



CITY OF ALBANY
COMMUNITY POLICE REVIEW BOARD
PUBLIC MONTHLY MEETING
MEETING MINUTES

October 14, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.
Albany Law School, Room 209

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL (Vives)

Chair Nairobi Vives called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Nairobi Vives, Dr. Veneilya Harden, Paul Collins-Hackett, Dr. Rev. Collier and Victor Person

OTHERS PRESENT: CPRB Program Manager Michele Andre, Matt Toporowski, Rania Adwan

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA (Vives)

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Regional Director for the New York Civil Liberties Union of the Capital Region, Melanie Trimble, stated she was very pleased with the growth of CPRB and that the NYCLU has encouraged the Board over the years to have subpoena power, their own attorney, and to embrace the mediation process. She hopes the attorney is included in the budget process because the Board should not share legal advice with the City, as it may be a conflict of interest. She also wanted to make sure there was an independent investigation when things went wrong. Ms. Trimble stated she appreciates the Board's service and is happy to speak to anyone on the Common Council while we go through the budget process or do any public speaking.

IV. REPORT FROM MOEEL LAH FAKHOURY

Rania Adwan stated that since the last meeting, the firm has helped work on the budget presentation and refining Local Law J to make sure it is clearer and more rigorous. Ms. Adwan also stated that they are working closely with Michele Andre on hiring investigators. Lastly, they have been working on the next round of training relating to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and Trauma Informed Facilitation.

V. CASE REVIEW/UPDATE

No case review or updates.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

BY-LAWS AND RULES

(M. Ingram)

Mr. Ingram was not present and no report was given.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

(P. Collins-Hackett)

P. Collins-Hackett reported that the committee had been engaged in outreach activities to make sure the public understands the budget request. He is also looking forward to tabling and planning future events, including a “Know Your Rights” program. Mr. Collins-Hackett also shared that he is seeking to connect with different schools and programs in the area. He volunteered to be present or lend public comment at events if requested.

MEDIATION

(V. Collier)

Rev. Collier reported that there were no substantive updates from the committee. However, there may be one case going through mediation.

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE

(Dr. Harden)

Dr. Harden was not present. Chair Vives reported on behalf of Dr. Harden that the committee is still working on finalizing the confidentiality agreement with the Albany Police Department.

Matt Toporowski shared that he informally briefly met with the Albany Police Department Deputy Chief and Kevin Cannizzaro in City Hall on October 13. Mr. Toporowski asked about the status of the confidentiality agreement and was told that it would be executed by Monday.

Chair Vives shared that the confidentiality agreement with the Albany Police Department outlines how, when, and with whom the CPRB shares confidential information. A minor edit has been made to the agreement since the last meeting. Now the CPRB is waiting on a signature from Albany Police Department. Chair Vives hopes to have the remote sharing capabilities that CPRB has been working towards on Monday afternoon.

MONITOR TASK FORCE

(Dr. Harden)

Dr. Harden was not present. There was no report from the monitor task force.

VII. REPORT FROM PUBLIC LIAISON

(N. Vives)

Chair Vives shared that the committee has been working hard on the budget. At the end of September, they met with the Mayor’s Office to request the national recommended funding for police oversight, which is approximately 5% of the police department Budget. The Mayor’s Office has instead provided the minimum amount required by Local Law J of 2020, which is 1% of the Albany Police Department budget. The committee has also met with the Common Council Finance, Assessment, and Taxation Committee and presented their budget request on Wednesday, October 13, 2022. There is uncertainty as to what will happen next regarding CPRB 2023 Adopted budget.

VIII. REPORT FROM GOVERNMENT LAW CENTER (M. Andre)

Ms. Andre shared that the Board received 3 complaints since the last meeting and has been working with the Office of Professional Standards (OPS) to get a number of how many outstanding cases there are. She estimates about 107 outstanding cases based on the current spreadsheets. There are still 20 cases in which the Board is trying to determine their status. There are 10 cases pending board review. The remainder of the cases are at various levels of completion and review by OPS.

Ms. Andre is working towards getting proposals for DEI and Trauma Informed training to bring a recommendation to the Board. She is also responding to requests for information and research to provide to the Common Council and the Mayor's Office. Lastly, Ms. Andre shared that she recently attended the Capital Region Chamber Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Summit and the Division of Criminal Justice Public Safety Symposium.

IX. REPORT FROM OPS (J. Laiacona)

Commander Laiacona shared that he is ready to provide remote access to members once the confidentiality agreement is signed by both parties. He confirmed that the Deputy Chief told him the agreement should be signed by Monday, October 17.

X. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR (N. Vives)

Chair Vives thanked the board for their dedication and, more specifically, Dr. Harden, John Levendosky, Kevin Cannizzaro, Chair Vives, Ms. Andre, Mr. Collins-Hackett, and the former CPRB chair who appeared at City Hall to present before the Common Council. Kevin Cannizzaro is currently at City Hall listening to the Albany Police Department presentation on behalf of the Board.

XI. REPORT FROM CORPORATION COUNSEL (M. Toporowski)

Mr. Toporowski shared that he and Ms. Andre are working to streamline the invoicing and payment process.

XII. NEW BUSINESS (N. Vives)

September 8 Public Monthly Meeting Minutes

Chair Nairobi Vives moved the approval of the last meeting's minutes to the next meeting's agenda.

Update on Proposal Request for Investigative Services

Ms. Andre stated that the Board received 244 applications for the Request for Proposal for Investigative Services. Out of the 244 applications, the Board is interested in interviewing 10 applicants, some of whom are local and some of whom are out-of-state. Ms. Andre hopes to be done with the application process by October 31, 2022.

CPRB 2023 Proposed Budget

Chair Vives stated that the Board is working with consultants and doing research on what best practices are national. The Board has elected to become a bifurcated model. In addition, Chair Vives shared that the Board has elected to have an executive director, structure, and support staff. The Board proposed there will be 6 support staff members, along with \$3000 stipends for all 9 of the board members. The budget also includes technology, office space, and more necessities to operate.

The Board is advocating becoming its own independent city department instead of an administrative agency model. Chair Vives expressed that a budget increase along with legislative changes is needed to fulfill this goal.

Ms. Andre mentioned that the Board is looking for two members on the board to serve on the committee tasked with hiring the investigators.

Chair Vives explained the process of filing and reviewing complaints.

Chair Vives explained that the Mayor's Budget is complete and did not include what the Board asked for. The Board asked for \$2.8 million, which is 5% of the Albany Police Department budget. Instead, the Mayor allocated the statutory minimum of 1%, around \$598,000. Chair Vives explained that they went before the Common Council to ask for more and are unsure of what will happen next but will be sure to inform everyone of any updates.

New Chair for By-Laws and Rules Committee

Chair Vives shared that there will be a new chair for the By-Laws and Rules Committee. The former chair, Matt Ingram, wanted to allow others to have new responsibilities and increase participation. Kevin Cannizzaro will be the new chair of the committee.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michele Andre
Program Manager