary to maintain a gas station on site and all the compliance and inspections necessary. The first thing every home sale requires is a search and extraction of underground tanks, and the police department is so close to a water source that any potential leak (in a new or old tank) is very risky.

We understand the convenience of having the ability to refuel 24 hours a day at the station and the backup service for the town when there are emergencies, we just don't know if that is worth the risk of an underground tank, the time to maintain and comply with all regulations of running a fueling system, and this capital cost. With the prevalence of fleet gas cards tracking and managing fuel usage could be automated and monitored for efficiency.

We think our police department's time should be spent on police items and maintaining fuel storage tanks can be outsourced to existing gas stations in town. Another way to think about this is to understand what happens to fueling police cars in the interim if the current tanks are being replaced? Is the back up plan a viable full time process?

2022 Capital Request - Portable Tfc Ctrs. and Fixed Tfc Ctrs.

The SOPD is proposing that we replace the two portable traffic counters (\$9,000) and install two fixed traffic counters (\$6,300.)

The justification is that the new technology would provide live feeds of traffic volume and speed, and that it would be easier to fulfill OPRA requests and individual resident's requests about traffic.

We wonder if this cost would be better managed out of the Engineering Department. Traffic calming is a multi-layer approach and enforcement is really at the bottom. The engineering department should own the dangerous streets and intersections and create improvement plans in conjunction with the other departments, but led by engineering.

In addition, we feel the police department should be advocating for a better data management system to support OPRA requests. Each department creating their own data frameworks and systems is not best practices.

2022 Personnel Request Form- IT Professional

The SOPD is proposing that they hire a dedicated IT professional for the police department.

We agree with the need as stated, we just don't think the police department should be the primary manager of that person. The person should be managed by the town IT department, just housed at SOPD headquarters. This may be semantics, but the IT department should be able to explain where that extra resource is coming from their budget

and resources (as they are currently supporting the SOPD) and this isn't 100% "new expense" for the police department.

Clarification on Operations

2022 Capital Request - Fixed ALPR

The SOPD is proposing to replace two fixed automatic license plate readers (that are currently 10 years old) for a total of \$24,029.08.

Just wondering how these would relate to the new cameras installed and how effective this tool is in successfully capturing investigative information?

2022 Personnel Request Form - Police Officers

The SOPD is proposing that the town budget for an additional 8 officers to join the force. There is a significant lag time in identifying, hiring, academy and background checks before an officer joins the rotation. Last year SOPD was not successful in hiring any officers and there are potentially three pending retirements in 2022.

Adding "8" officers is not necessarily the best way to frame this request. It would be better to describe it as a function of the budget (x% increase from 2021 actuals vs. 2021 budget vs. 2022 proposed budget.). And from an FTE perspective we recommend it be a function of current police officers **plus** potential new hires **less** potential hires equals a 2022 FTE goal.

We think it would be wise to have a visual of the age distribution of the force. This is important to understand the impact of not hiring or hiring in bubbles. We pay the price down the road with bubbles of a younger, less experienced force as officers retire.

We still think a data analyst would be a prudent hire, as well as a willingness to think about the service level agreements.

2020 Operating Budget Request Form - Vehicles

This is a tricky year to ask for vehicles as the town has moved toward the fleet management system to eventually move vehicles from capital to operating budget. Is that what this is expecting that all of this will go through operating budget?

We should separate out how many vehicles are needed for an average day from how many vehicles we need extra to ensure proper maintenance. From there we can run the numbers to understand the financial impact of transitioning to the fleet management system.