

## **Village of Brockport Advisory Committee on Police Reform and Reinvention**

### **Meeting Minutes January 20, 2021 via Zoom**

Attending:

Co-Chair Mayor Margay Blackman, Co-Chair Trustee Annie Crane, Chief Mark Cuzzupoli, Village Clerk/Manager Erica Linden, Lt. Steve Mesiti, Karen LoBracco, Dan Brockway, Bill Plews, Robert LeSuer, Melanie McDonald, Katy Wilson, Howard Ward, Orlando Benzan

Excused: Howard Ward, Jackie Smith

Meeting started at 7:03 pm

Mayor Blackman observed that today was Inauguration Day, and a day that showed that our country is resilient.

Committee member Orlando Benzan has been appointed Equity and Inclusion specialist by the Brockport Central School District. We congratulated him and wished him well in this newly created position, which will continue with some of the goals of this committee. Orlando stated that he hopes this position and his work on this committee will help to bridge some of the gaps between the School District and the community.

Bill and Karen met with Chief Cuzzupoli yesterday to discuss the department's use of force policy.

Bill stated that the use of force policy is actually very good and it is good that it is on the website, but it is extremely difficult to find on the website. The website needs to be changed. Manager Linden mentioned that the website is currently in the redesign process.

Conflict de-escalation is mentioned at the very end of the policy. Bill and Karen felt it should be stressed at the beginning. Chief Cuzzupoli stated that conflict avoidance is stressed in training.

Bill stated that most people did not realize that a bite from the police K9 is considered a use of force.

Karen mentioned that there is a tension between transparency and privacy, and there is a need to balance long and short term goals when dealing with the education of officers and accountability.

Mayor Blackman sent the committee a draft outline of the report—attached at the bottom of these minutes.

The subcommittee that will write the report will consist of: Mayor Blackman, Trustee Crane, Bill Plews, Karen LoBracco, and Bob LeSuer, with input and feedback from the rest of the committee.

Bob said we need to consider the audience for the report. Is it the Governor, whose executive order we are following, or is it the community?

The executive summary needs to be relatively short, as it is the only part many people will read, but needs to mention topics in the rest of the report so those interested can refer to those sections.

The section on community needs to refer to the greater Brockport community, not just the area within village limits. Suburban, but also a college town, surrounded by agriculture. We need appropriate demographics. Cannot use the description from the Village's Comprehensive Plan, as that is mostly history and land use.

The synopsis of the Police Department should have input from the Department. Should include Community Policing, training, years of accreditation, areas of expertise. It should focus on the present time since Chief Cuzzupoli has been Chief. Information on community interactions should be in the community policing sections.

While the survey respondents did not include a statistically significant minority population, our meeting guests and presentations were diverse. Details of the survey will be included in an appendix.

Community outreach section will need a paragraph on outreach to the college.

Chief Cuzzupoli mentioned that he meets regularly with the BSC Superintendent and with officials at the College. It was pointed out that we cannot mandate those meetings as we cannot make requirements for the outside groups.

Westside News will sometimes print provided information, but only if positive.

Chief Cuzzupoli will provide a tally of traffic stops with data on warnings vs tickets. Most people do not realize that most stops do not result in tickets, and warnings are considered law enforcement.

We should include points of pride, but need to be careful to stay balanced.

Reporting and notifications – we need to codify best practices that are currently in place, to make sure good habits transfer to future administrations.

The Chief was asked if he keeps annual reports with statistics. Yes, but they can be misinterpreted. For example, DWIs are down, but the statistics don't provide the reason for the trend, which is in part due to the use of ride sharing apps.

Our Police force is not diverse, and Civil Service rules create difficulties recruiting a diverse force. Our report needs to include a request that the Civil Service rules that create difficulties for minority populations be changed.

The Chief mentioned the just announced goal by the chiefs throughout the County to have 100% of the officers in each department pass Crisis Intervention training. Currently 10 of our 14 officers have that training.

The Chief also mentioned that accreditation standards, which are constantly being updated, will change to include more diversity training.

We are going to recommend establishment of a standing Law Enforcement/ Community Partnership, setting up the expectation that the community has a hand in law enforcement. Oversight will not be part of the title.

