

Police Civilian Review Panel
August 3, 2023
Woodrow Wilson Library
6101 Knollwood Dr. Falls Church, VA 22041
Meeting Summary

Panel Members Present:

Cheri Belkowitz, Vice Chair
Todd Cranford, Chair
Fazia Deen
Michael Lau
William Ware
Janell Wolfe

Others Present:

Madison Gibbs, Counsel
Sanjida Lisa, PCRP
Rachelle Ramirez, OIPA
Richard Schott, OIPA
Lt. Matt Lane, Internal Affairs Bureau
Community members

Chair Cranford called the Police Civilian Review Panel’s (PCR) business meeting to order at 7:12 p.m., and after taking attendance, noted the presence of a quorum. He welcomed everyone to the Panel’s August 3, 2023, meeting and provided a brief overview of what the Panel does. Mr. Cranford thanked Second Story for collaborating with PCR for the Panel’s meeting and asked Ms. Soraya Borja from Second Story to give a brief introduction. Ms. Borja provided information on the different types of events and services Second Story provides to the community in Falls Church.

Approval of Agenda: Ms. Wolfe moved approval of the meeting agenda. Mr. Ware seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Review of FCPD Responses to Panel Recommendations Matrix: Mr. Cranford moved to the review of the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) responses to the Panel’s Recommendations Matrix. Mr. Cranford read aloud the first recommendation and the corresponding FCPD response. Mr. Ware wanted to know what the “reconstitution” term was referring to and where the best practices were saved for the Panel to refer back to. Ms. Belkowitz expressed her concern of FCPD not guaranteeing their response within 30 days. Mr. Cranford suggested that PCR staff would monitor whether FCPD complied with the 30-day response timeline and follow up with the Panel Chair if there were any delays. Mr. Cranford moved to accept FCPD’s response to this recommendation. Ms. Wolfe seconded the motion and it carried, with Ms. Belkowitz abstaining.

Mr. Cranford read aloud the second recommendation and the corresponding FCPD response. Mr. Lau recommended that FCPD should have ongoing training instead of having an annual training day. Ms. Deen agreed. Ms. Belkowitz asked Mr. Lau if he would be satisfied with the addition of “at least annually” instead of “established ongoing training.” Mr. Lau confirmed that he did not think a set number of hours needed to be identified, but the implication of training more than once a year would

be sufficient. Mr. Cranford moved that the Panel accept the FCPD's response with the additional recommendation of adding "at least annually." Ms. Wolfe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Cranford read aloud the third recommendation and the corresponding FCPD response. Mr. Belkowitz confirmed that the language described what FCPD is advised to do. Ms. Wolfe expressed an issue with the language used, specifically the word "encouraged." Ms. Wolfe made a motion to ask the FCPD to amend their response, adding "working knowledge and be encouraged to directly consult the criminal code." Ms. Belkowitz seconded the motion. Mr. Lau recommended changing the word from "encourage" to "requires." Ms. Belkowitz provided that the officer from a previous case, CRP-22-06, had an administrative investigation conducted for their misinformation. Mr. Lau opined that if the officer was admonished, that implies that FCPD already has requirements in place that would lead to an officer being reprimanded when necessary. Mr. Lau proposed adding a separate sentence of "officers are encouraged to consult the criminal code." Ms. Wolfe did not believe that the additional sentence should be added, and felt adding the word "and" would suffice. A vote was taken and the motion carried, with Mr. Lau abstaining.

Mr. Cranford read aloud the fourth recommendation and the corresponding FCPD response. Mr. Lau suggested that the FCPD officers should provide specific code section and case laws to the community members they interact with, for clarification purposes. Mr. Ware did not think the FCPD's response wholly addressed the Panel's fourth recommendation. Ms. Wolfe agreed and then suggested that the response be sent back to FCPD for reevaluation. Mr. Ware moved to make a recommendation that the FCPD revisit Recommendation #4 and consider amending the language to "officers should directly consult the criminal code in advance of follow-up interactions." The motion carried, with Ms. Belkowitz opposing.

Mr. Cranford read aloud the fifth recommendation and the corresponding FCPD response. Ms. Belkowitz motioned to accept the FCPD response to the recommendation. Ms. Wolfe seconded the motion. Ms. Belkowitz pointed out that the wording "whenever appropriate" was subjective and she wanted more specific parameters to be defined. Ms. Wolfe understood why the language was worded the way it was. A vote was taken and the motion carried, with Mr. Lau abstaining.

Mr. Cranford read aloud the sixth recommendation and the corresponding FCPD response. Ms. Belkowitz accepted the response but acknowledged that FCPD had rejected the recommendation. Ms. Deen wanted to know how FCPD defined "timely manner," but accepted the response as it was written. Mr. Cranford moved to accept FCPD's response to this recommendation. Mr. Ware seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Cranford read aloud the seventh recommendation and the corresponding FCPD response. Mr. Lau expressed his concern with "concepts of implicit bias" and wants the FCPD to have practical impact. Ms. Belkowitz pointed out that the language of practical impact and application was included in the response and Mr. Cranford agreed. Ms. Belkowitz motioned to accept the FCPD's response to this recommendation. Ms. Wolfe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Cranford read aloud the eighth recommendation and the corresponding FCPD response. Ms. Belkowitz did not think the response addressed the Panel's eighth recommendation. Mr. Lau expressed an issue with the wording "when applicable" and included that blanket statistics would be helpful for

Panel members. Mr. Cranford agreed with both Ms. Belkowitz and Mr. Lau and recommended that Panel staff do their assessment and review the nature of the case in advance of Panel members reviewing the case file. Ms. Belkowitz recommended adding “when germane and when requested by PCRCP” in order to address the original recommendation. Mr. Lau suggested that all statistics should be provided and the Panel can decide what was and was not “germane” to the case file. Ms. Wolfe expressed that she trusted the FCPD to provide the pertinent information. Mr. Ware added that if the data provided was incomplete, the Panel could always make a request for additional information. Ms. Belkowitz motioned to request that FCPD add language that says “Internal Affairs will continue to provide applicable statistics when germane to the case investigation and when a statistically significant amount of data is available or when requested by the Police Civilian Review Panel.” Mr. Ware seconded the motion. The motion carried, with Mr. Cranford opposing.

OIPA Update: Mr. Schott provided an update on three incident reports he published since March 2023, which was his last report to the Panel. Mr. Schott provided that the FCPD responded to a domestic incident call on January 4, 2022, which led to an officer-involved shooting. The second case involved FCPD officers pointing their firearms at a juvenile who had brandished a weapon at an IHOP restaurant. The third incident involved a complaint of an alleged assault committed by an FCPD officer, which was determined to be unfounded.

Mr. Schott provided that he was closely monitoring the FCPD investigation into two incidents. The first incident involved the April, 2023 officer-involved shooting that occurred after a car pursuit on Interstate 95 that began in Fairfax County and ended in Prince William County. The second incident was the officer-involved shooting that occurred on May 11, 2023 in a Citgo parking lot in Alexandria.

New Business: Mr. Cranford announced the resignation of Executive Director Steven Richardson on August 1, 2023. Mr. Cranford provided that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors was in the process of hiring a new Executive Director. In the interim, the Office of the Independent Police Auditor and PCRCP’s Management Analyst would handle Panel affairs and office matters.

Mr. Cranford then entertained questions from the community members present.

Adjournment: Mr. Cranford motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Ware seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.