

MINUTES
ST. ALBANS POLICE ADVISORY BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
5:00 PM TUESDAY, MAY 23, 2023

DRAFT

Commission Members Present: IN PERSON: Jamie Pinkham, Chair; Melinda White, Vice Chair; Kris Lukens; Winnie Wilkinson; Marcus Neabar; John Nichols

Commission Members Absent: Danielle Lindley Mitchell

City Staff present: IN PERSON: Katie Haseltine (Minutes Taker); Chief Lamothe (Police Chief)

Members of the public present: ZOOM: Jen Williamson

1. **J. Pinkham called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.**
2. Agenda Introduction & Review
 - J. Pinkham mentioned that there were no members of the public so there would be no public comment on the agenda.
3. Mission Review 5:08
 - **M. Neabar read the 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.
4. Consider approval of Meeting Minutes (D&V)
 - J. Pinkham would like to batch approve all minutes if possible. M. White agreed, but wanted to state on the record a couple of clarifications.
 - i. The grant the SAPD applied for has a quick turnaround for applying, but not for actually receiving. Notification to recipients won’t happen until fall.
 - ii. The COMSTAT program is not open to the public, it is for community partners.
 - W. Wilkinson motions to approve all minutes, M. White seconds, with stated notes for the record. Minutes for 9/27/22, 12/27/22, 2/28/23, 3/28/23, 4/25/23 pass with all in favor.
5. Restorative Justice & Community Youth, Harmony Bougeois, Lisa Pepe & Lt. Talley
 - H. Bourgeois, Executive Director of the Franklin Grand Isle Restorative Justice Center (FGIRJC), introduces herself and gives an overview of the work that the FGIRJC does.
 - i. Several programs are funded by the Attorney General’s (AG) office, Department of Corrections (DOC), Department of Children and Families (DCF), and the VOCA grant (small grant funds a part-time victim advocate).
 - ii. DOC funds 10 beds for transitional housing, coming out of incarceration
 - iii. Recently been working with SAPD on a pre-charge (usually lives with DOC), but would give police discretion to refer lower level offenses to FGIRJC, this is still a work in progress. An MOU has been created, but not officially signed.
 - L. Pepe, Youth Services Coordinator at FGIRJC, works directly with youth introduces herself and the work with skills classes that the youth department at the FGIRJC does.
 - iv. Driving My Mind & Body, Owning My Decisions, Making Change Real, My Online Life, Healthy Relationships, and Substance Awareness are the top skills classes. Other skills classes offered are: Financial Steps to Independence, TRUE, Building Mindfulness, Driving with the Full Brain, “A Call to Men”

John Nichols joined the meeting at 5:17 PM

Jen Williamson joined meeting at 5:28 PM

- v. L. Pepe shares that open panels are held to discuss the 4 domains of the youth department and how programming can be built around them.
- vi. *Detailed skills class information and list of the 4 domains in attached brochure.*
- W. Wilkinson inquired what population are homeless, H. Bourgeois states 30 is their cap.
- Lt. Talley shares information regarding Pre-Charge programming that is being worked on that would grant an offender who completes the program no arraignment and no conviction. Currently looking to model a program similar to one being done in Chittenden County. Examples of offenses are: retail under \$300, vandalism under \$500, petty larceny under \$500, LSA (leaving scene of accident) under \$3,000, among others.
- W. Wilkinson inquired about population of youth offenders are homeless. C. Lamothe not sure that we have a lot of juvenile homelessness. W. Wilkinson is hearing a lot about stop & frisk in the homeless community. J. Pinkham reminds that stop & frisk is on the agenda later on and brings focus back to the FGIRJC.
- J. Pinkham wondering if a referral is made, does that require the offender to go? Lt. Talley explains that the decision is ideally made by the state's attorney's office.
- M. White curious if FGIRJC receives referrals from Spectrum, H. Bourgeois said no.
- H. Bourgeois notes that vouchers are available for apartments to address homelessness, but there are no apartments available.
- J. Pinkham inquires on the success of offenders going through youth programming. L. Pepe explains that they have a lot of success in youth that go through the FGIRJC. She did not have exact statistics to share, but notes a high rate of success with the program.
- H. Bourgeois states there is about 80% success in program completion, but success can look different for each person and in different ways. H. Bourgeois mentions that in the case of recidivism, often the state's attorneys office will revisit the case and consider a change in programming to further help youth.
- M. White shares her gratefulness for all that FGIRJC do and helping to highlight them more is super important since their work is so valuable. H. Bourgeois, prevention work is so important, especially humanizing the experience.
- J. Pinkham wants to know how the PAB and SAPD can help support the FGIRJC in increasing awareness and utilizing those platforms to collaborate further. L. Pepe thinks keeping community partners and collaborations active, we will continue to see success.
- Chief Lamothe states that the FGIRJC is funded and relies on grant money. The city is the only population that contributes to the FGIRJC. Lt. Talley curious if the board could look into the potential opportunity for surrounding towns to help fund the FGIRJC. H. Bourgeois mentions that a lot of the data is based on where the crime took place (which is often the City of St. Albans) and not where the offender actually lives, which doesn't help to show the data on where the offenders reside.
- J. Pinkham recalls Daniele Lindley sharing that the DA (NCSS) in the F/GI region does not have the staff or capacity to support in this work right now.
- H. Bourgeois emphasizes the constant need and opportunity for volunteers and shares that they have had some success with community partners allowing their staff to volunteer their time at FGIRJC.
- M. White has been a volunteer for COSA for 9-10 years and it has been the most rewarding volunteer experience. She is very supportive of that work and absolutely recommends volunteering.

