

Meeting Minutes
Police Advisory Board
Meeting VIA
TELECONFERENCING
5:00 PM FRIDAY FEBRUARY 12, 2021

Board Members Present: Chair Melinda White; Co-Chair Jamie Pinkham; Danielle Lindley; Tom Benton; Kris Lukins; John Nicholls; Winnie Wilkerson

Board Members Absent:

Staff Members Present: Wendy-Ayn Coy, Minute Taker

Public Present – Chief Maurice Lamothe, Angela Sturm, Zach Sheffler

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting was called to order at 5:01.
2. **Agenda Introduction & Review** – None
3. **Brief Public Comment on Agenda Items** – None
4. **Mission Review** –
 - Mission: To offer advice to the St. Albans Police Department for the successful implementation of 21st Century Policing strategies and to assist the Police Department in following the established “Road Map” as amended by the City Council
5. **Consider approval of January 8, 2021 meeting minutes** – Member Lindley made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Member Benton seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.
6. **RBA Training – Danielle Lindley** – Member Lindley did a presentation on RBA (Results Based Accountability). It was a State of Vermont initiative about ten years ago. The presentation started with the definition of RBA. It is made up of two parts - Population Accountability and Performance Accountability. This Board would be using Population Accountability. Common Language is an important part of all people being on the same page. This Board would use the Population / Community wide level. There are three different ways to measure the results. How much did we do, how well did we do and is anyone better off. Measures are not always going to improve. There is a story behind the numbers. The last is developing an improvement plan. There are seven question that needs to be asked in Population Accountability:
 - What are the quality of life conditions we want for the children, adults and families who live in our community
 - What would these conditions look like if we could see them
 - How can we measure these conditions
 - How are we doing on the most important of these measures
 - Who are the partners that have a role to play

- What works to do better, including no-cost and low-cost ideas
- What do we propose to do

Member Lindley reviewed a one page turn the curve report that is used to measure the success of RBA. Chair White talked about where the information might come from. Co-Chair Pinkham stated that the Board should look at the complaint data and be allowed to question the completeness of the data. Member Wilkerson stated that the data from the police is not the whole story. Member Lindley asked how do we quantify that and get the data. Chair White stated that without an example you can't find the missing link. Chief Lamothe stated that there are three different data sets that were given to the Board - Response Resistance, Traffic and Internal Affairs

- Traffic - Every time an officer issues a warning or a ticket, the data is compiled by the State.
- Internal Affairs - Data is collected internally. If a complaint is made it should be taken by a sergeant but is sometimes taken by dispatch then it goes to IA lieutenant.
- Response Resistance - three officers are involved and have to notify the supervisor. The officers fill out the forms – the policy has changed so that the officers have to fill out the forms not the lieutenant.

Member Wilkerson asked where we get the data to inform the larger picture. Co-Chair Pinkham stated that the Board would need to work with City Council if there is a need for data from someone other than the department. A third party could be used to help inform the data. Co-Chair Pinkham asked how the seven steps would be aligned with the current data and potential third party data. There was a concern about scope creep. Member Lindley thought that the Board would need to dedicate at least half a meeting to walking through an exercise and going through those population health questions then correlating the data with the questions. It would tie into other entities that would have an impact on this work. Chair White talked about making a map of who the community partners are in the area. Chief Lamothe mentioned a trifold that the department has been handing out that lists different community resources and offered it to the Board. Co-Chair Pinkham suggested a meeting that is dedicated to just going through the data. Member Nicolls stated that the Board needs to start focusing in on one point at a time. Co-Chair Pinkham thought that number two - Embrace Community Engagement and build public trust - would be the place to start as it seems to inform the rest of the Roadmap.

- 7. Police Transformation Roadmap / Data Review** – The Board reviewed the Stop Data. Chief Lamothe wanted the Board to be aware that the traffic stop is the only place where it is completely the officer's discretion. They are not allowed to ask the person what their race is. They put down what they believe the race to be. The categories are supplied by the judicial bureau. Member Wilkerson stated that a member of the community that on one of the forms African Americans were referred to as colored. Chief Lamothe stated that a document discussed at the City Council meeting referred to a community of color. Chief Lamothe apologized for the language and stated that it shouldn't have happened that way. He has changed the slide that had that language. The Board reviewed the breakdown of Response Resistance. Officers put their hands on someone besides compliant handcuffing 37 times. Chief Lamothe stated the number of cases might go up next year due to the change in the stringency of the policy. Response resistance does not always result in an arrest. About half of the Response Resistance numbers are pulling someone back from jumping off the roof of the parking garage. This occurs about every ten days. They have had discussions with the City about putting up suicide prevention fences. It is a magnet for suicidal people. The police are there constantly. Member Wilkerson asked if the

officers were trained to deal with someone who has a mental health situation. Chief Lamothe responded very minimally. Member Wilkerson stated that there should be more mental health workers working with the police department that would be able to handle the situation better. He does not believe, due to funding, that there will be any mental health / substance abuse positions added.

8. Public Comment –

- **Zach Sheffler** – Sheffler wanted the Board to continue to be aware of the reasons for the formation of the Board. He reminded the Board of the community pressure and on-going concerns such as inequitable experiences for women and people of color; shared experience of over policing; lack of accountability for history of police department. The City needs a police department that better reflects its community. This cannot be done without data but it needs to be good data. Sheffler was interested in how RBA will be applied to data from the St. Albans police department. He stresses that the public wouldn't be the only group to benefit from good data. The police department also benefits. He reviewed a pie chart with from 2019. 44% of responses were for motor vehicle, 20% is wellness checks and a very small percent is a response to crime. There is no accountability structure to make sure the data is good. He would like the Board to ask what data points are being collected and propose some additions just to get a view on what is being collected.
- **Angela Sturm**– Sturm was supportive of data being what the community needs to come back to analyze the interactions with the community and use the information to advise the Board on how the number of interactions could be reduced. There should be as light of a footprint as possible. Sturm thought that this Board could provide a really good way to receive feedback on community / police interactions. She felt that, after an interaction, a follow-up call from a compassionate resource community member with an understanding of recovery, mental health and poverty would be a good thing that would help the community feel better about the interactions.

9. Adjourn – Next meeting will be on March 23, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.