



MINUTES: Police Community Relations & Review Commission

Date: May 16, 2024

Location: Oxford Courthouse, 118 W. High St.

Time of Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Larry Nadler, Edna Southard, Daniel Umbstead, and LaTricia Hillman

Members absent: Aimin Wang, Egon Kraan, and Fritz Wellman

Staff present: Chief John Jones, City Manager Doug Elliott, Assistant City Manager Jessica Greene, Law Director Chris Conard

Approval of Agenda

Motion: Edna Southard

2nd: LaTricia Hillman

Vote: 4-0-0

Approval of Minutes of February 15, 2024 PCRRC Meeting

Motion: Edna Southard

2nd: Daniel Umbstead

Vote: 4-0-0

Public Comments

There were no public comments related to items not on the agenda.

Old Business

1. Review/Summary of the Butler County Prosecutor's investigation of use of force involving the November 2023 incident, external investigation by the independent attorneys, criminal trial of April 2024, and Chief Jones' 2024 Training Plan (City Manager Elliott, Jr., Chief Jones)

Chief Jones provided a timeline and summary of what has occurred since the November 18, 2023 incident. He then reviewed the OPD 2024 training plan.

Public Response

Ann Fuehrer, Dana Drive, and Secretary of the Oxford NAACP - After reading Special Counsel's report, she said she appreciates their suggestions of requiring additional training in defensive tactics and de-escalation techniques and addressing procedures for reporting the handling of evidence. She reported that another member who was not able to attend the meeting suggested that the body worn cameras capture audio before they are activated and that all evidence is



documented in length and type with all failures to submit evidence be documented. The member also suggested that the officer involved in the use of force is not allowed to collect evidence around the incident given the potential for conflict of interest.

Linda Musmeci-Kimball, Melinda Drive – Ms. Kimble spoke out against qualified immunity. She said the Oxford NAACP is working to repeal the use of qualified immunity as an applicable principle in our legal system.

Fran Jackson, Country Club Drive, and President of Oxford NAACP – Fran Jackson said she was very saddened, angry and without hope because there was no justice for Devin Johnson. She said she is looking forward to seeing more details of actual training programs and hiring policies being used.

Vanessa Cummings, Marti Court – She stated she wants a joint meeting with other groups. She questioned the video and why it was missing and why the report changed once the video came out.

Steve Schnabl, Autumn Drive – Mr. Schnabel said that no one is talking about how Mr. Johnson should be held accountable for his behavior. He supports changes with evidence handling and being more diligent.

Lt. Geoff Robinson clarified some confusion he has heard throughout the meeting regarding the handling of the video. He also spoke towards the efforts Chief Jones has made towards improving OPD's response to mental health incidents. He explained why qualified immunity is not at issue in this case at this point.

PCRRC Discussion

LaTricia Hillman had a few questions, the first being had West Chester PD conducted the special investigation could they have interviewed Devin Johnson, to which Mr. Conard advised no, they could not, just like special counsel could not.

The next questions she had was why the department went from carrying a .45 to a 9mm handgun, to which Chief Jones said in addition to the amount of ammunition that can be carried with a 9mm and the lack of availability of .45 ammunition, it was a cost saving tactic.

Another question she had was if the social services liaison was joining any of the trainings, to which Chief Jones stated the lesson plans will determine whether it is appropriate for her to attend.

Finally, LaTricia Hillman wanted to know what NIBIN was. Chief Jones explained NIBIN (National Integrated Ballistic Information Network) is basically like a database to help solve crimes involving guns.

Edna Southard said she liked Fran Jackson's question about where do we go from here and she liked Vanessa Cumming's idea about all commissions and groups coming together to meet and talk about the issue. She commended Chief Jones for his efforts in addressing mental health



training. Chief Jones expressed willingness to participate in the town hall type meetings previously mentioned but also noted that some people may find having an open, honest conversation about difficult topics such as implicit bias or race relations may be better in small group meetings rather than open forums.

Daniel Umbstead said he appreciated the exchange today. He liked Vanessa Cummings' issue with the video and Lt. Robinson's explanation of what happened with it.

Larry Nadler stated that since council referred this incident to the commission, the commission should report back to them. Mr. Nadler asked for thoughts on that, to which Daniel Umbstead stated since there are only four commission members present, they should talk as a whole and then report back to council. Mr. Nadler agreed to add this topic to the 6/6 meeting agenda.

Adjournment