

**CITY OF ALBANY
COMMUNITY POLICE REVIEW BOARD
BYLAWS AND RULES COMMITTEE MEETING**

February 16, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

[Via Zoom](#)

MEETING MINUTES

I. Attendance

Board Members Present: Nairobi Vives, Matt Ingram, Dr. Veneilya Harden, Victor Person, Larry Becker

Also Present: Ava Ayers, CDR. Anthony Battuello, Robert Magee

The meeting started at 5:30PM.

II. Discussion about the Board using Officers' names when reviewing cases

N. Vives started this discussion inviting public comment:

- Officers should be held to the same level of public facing information as the citizens are held to when it comes to criminal activity.
- Government employees should not be afforded the luxury of anonymity.
- For transparency reasons the public should know the names of officers involved in civilian complaints.
- **Questions:** *Are law enforcement officers opposing this proposal? What harm might come to the officer if their names are revealed? Does that outweigh the interest of community members?* – Cdr. Battuello responded OPS is not opposing the proposal, because 50a was repealed the CPRB have full access to officer names and disciplinary records available to them. This is in the context of the public meeting, if complaints are unfounded, exonerated or not sustained that it would cause harm to them if the public forms an opinion about a particular matter. Information can be FOIEd and they are only opposed to use of names in public meetings. Policies are different as it pertains to criminal and administrative matters. It's his role to uphold the rights of the public and the officers. There are valid points on both sides of the discussion.
- We are weighing the harm of an officer's reputation v. the best way to serve a community and therefore an officer's reputation does not hold any weight.
- A. Ayers clarified that the purpose of the meeting is to determine whether the Board can use officer names in public meetings. Officers' names are public information and can be provided upon request.
- **Question:** *What happens in findings of "Sustained" findings, does it matter if their names are mentioned?* Cdr. Battuello responded - Officers where there were no findings of wrongdoing were concerned about their public reputation and do not want their relationship in the community to be tarnished. For those where disciplinary action is

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warranted, officers are still afforded due process rights. Issuing the name of officers before they issue discipline is problematic, administratively.

- Transparency is to address the power imbalance, there are many complaints that do not make it to the Board for fear of retaliation.
 - M. Ingram reiterated that the purpose of this discussion is for transparency and for the core values as the Board is to build trust of the constituencies.
 - M. Ingram supports the idea of discussing the officer's name in sustained findings.
 - Part of the problem has been an unwillingness to weed out bad apples, the systems we currently have continue to fail – releasing the officer's name allows the community to identify bad apples to take the appropriate steps to protect themselves.
 - If we are moving towards equity then everyone that comes to a meeting can have the same expectations.
 - Informal discussion about the term target officer v. responding officer and publicly released information regarding arrests.
 - Informal discussion about complainants fearing retaliation due to filing a complaint.
 - P. Collins-Hackett states that as we are trying to increase transparency and that this is a step in the right direction.
 - N. Vives “if the decision to use officers' names we reviewing cases make the community more comfortable and will encourage people step forward and file a complaint,” she is comfortable with going forward with using officers' names.
 - **M. Ingram proposes** changing the language to we will share the officers' names in any case unless it is an “Exonerated” outcome.
 - Informal discussion about the logistics of when the the officers' name would be used.
 - **N. Vives makes a motion** to adopt the practice of using officers' names in discussion of complaints. L. Becker seconds motion. Unanimous support in favor of the motion. No abstentions or opposition.
- Discussion - Becker makes the point that unlike public media that releases information about an arrest, the Board will ensure that the finding is clearly stated in reference to the reported conduct of the officer.
- M. Ingram references a proposal the Board sent recently which supports this motion.

III. **Meeting Adjournment**

(N. Vives)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:04PM.