

Mayor's Blue Ribbon Crime Advisory Sub-Committee Meeting

Thursday, July 9 at 1:00pm
City Hall – 4th Floor Conference Room

Committee Members Present:

Whitney Lanning, Chairwoman, Drew Brown, Dan Radke, Mickey Roberts, Mike Cazel, Keith Dudley, Chief Chris Connally, Commander Eric Protzman

Call to Order:

Committee Chair, Whitney Lanning called the meeting to order at 1:01pm.

Mission Statement:

Whitney restated the mission statement of the Crime Committee and discussed the purpose of the creation of the sub-committee. Whitney reported that the committee was created in response to the nationwide unrest related to racial disparity and injustice. She stated that she, Chief Connally and Mayor McMurray developed the concept of a sub-committee of the crime committee to assess what racial disparities exist in our criminal justice system and to take a proactive approach in addressing identified disparities.

Goals:

The committee members each offered their perspective as to why they'd offered to serve on the sub-committee and what they hoped to come from the committee.

Mike Cazel – Concerns regarding the lack of information about the efforts of the police to address crime. Would like to see the positive strategies and impacts communicated more efficiently. Feels it is important to engage more members of the community that are affected by crime.

Mickey Roberts – Concern that there is no publicity or communication of the positive outcomes achieved by SJPD or their successes.

Keith Dudley – Would like to see more engagement from citizens directly affected by crime, especially those from the Midtown area.

Drew Brown – Goal is to make crime prevention easier and address national victimhood through better communication and collaboration.

Dan Radke – Would like to emphasize the positive interaction between citizens and the police, while also achieving policy reform and transparency, and address racial bias. Dan went on to provide a list of 6 topics he'd like to see further investigated as to their viability and feasibility:

1. Citizen Complaint Committee – Dan shared that cities have adopted a committee that reviews complaints and makes recommendations, especially in situations like use of force concerns. Dan cited Tucson as an example. There were concerns raised as to whether information could be made public regarding complaints. It was decided that Whitney would discuss with the City Attorney before the next meeting.
2. Decriminalize nonviolent crimes
3. Conduct psychological evaluations upon hire and annually – Officers currently participate in a psychological evaluation upon hire and as needed. The committee discussed the cost of annual evaluations and believed it to be cost prohibitive. Whitney inquired about the City's employee assistance plan for counseling services. Chief Connally explained that all city staff receive three free visits. Whitney said that increasing the number of visits would likely be a nominal cost; there was disagreement about whether the cost would be significant or not. Whitney said she would investigate the situation more and bring information back to the next meeting.
4. Publicize the budget for the SJPD – This is already a matter of public information. Dan said that he'd looked for the budget and could not find it. There was discussion about making the City's budgets more accessible to the public.
5. Reducing police responsibilities for nonviolent crime – Chief Connally explained the department's partnership with Family Guidance, who provides a licensed social worker to assist with non-violent calls. Chief Connally said that this has been a significant benefit to the officers and department as a whole.

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6. **More social workers** – The committee continued to discuss the role social workers might play and agreed that there are certain situations where social workers can reduce the time police officers spend individuals in emotional or mental health crises.
7. **City statistics and information** – Chief Connally reported that he publishes a report on an annual basis regarding arrest statistics, which includes race information. Chief Connally said he'd share the report prior to the next meeting.

Membership:

The committee discussed the importance in engaging members of the black community through membership on the sub-committee. Whitney Lanning stated that members of the black community should outnumber white committee members, as they have firsthand knowledge and understanding of the effects of racial disparity. Whitney stated that members of the black community need to be able to share their lived experiences and concerns. The committee discussed potential members and identified individuals to reach out to about joining the committee.

After much discussion, the committee finalized the following three goals of the committee.

1. Lift up the current work of the police department, share the information via multiple streams of communication.
2. Engage members that are affected by crime and who can speak from experience about racial disparities within our community.
3. Identify best practices and assess the feasibility of implementing those strategies here.

Recommended Timeline:

The committee discussed a timeline for the committee's work on the topic and on issuing a recommendation or list of recommendation to the City. The committee agreed to finalize the membership of the committee before developing a timeline.

Public Comment: No comments were offered from the public.

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 23, 2020 – 3:00pm

Adjourn: 2:12pm

Prepared by: Whitney Lanning