Karen would like to see a methodology for citizen input for complaints and complements. Chief Cuz-zupoli disagrees, his door is always open, he gets many emails and takes phone calls. It was mentioned that could be one of the roles of the Community Partnership Committee. An online form can be created, which could be for all Village employees. An auto-form would give the person some anonymity, but anonymous complaints are difficult to investigate. Union rules require that the officer needs to see the complaint. This is an issue that we may deal with at the public hearing.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30

# **PAB Report Draft Outline 1/20/21**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** 3-4 paragraphs max. Include committee mission: The formation of a committee of community stakeholders along with the mayor of the Village and the Village Police Chief for the purpose of reviewing current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices. The Committee will develop a plan that reflects the needs of the community and identify growth opportunities. The committee will promote community engagement that fosters trust, fairness and legitimacy as it relates to policing.

**THE MANDATE—EXECUTIVE ORDER 203**

**THE BROCKPORT COMMUNITY**

Use/borrow description from Comprehensive plan

**THE BROCKPORT POLICE DEPARTMENT—A SYNOPSIS**

- Size, unionized, membership/leadership, K-9, accreditation, training, current community policing/outreach, relationship to MCSD and University police, to Student Conduct at the college, use of body cams, use of force etc. What else?

**THE COMMITTEE—**

**CHAIRS AND MEMBERS**

who, selection process

how they represent the greater Brockport community

**MEETINGS, PRESENTATIONS (GUEST SPEAKERS), DISCUSSIONS**

The committee met biweekly and , in a few cases, weekly from September 2 through January 20. Meetings included a presentation on accreditation by Chief Farina of Fairport, a discussion BPD training by LT Mesiti, a presentation by Lee Struble and Clifton Manns on diversity training, meeting with College students (officers of Brockport Student Government) and the Diversity Club at Brockport Central High School). Current area and national police issues were discussed, the committee designed a community survey and discussed its results, and Chief Cuzzupoli did a presentation on BPD's community policing. The last meetings were devoted to discussion and planning of the final report.

**THE COMMUNITY SURVEY** To reach the larger public and solicit their views on the BPD. Done via Survey Monkey online. Advertised on FB, Village webpage, Westside News, College at Brockport Daily Eagle. 299 participants.

Summary and analysis

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

## Additional Training

Anti bias training (racial, ethnic, disability, gender)—annual or biannual

Use of force tracking (see Fairport PD) Brockport should track and report in annual report

Mental Health issues, handled through Monroe County and FIT (Forensic Investigation Team) which is expanding its operations to 24 hours. We could use more information here to make recommendations.

Recruitment of a more diverse police force—definitely a goal. People of color, women, Spanish speakers. Press the state to change civil service requirements that keep police forces from diversifying (due to hiring from a list based on scores on written test performance)

## Community outreach

Community policing—currently (see appendix). Chief Cuzzupoli defined it succinctly: “building trust, being visible and interactive. It includes directed patrol, walking patrols and bike patrols. The people who see you know you and you become approachable to them, It is knowing your business owners and community members by name. Trust is the heart of community policing.” additional recommendations for community policing include

Reaching out to people of color through meetings with high school and college Students; increasing opportunities for community interaction with police.

Establishment of a standing Citizen Committee, (a “Law Enforcement Community Partnership”) with members drawn from commercial and agricultural business, faith institutions, education, government, and underrepresented groups. The overarching goals area to acquaint police with members of the larger community, educate the community about the police, increase community outreach and understanding, and tackle issues of mutual concern (*could specify some of those*)

The Migrant community—Brockport has a large migrant farm worker community in the general area who come to the village, many of them on bicycles to shop and bank. Members of this community are terrified of unjustified deportation. Required workshop/training to acquaint police to this community and build trust with them; understand acceptable forms of non-USA identification, relations between local police and ICE.

Reporting and Notifications—there is nothing in Brockport’s General Orders requiring notification of the mayor, village board, or general public about any incident. Annual Reports are posted on BPD webpage and include crime statistics on itemized offenses submitted to DCJS (Department of Criminal Justice Services). The most recent annual report on the website is 2016. Needs updating.

As of 12/12/20, by state law, traffic tickets., misdemeanors, violations must be reported by race.

Develop A strategic 3 year plan?

BPD COMMENTS ON REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PUBLIC HEARING

Date, summary comments

LOCAL LAW/RESOLUTION FOLLOWUP

APPENDICES—

PAB minutes?

community policing pdf—BPD presentation?

Community Survey with responses?