

Meeting Minutes
Police Advisory Board Meeting
VIA TELECONFERENCING
5:00 PM WEDNESDAY April 14, 2021

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

Board Members Absent: John Nicholls; Danielle Lindley;

Staff Members Present: Wendy-Ayn Coy, Minute Taker

Public Present – Chief Maurice Lamothe, Zach Scheffler

- 1) **Call to Order** – Meeting was called to order at 5:02.
- 2) **Agenda Introduction & Review** – None
- 3) **Open 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 03.10.2021 meeting minutes** – Member Benton made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Co-Chair Pinkham seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- 6) **Implicit Bias Training** – Nicki Fuller will be leading the training for the Board of Directors on Friday April 23, 2021. Co-Chair Pinkham asked if she had worked with any other organizations in Franklin County. Chair White wasn’t sure if she had worked in Franklin County specifically, but she has worked with many organizations in the State of Vermont.
- 7) **Areas of Focus** -
 - **Hiring – Melinda White** – Chair White reviewed the responsibilities of the PAB in the hiring process for the SAPD. The committee asked some questions of Chief Lamothe. One was the process of hiring. The process takes anywhere from 2-4 months. The steps are:
 - Records Check
 - Oral Screening Board
 - Prep for polygraph and polygraph
 - Background check
 - Entrance exam for academy which consists of written, physical and mental health exam.

Member Wilkerson expressed a concern that interviewees had stated that Vermont was easier to apply for than other states. Chef Lamothe stated that the wait lists in other states was very long

compared to Vermont but that the overall process was the same. Co-Chair Pinkham asked if the process was different for existing law enforcement that applies to SAPD. The background check and the polygraph are more in depth and they do not have to go through the Academy if they are from the State of Vermont. Chair White asked if the SAPD looks to promote from within. Chief Lamothe stated that they try to but, dependent on the position, internal candidates may not apply. Chair White asked if there were any social media checks on the applicants. The polygraph and the background check are in depth enough to catch all that information. Member Lukins asked how many position SAPD normally has available. At the moment, the SAPD has two uniform officers and one sergeant position available. Due to COVID restrictions, it takes about a year and a half to get a new hire through the academy.

- **Community Partnerships** – Melinda White – Chair White reviewed the goals of the Community Partnerships committee. The Committee joined the Franklin/Grand Isle Community Partnership meeting to become more familiar with the various community partners. The Police Advisory Board will be presenting to the Partnership meeting in the fall.
- **Policy and Procedures** – Jamie Pinkham – Co-Chair Pinkham reviewed the goals of the Policy and Procedure committee. The Committee reviewed both policies that went to City Council on April 13, 2021 and was approved.
 - **Duty to Intervene** - Chief Lamothe reviewed the policy and stated that the Committee was very helpful in helping to make the policy flow better and in making it obvious where things were missed. He stated that the suggestions that the Committee gave helped the City Council understand the policy better and required less explanation of the policy.
 - **Response to Resistance policy** - Chief Lamothe reviewed the policy. The guidelines in the policy are set by the State of Vermont. Chief Lamothe appreciated the feedback the Committee gave to him. Co-Chair Pinkham pointed out the time expectations of the report and what would happen to an officer if the policy's timeline was not adhered to were moved to the front of the policy. Chief Lamothe highlighted a separate form that each officer is required to fill out in conjunction with the report. It gives specific details that may be generalized in the narrative that the officer writes. Lethal force is investigated by the State Police and the officer is put on administrative leave until the investigation is complete.

Both policies will be reviewed annually and will be presented to the Board when reviewed. Co-Chair Pinkham pointed out that, due to timing, these policies were not able to come before the Board before going to the City Council meeting on April 13th. Subsequent policies will be brought to the Board before going to City Council.

- **Data** – Jamie Pinkham – Co-Chair Pinkham reviewed the goals of the Data committee. The big initiative is to get a survey out to the public. They are planning to push a link out through social media.
- 8) **Public Comment** – Zach Scheffler shared some policies from the Bennington Police department that he thought were important and would like to see the SAPD write and/or review - Responding to Persons with a Mental Health Crisis; Investigating and Reporting Hate Crimes; Domestic Violence Investigations; Electrical Weapons. Co-Chair Pinkham informed Zach that the Response to Persons with Mental Health Crisis was in the queue for review. Member Lukins informed him that there was a policy concerning Domestic Violence Investigations.

9) **Other Business** – Chair White is going to send the Pine Lake documentary to the Board.

10) **Adjourn** – Member Benton made a motion to adjourn at 6:05. Member Wilkerson seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

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