
Police Civilian Review Panel

Meeting Agenda

Location: Fairfax County Government Center – Room 9
12000 Government Center Parkway
Fairfax, VA 22035

Date: January 4, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm

Website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecivilianreviewpanel/

Agenda details:

I. Call to Order

II. Agenda Items

- a. Approval of Agenda
- b. Approval of December 7, 2023 Draft Meeting Summary
- c. Panel Elections

III. New Business

IV. Adjournment

Panel Meeting Schedule:

- February 1, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
- March 7, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.
- April 4, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Police Civilian Review Panel

December 7, 2023

Fairfax County Government Center

12000 Government Center Pkwy Fairfax, VA 22035

Meeting Summary

Panel Members Present:

Cheri Belkowitz, Vice Chair

Todd Cranford, Chair

Fazia Deen

Dirck Hargraves

Michael Lau

William Ware

Janell Wolfe

Celeste Peterson

Others Present:

Sanjida Lisa, PCRCP

Rachelle Ramirez, OIPA

Richard Schott, OIPA

Lt. Matt Lane, Internal Affairs Bureau

Lt. Chris Cosgriff, Internal Affairs Bureau

Chair Cranford called the Police Civilian Review Panel's (PCRCP) business meeting to order at 7:05 p.m., and after taking attendance, noted the presence of a quorum. He welcomed everyone to the Panel's December 7, 2023, meeting.

Approval of Agenda: Mr. Hargraves moved approval of the meeting agenda. Vice Chair Belkowitz seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Approval of November 2, 2023 Draft Meeting Summary: Mr. Hargraves moved approval of the November 2, 2023 draft meeting summary and Ms. Wolfe seconded the motion. Chair Cranford offered an amendment by requesting that references himself and Ms. Belkowitz be made as Chair Cranford and Vice Chair Belkowitz. The amended motion carried unanimously.

Independent Police Auditor Presentation on Monitoring Authority and Reviewing Investigations: Mr. Richard Schott, the Independent Police Auditor (IPA), gave an overview of the OIPA Procedural Memorandum on Monitoring and Reviewing Investigations. Mr. Schott stated that the most common types of investigations that he monitors and reviews are officer involved shootings and in-custody deaths, which are automatic reviews. Mr. Schott explained the process through which his office receives automatic reviews and when he initiates a review based upon a public complaint. He does not participate in live interviews as his role as the auditor does not include investigating the case. He further stated that he usually starts his reports while an investigation is ongoing, but that he does not publish a report until after monitoring and reviewing the completed investigation. The investigation is completed when the Chief or the Chief's designee approves that the investigation has been finalized.

Procedures Subcommittee Presentation: Vice Chair Belkowitz started the presentation by sharing her experience attending the NACOLE conference in November (in Chicago, IL) and how her point of view on the initial review process changed based upon conversations she had with officials and panel members from other state and local police civilian review boards. Vice Chair Belkowitz then presented the six different options, provided to the Panel in the meeting materials, that the Procedures Subcommittee had developed, to discuss possible amendments or complete overhaul of the current subcommittee process. Vice Chair Belkowitz explained the thought process behind the different options and provided her views that the subcommittee process as it stands would not be necessary if the Panel had remote access to FCPD investigative files for review. She further requested that the Panel receive some training on the FCPD's investigative process.

Mr. Hargraves suggested that the Panel should find a way to provide better transparency to the community with the resources the Panel has access to and within the Panel's current authority. Vice Chair Belkowitz noted that if the Panel would like to keep the current Subcommittee process, then the Procedural Subcommittee recommended that the complainant be given 15 minutes to speak at every Panel meeting where the complaint is reviewed.

Mr. Ware stated that while he would like complainants to be given time to address the Panel, he was concerned that complainants sharing their comments does not become moot since the Panel cannot take evidence from complainants. Chair Cranford confirmed that the Panel cannot consider anything that is not within the four corners of IAB's investigative file. Vice Chair Belkowitz reminded the Panel that we are able to request further investigation by IAB in instances where the Panel believes the investigative file or the investigation itself is incomplete.

Ms. Wolfe mentioned the lack of outreach to the communities that might need the Panel's help the most and she wants to figure out a way to ensure we reach those communities going forward.

Mr. Ware suggested that updated instructions should be provided to complainants on page two of the draft Intake and Processing of Review Requests. Panel members agreed and would also like to review any new template letters that are sent out to complainants at various stages of the process.

Ms. Peterson suggested providing the complainants with a list of instructions on how Panel procedures work, what they are able to say, the length of time they have to address the Panel, and how to submit any new information or evidence to the Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB).

Vice Chair Belkowitz directed the Panel to the language on page 4 on the draft procedure and motioned to approve the Procedures Subcommittee recommendation that would require the full Panel to consider a complaint when two or more Panel members vote against an Initial Review Subcommittee recommendation against such full Panel review. Ms. Wolfe seconded the motion and the motion carried, with Chair Cranford, Mr. Hargraves and Mr. Lau voting in opposition.

Ms. Wolfe motioned to that the procedures be amended to allow the Complainant or their designated representative 15 minutes to address the Panel at both the initial review subcommittee meeting and the initial disposition meeting. Mr. Hargraves seconded the motion and it carried, with Chair Cranford voting in opposition and Mr. Lau abstaining from the vote.

Vice Chair Belkowitz motioned to adopt the proposed changes to the Public Comment Procedures memorandum and allow speakers three minutes, with additional time afforded at the Chair's discretion,

to make comments or ask questions of the Panel at one of the six Public Comment meetings in the calendar year. Ms. Wolfe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Ms. Wolfe motioned to adopt the change to the Initial Review Procedures on page 8 under the Handling of Confidential Information, which would prohibit Panel members to use Complainants' names during Panel business meetings. Vice Chair Belkowitz seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Ms. Wolfe motioned to adopt the edit on page 7 of the Initial Review Procedures, which includes contacting the Complainant for sexual orientation information for inclusion in the Review Report, if relevant in the complaint. Vice Chair Belkowitz seconded the motion and it carried, with Mr. Hargraves and Ms. Deen abstaining from the vote.

National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) Conference: Ms. Deen shared her takeaway from the NACOLE conference and the informative sessions she attended. Vice Chair Belkowitz added that she was able to speak with many individuals from all over the country involved in civilian oversight and appreciated getting various feedback. Ms. Ramirez and Mr. Schott both thanked the Panel members that were able to attend for coming and being involved with the sessions. Mr. Schott added that he would recommend that more law enforcement officials attend the conference moving forward, including officers and representatives from the FCPD. Chair Cranford commented that he was impressed with the conference's informative sessions.

New Business: Chair Cranford mentioned the upcoming Panel elections at the January 2024 Panel meeting. Chair Cranford stated that Vice Chair Belkowitz would become the new Panel Chair and he would be making phone calls to Panel members to assess who might want to be considered for the role of Vice Chair at the January 4, 2024 elections.

Adjournment: Ms. Wolfe motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Ware seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.