Lt. Talley, H. Bourgeois, L. Pepe depart the meeting at 5:44 PM

6. Update on SAPD grant activity/eligibility, Melinda White & Chief Lamothe
 - Chief Lamothe states the grants are submitted, won't hear anything until September
7. Areas of focus 2023: Engaging Community Youth & SAPD Youth Data
 - Chief Lamothe shares 345 juvenile problems in 2022 (anyone 18 and under). 50 were

arrests, 14 felony arrests (assaults, robberies, etc.). 27 of them were the same person. Many occurred in the parking garage (62 calls) and at Taylor/Houghton parks (40 calls).

- Case numbers are generated any time there is a call, so although there may be
- J. Pinkham curious if any of these incidents could have been an opportunity to refer them to FGIRJC, and Chief Lamothe said that yes it would. C. Lamothe is hopeful that the FGIRJC can provide some programming and try and help one youth in particular.
- C. Lamothe shares that someone has now been hired and monitors the parking garage during the day, which has helped tremendously, but this doesn't address after hours, J. Pinkham reflects that she is not entirely in agreement with money being spent on a staff to be in the parking garage, since that simply allows for offenders to seek others places to loiter. M. White reflects how it is kind of catch 22.
- J. Pinkham asks about 6-month 2023 data. C. Lamothe can pull that for the next meeting.
- K. Lukens mentions that they are doing a lot of collaboration with Spectrum. Spectrum would like to expand, but funding is lacking
- W. Wilkinson proposes the idea of a forgiveness program for youth, reflecting that youth are experimenting and often tend to get into more trouble for this and has lasting consequences later in the individuals life.
- M. Naebar appreciative of the youth department at FGIRJC and reiterates those resources as being a helpful tool
- C. Lamothe said the partnership between SAPD and FGIRJC has been on the table for almost 20 years now, recent momentum means this could be a reality very soon.
- K. Lukens reflects that historically there have been laws in place that prohibit domestic violence cases from being picked up by organizations like FGIRJC. She shares a policy that was passed (about a year out), will be able to design a local process to address that.
- J. Pinkham would like to continue monitoring this data.
- W. Wilkinson reiterates the idea of a forgiveness program (between community partners)
- M. White mentions that there is an expungement program, and that it is typically successful for most people (tough populations are arson and sex offenders).
- W. Wilkinson shares that expungement clinics are offered by VT Legal Aid and wonders if we can we get clinics like this up in the F/GI area?

8. Quarterly Internal Affairs Data, Chief Lamothe

- First Quarter (January 1-March 31) - 9 IA's (internal affairs)
 - i. Officer rude on the phone, officer exonerated after listening to recordings
 - ii. Officer rude on the phone, officer exonerated after listening to recordings
 - iii. Landlord/Tenant interaction with inaccurate information, substantiated
 - iv. Officer didn't take proper action on a domestic assault, substantiated
 - v. Officer didn't respond to a theft, no follow through, substantiated
 - vi. Officer didn't properly take care of scene after stabbing incident, substantiated
 - vii. Officer didn't properly search a person, not substantiated
 - viii. Officer initiated traffic stop without cause, not substantiated
 - ix. Officer didn't properly turn on body cam footage, not substantiated
- 4 were one officer, no longer works for us, not related, but making that known
- 5 were externally generated (outside the department)
- J. Pinkham, in relation to social media, wants people to feel like they are safe and that there is follow-up to address community concerns.
- J. Pinkham mentions that the members are not required in any way to interact on social media, but if you are comfortable, you are welcome to comment on behalf of the Police Advisory Board (PAB) to offer your support/advice, and let them know some items will be escalated and brought to the board.

9. General Community Questions/Concerns

- Recent News Concerns

- i. J. Pinkham, new AG, what does this mean, how does that impact the work?
 - ii. J. Pinkham explains that it doesn't have an impact right now. It is really important to know that VSP, Sherriff, and SAPD all interface with one another, but know what is SAPD related and what isn't, since PAB is centered around SAPD.
- Stop & Frisk/Stop & Identify
 - iii. C. Lamothe clarifies that they are 2 different things. Frisk/Pat-Downs are used to detect weapons on the outside of clothing (known as a Terry stop), every officer has the ability to do that with reasonable suspicion. Stop & Identify - can ask for identification on traffic stop or municipal ordinance, if it is for a crime. Ordinances are only different from traffic stops in terms of where the money goes. Ordinances, money goes back to the city; Traffic stop, money goes to the State of Vermont.
- Response and Follow Up
 - iv. J. Pinkham inquires about concern seen on social media around follow-up
 - v. C. Lamothe informs that if a third party calls something in, they are not followed-up with unless they need a statement from them. In addition media releases are very minimal now, C. Lamothe doesn't see the value in that. If there is not a safety/health issue, public sharing and follow-up to the inquirer is unnecessary.
 - vi. C. Lamothe encourages community members to keep calling. Each call is documented and the more calls around one concern can increase opportunity for investigation/observation and subsequent action.
 - vii. J. Pinkham reiterates advice that community members continue to call. Just because people aren't being taken away doesn't mean something isn't being addressed, continue to call so they are documented.
 - viii. J. Pinkham thanks the community member for sharing their experience so that the PAB could have this conversation today.
- 10. Update on Recent SAPD Award and Award Process, Chief Lamothe**
 - Chief Lamothe, started an award policy/system. Any officer that sees someone stepping up heroically can nominate them for an award.
 - Bus driver at SATEC saw an incident unfolding and happening acted heroically. Lt. Weatherly presented the case, and the individual was given a civilian award.
 - J. Pinkham reflects that we hope to know about these awards ahead of time so that the PAB can attend and support the community and SAPD.
- 11. Public Comment - None**
- 12. Adjourn (D&V)**
 - W. Wilkinson motions to adjourn. K. Lukens seconds. There was no discussion. The motion passed with all in favor. Meeting ends at 6:42 pm.