

City of Salem Community Police Review Board
January 12, 2021 6:00 p.m. Digital Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Jodi Sherwood, Chair; Bevin Clapper, Vice Chair; Erin Hull, John-Michael McDaniel, Steven Rice and Michelle Teed.

Guests Present: Chief Trevor Womack, Sgt. Lance Diede, Julianne Jackson, David Rheinholdt, Cathy Seckel and Les Ruark

Staff Present: Gretchen Bennett, Mayor/City Manager's Office, Marc Weinstein, City Attorney's Office

Gretchen provided notification that the meeting is streaming live on You Tube.

1. **Roll Call.** Chair Sherwood welcomed everyone. Introductions were shared.
2. **Public Comment:** None received at this time.
3. **Welcome: Police Chief Trevor Womack and Internal Affairs Sergeant Lance Diede** Chief Womack thanked the board for their service and discussed his approach to beginning his role: listening/learning, to assessment, to developing into strategic plan mode. He is impressed with the quality of training; he has concern about capacity and staffing levels. His initial impression is the workload level is high.

Chair Sherwood thanked him for what she sees as an increase in communication to the community. The Chief replied his view is we must increase communication and tell their story as accurately, completely and frequently as possible. Constant communication flow is an area of focus.

Sgt. Diede noted the importance of the role of the board. He has spent fourteen years at the department, with time in both patrol and narcotics. He said it is critical to find fact and truth in an unbiased way. Chair Sherwood asked about the selection process. Sgt. Diede noted a factor was his past work product: he completed investigations including IA investigations as a supervisor.

The group discussed the role of the IA Sgt. It is generally a two - four year rotation. The Chief noted the IA Sgt. is a close report to the Chief, given the objective nature of the job and the importance of a direct line to the Chief should there be concerns. Having the role be removed from the chain of command, be objective and have direct access to the Chief is important.

Member Rice asked if Salem is ready for what may come in the coming weeks given the presidential inauguration and recent national events. The Chief responded there is a link on

the web of the City Council meeting where an update was provided. He discussed potential events. Oregon State Police is the lead agency; SPD is in close coordination in a support role. SPD is prepared with high levels of resources to support if needed.

Vice Chair Clapper asked about choke holds, noting she has not had ability to ask directly of PD with a lack of representation present at CPRB meetings. Sgt. Diede responded yes, there is a policy prohibiting use unless the situation rises to the level of threat of loss of life. Vice Chair Clapper expressed disappointment in delays in the board receiving information. Chief Womack asked Gretchen to let him know if something is needing attention, noting sometimes their capacity will limit them.

Julianne Jackson asked about training and policy at traffic stops: are officers trained to have a hand on their gun? Sgt. Diede answered generally no, unless the officer is in a heightened state of awareness. Gretchen noted that she has understood some naturally rest their hand there; Chief Womack answered yes that can be a natural inclination, and they work to be aware of how that can be perceived and to try not to do so as result.

Chair Sherwood noted that regular attendance by PD is helpful to the board; Sgt. Diede answered he'll attend all meetings to which he is invited.

4. **Approval of Minutes:** Vice Chair Clapper moved the approval of the October 13 minutes; Member McDaniel seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Chair Sherwood listed several edits to the November 18 minutes; Gretchen will make the changes. Member Rice moved the approval of the November 18 minutes as amended; Vice Chair Clapper seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.
5. **Requests for Review:** None received. Gretchen overviewed the process. There is 'no wrong door' with many ways to express a complaint. She is there to help if a person does not want to talk with the department directly. The CPRB is in position to assist with unresolved complaints. The group discussed the recent community unrest. Sgt. Diede noted they have had lots of views expressed to them, and some questions. Many provide viewpoint but do not leave contact information. No formal complaints have emerged.

Member Hull observed the community can be nervous about coming forward and asked if there is another approach. She is happy to sit with people and make it a positive, not a negative. Gretchen replied yes, that could happen now, and that board members may be approached by community members. The goal is to help each person be comfortable and access the information and the process, and to support people as needed.

Member Hull asked if a future training can relate to the K-9 unit; others agreed.

Chair Sherwood noted the performance audit may have information about the role and function of the CPRB.

Member Hull asked about a virtual tour of the new police station. Chief Womack noted there are videos online which detail the building of the station through to the finish, and that he looks forward to welcoming everyone to the community room at the station.

- 6. Election of Officers:** The Chair and Vice Chair positions are elected annually. Vice Chair Clapper clarified current membership and the group agreed with proceeding.

Vice Chair Clapper nominated Chair Sherwood to serve another term as Chair; Member McDaniel seconded the motion. Chair Sherwood indicated willingness to serve if selected. No other nominations were received. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Sherwood nominated Vice Chair Clapper to serve another term as Vice Chair; Member McDaniel seconded the motion. Vice Chair Clapper discussed a possible upcoming transition, noting that while she is willing to serve, if another is interested, that may be better. The group clarified the role of Vice Chair. Vice Chair Clapper nominated Member Hull for the role of Vice Chair. Member McDaniel seconded the motion. Member Teed clarified the motions/nominations on the floor. Vice Chair Clapper declined to serve if selected. The motion to elect Member Hull as Vice Chair was approved unanimously.

- 7. Performance Audit:** Chair Sherwood noted she also chairs the Community Policing Performance Audit Steering Committee. The audit firm has been meeting with people; over 40 groups have been talked with. They are also talking with members of the police department. Listening sessions have been conducted. They are gathering key themes to further discuss and plan. A high level list of key concepts includes:

- Trust
- Relationships
- Transparency
- Reparation
- Sustainability
- Vision

Chair Sherwood clarified each concept. The next meeting of the Steering Committee is Thursday. A web link is available for people to provide input; as of last month, about 130 have done so. Information will be provided to City Council and a public session will provide more opportunity for input to the community. Meetings are live on You Tube.

The group is also interested in trends in departments across the nation. Member Clapper clarified the timeline, asking if Council will receive recommendations in time to inform the budget process as requested. Gretchen will send the audit web page link to the group.

- 8. Member Remarks:** Vice Chair Hull suggested the group bring back training to the meetings. Chair Sherwood suggested the group review the training list. Also, on the next agenda will be an update on the performance audit.

Member Teed asked Sgt. Diede to review hot topics that are coming in and to see what issues may be emerging most often. She noted a public records/public meeting training would also be needed. She thanked Member Clapper for her service as Vice Chair, appreciating her ability to be detail oriented, to circle back on pending issues and to bring a point of view others may not have.

9. **Adjournment:** Member Clapper moved to adjourn the meeting; Member Teed seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously. Chair Sherwood thanked everyone for their participation.

Respectfully Submitted, Gretchen Bennett, Staff Liaison