



Civilian Police Advisory Board Study Committee - MINUTES

Date: December 7, 2021

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Conducted by Remote Participation

Attendance

Karen Bishop	p
Anne Brown	p
Michael Brownstein	p
Elliot Elkin	
Kerrie Fallon	p
Julie Flaherty*	p
Laura Gitelson	p
Jillian Harvey*	p

Doug Heim*	p
Carlos Morales	p
Mona Mohtadi	p
Sanjay Newton	p
Bob Radochia	p
Kathy Rogers	p
Clarissa Rowe	p
Susan Ryan-Vollmar	p

‡ <Person> attended

* - non-voting member | p - present

Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm

1. Approve minutes from prior meetings
Vote: to approve October 13, 2021 and November 15, 2021 minutes
Approved Unanimously
2. Updates from committees/constituencies
(Susan Ryan-Vollmar) - LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission - None
(Carlos Morales) - Envision Arlington Diversity Task Group - None
(Kathy Roghers) - Human Rights Commission - None
(Elliot Elkin/Mona Mohtadi) - Arlington High School - None
(Michael Brownstein) - Envision Arlington Standing Committee - None
(Anne Brown) - Council on Aging - None

(Karen Bishop) - Board of Youth Services - None
(Kerrie Fallon) - Disability Commission - None

3. Recommendations - Sanjay Newton

(Sanjay Newton) reviews the timeline. Town Meeting begins in April, the Select Board would hear an article in March and we would need to have an article ready by the end of January to place it on the Warrant.

(Doug Heim) reviews what a Warrant Article is and isn't.

(Sanjay Newton) wants to review the overall concept of the framework he circulated. Is there anything missing? Anything that shouldn't be there?

(Clarissa Rowe) thinks that the framework is excellent. She thinks the one thing that shouldn't be there is any reference to collective bargaining. It's very complicated and it would be unnecessarily confrontational. We should also spell out for people how people can come to this body anonymously. Clarissa also thinks the body should evolve over time.

There was further discussion of how collective bargaining and state law interact. Non-binding recommendations could be made by anyone, but there could be complications depending on the recommendations and process.

(Kathy Rogers) suggests we might be better served to remove "collective bargaining." Kathy is pleased with the draft and suggests we move to discussing the warrant article.

(Sanjay Newton) reads the proposed warrant article language and there is extended conversation by the committee about scope and word choices.

(Kathy Rogers) is wondering whether "reviewing policy and procedure" is asking too much of a commission. She has a personal philosophy to do a few things well, rather than many things in a mediocre manner. This sparks extended discussion of how policies are reviewed now, and the amount of time commissioners might be expected to devote and the appropriateness of the commission offering comment on policy.

(Kerrie Fallon) wants to make sure we have welcoming language and that a commission would work to bring people together.

(Laura Gitelson) wants to clarify whether the discussion about policy and procedures is about language or is a substantive disagreement?

(Jillian Harvey) asks how much time commissioners would be expected to devote? There is discussion on this topic and a general thought that this commission would likely be a heavy lift.

(Bob Radochia) is not quite ready to recommend a commission. He has been reviewing his note and he thinks that what we're talking about is overkill. Nobody likes it when a police officer gives them a ticket, but that's their job. Bob says that it's their job to keep us safe, even when some people don't like the outcome. He has categorized the comments received in the committee's google form and doesn't see a consensus for any action. Bob thinks that the statewide police reform is addressing a lot of the issues we're discussing here. Bob reviewed some statistics. Bob thinks we're in a time of unrest in the country with all of the looting and shootings and stabbings all over the place, especially the west coast. He thinks that's going to work its way east. It just takes time for things to start in California and eventually end up here.

(Sanjay Newton) asks Bob to clarify what things he's concerned about originating on the west coast?

(Bob Radochia) mentions music and looting and other things. He thinks we haven't experienced it like they have. He thinks it's a question of time.

(Susan Ryan-Vollmar) thinks that the worst example of something originating on the west coast is prop 2½ which cut funding for police and first responders. She disagrees with the points about looting. Susan shares the story of an elderly woman who had some positive and one very negative interaction with the police in Arlington. Susan is concerned that the person didn't feel safe.

(Bob Radochia) asks how the issue was addressed.

(Susan Ryan-Vollmar) reminds us that the woman never complained because she knew she would need to call the police in the future for help and she was concerned about retribution.

(Bob Radochia) doesn't think we need a commission to deal with that. If the chief heard about this, she would have dealt with it.

(Laura Gitelson) agrees that if the chief had heard about this, she would have investigated and dealt with it. But the story underlines that there are people who do not feel comfortable going directly to the police. Laura is concerned that the idea that "Arlington is a safe community" is a distraction from the fact that some people don't feel safe and from doing the work of helping them to feel safe.

(Bob Radochia) thinks that what we're suggesting is overkill.

(Clarissa Rowe) does not agree that it's overkill. When she was on the Select Board she received a complaint from an acquaintance. She passed it along and it was dealt with. But Clarissa notes that she was in a position of power and we

need to find a way to help folks who aren't in that same position or don't know someone in that position.

(Kathy Rogers) likes to think about this as going from "good" to "great." She wants all members of the community to feel safe. It's not about things being broken, but about seizing an opportunity to improve.

(Anne Brown and Karen Bishop) agree with Kathy's sentiment.

(Sanjay Newton) notes that the intention of this committee, and the draft framework, was to create a process that was low conflict.

(Doug Heim) reminds the committee that they can have a Warrant Article that can contemplate issues that a final vote doesn't ultimately address.

(Laura Gitelson) starts a conversation about how to move forward, and whether we will need a second December meeting. She and Bob discuss whether there are changes Bob would contemplate so that he could support the warrant article.

Vote: to recommend the creation of a commission.

Approved (11-1) Bob Radochia voted against.

Vote: to request the following article be placed on the 2022 Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town Bylaws to establish a Commission to assist community members in filing complaints about police conduct, to analyze and publish data on policing, to review police policies and procedures and to provide a public forum for feedback on policing in the Town; setting forth the membership, duties and responsibilities, administration, and requirements of such Commission; or take any action related thereto.

Approved (11-1) Bob Radochia voted against.

Vote: to cancel our December 13th meeting

Approved Unanimously

4. Adjourn

Vote: to adjourn at 8:57pm

Unanimous Vote