

MINUTES
Police Advisory Board Meeting
Tuesday, February 22, 2022
5:00 – 6:30 PM
City Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room
DRAFT

Board Members Present: Melinda White, Chair; Jamie Pinkam, Vice Chair; Kris Lukens; Winnie Wilkinson (via Zoom); Danielle Mitchell (via Zoom).

Board Members Absent: John Nicholls; Tom Benton.

City Staff Present: Chief Maurice Lamothe, St. Albans Police Department; Angela Bernard, Minute Taker.

Members of the Public Present: Lane McElree, Northwest Access Television; Sarah Auer (via Zoom, arrived at 5:21 PM).

1. Call to order

M. White called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

2. Agenda Introduction & Review

None.

3. Open Brief Public Comment on Agenda Items (limit 2 min. per person)

None.

4. Mission Review

J. Pinkam reviewed the mission of the PAB.

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 Meeting Minutes

Motion by J. Pinkam to approve the minutes of January 25, 2022. Second by D. Mitchell.
Minutes approved at 5:06 PM.

6. Update – Data Posted on SAPD Website

- Data - M. Lamothe explained that the last post of data on the website was in September 2021 because of staffing issues and the Department move to the new location. Now with January and the new year underway, all calls and data will be posted monthly once again.
- Race Data – M. Lamothe explained that the state of Vermont dictates how data on race is collected. The state requires it to be collected when it's a traffic stop or in traffic accidents. But

it is based on the officer's perspective because they are not allowed to ask. The data is collected and required by the state. The state collects it and releases the data annually.

Chief Lamothe explained that the only downfall is that it is perspective based. The officer may not be accurate assuming the person's race, but the data regarding the nature of the stop of accident is accurate. Chief Lamothe explained that the race-based data they released to City Council this year was painstakingly extracted at the end of the year. J. Pinkam asked if there's an easier way to do that in real time. Chief Lamothe said the system is new, statewide, limited, and it crashes when they try but, over time, it will be more usable and should be able to churn out the information in real time. All departments across the state are on the same system now, but it needs a little work to make that part more usable.

J. Pinkam asked if the internal investigations / grievances are also part of the same system. Chief Lamothe said he keeps that tally going and keeps the list running, but it's only reported at the end of the year. J. Pinkam said she thinks it may be useful for the Board to look at that data regularly and possibly quarterly to see if there are any trends or anything. Chief Lamothe agreed and said he could bring the numbers in regularly for the Board to review. As of February 2022, the Department has 2 internal investigations for the year. J. Pinkam suggested the Chief bring the use-of-force numbers and internal investigation numbers for the Board meeting of April 2022.

7. Opiate Addiction Summit

- Outcome of Opiate Addiction Summit presentation 2/17/2022 - M. White explained that she and Chief Lamothe attended the Summit and that it was a helpful event that was well-attended. Chief Lamothe spoke to the group about the Department's embedded health care position, and it was well received. M. White thanked the Chief for attending with her.

8. Policy & Procedure

- Social Media Policy - M. White explained that the Department's Social Media Policy is in a holding pattern and awaiting response from the City. Chief Lamothe said this is the first policy that's not strictly procedural, and that it's a balance dealing with people's work life vs. personal life. Chief Lamothe said it's out of his hands. J. Pinkam said it's most likely going to have to be a City policy and that if the Board feels passionately about it, they should bring it to City Council for follow up.

J. Pinkam said there are no other major policy updates available right now. Chief Lamothe said there will be some coming, mostly with minor updates and changes, such as the address change.

J. Pinkam asked about the Department's hiring policy that went already through City Council and said there was a question from a member of the public regarding it. The question pointed out that the policy doesn't have any language in it regarding gender bias and she suggested it might be worth taking another look at it. J. Pinkam said it's important to emphasize that policies are always changing and being updated.

Chief Lamothe said the Body Worn Camera Policy is one that is being changed at the state level due to feedback from other departments around the state.

9. PAB Surveys Collected

- Next Steps - J. Pinkam explained that a few extra surveys came in since the last meeting. She said she is working around translating the data from the paper surveys into digestible data. She explained that the data needs to be input into a spreadsheet and then someone else can edit it and double check using the paper surveys against the spreadsheet. She estimated it could be ready for the Board's April 2022 meeting. D. Mitchell asked how many surveys were returned. J. Pinkam said a little more than 100. D. Mitchell offered to donate outside admin help from NCSS to input the data for the Board. J. Pinkam said she can input the data herself now and then hand it over to someone else, whether that is someone from the Board or an admin donated by NCSS. K. Lukens asked if she has started inputting the data yet. J. Pinkam said she has started to create the spreadsheet. M. White said someone donated from NCSS / D. Mitchell to do the editing would be welcome. M. White and J. Pinkam thanked D. Mitchell for the offer of help. M. White also thanked J. Pinkam for taking on the data input process.

10. PAB Restructuring Status

- Nominations Received - M. White said there is no update on the restructuring. The only nomination so far is for J. Nicholls to step into one of the leadership roles. M. White reminded the Board to send in any nominations they have. She said she would like to make sure every Board member's voice is heard.
- Next Steps - it will be on the agenda for the Board's March 2022 meeting.

11. Public Comment

No comments from the public.

J. Pinkam commented on the amount of work that the Board has accomplished approaching their one-year anniversary and commented that it should be celebrated. M. White agreed and said she is excited for the survey results.

12. Adjourn

J. Pinkam made a motion to adjourn. Second by K. Lukens. Meeting adjourned at 5:44 PM.