

Police Civilian Review Panel (PCRP), Executive Director's Report

August 11,2022

The establishment of the PCRP Executive Director's position essentially established a new, fully functioning, Fairfax County Government Agency/Department. As such, the Executive Director, in addition to his/her direct responsibility to the Panel, operates as a County Agency Head, and is responsible for the entirety of the newly created Agency/Department - which includes the establishment of the physical office (ordering furniture, supplies, etc., coordinating with the Human Resources Department to create a job description for support personnel, establishing an interview panel, conducting interviews to fill the position, reviewing and authorizing time and leave for current temporary support staff, and advocating for and managing the office budget). Thankfully, due to accessibility of the Independent Auditor, Richard Schott and Management Analyst III, Rachelle Ramirez, from Office of the Independent Auditor, this office has enjoyed the input and assistance required to successfully manage the aforementioned tasks, while simultaneously becoming familiar with the County, its residents, the Action Item that was the genesis of this office, and the formation of the Panel. Today, I am proud to announce that the PCRP Executive Director's Office, located in Suite 150A of the Government Center, is now up and running!

The establishment of this Agency/Department did not, however, take away from the day-to day interaction with the Chair, Vice-Chair, or Panel as a whole. Chairman Hargraves and I are in constant communication with one another, conferring on case reviews, trainings, information dissemination, and his vision for the Panel during his tenure as Panel Chairman. Again, thanks to the willingness of Mrs. Ramirez to bring me up to speed on the administrative functioning of the Panel and the staffing of its public meetings, supplemented by the temporary administrative assistance of Ms. Dre'Ana Whitfield, who was brought on by the OIPA to assist in managing the work of the Panel, I have been able to meet

with numerous stake holders throughout Fairfax County in an effort to fully appreciate the breadth and width of the PCRCP mandate and its reach. During my five (5) months in this office, I have had the pleasure of meeting one-on-one with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman, Jeff McKay, to discuss the new position and Agency/Department. I have also met with the County Executive, the Deputy for Safety and Security, the Chief Diversity Officer, the Trust Policy Coordinator, the Chief of the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD), Chief Kevin Davis, his command staff, as well as the Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) Commander, Major Todd Billeb and his team. As a result of consistent and positive interactions with the FCPD, Chief Davis has now chosen to allow this office to sit in on the FCPD Core monthly meetings, to assess departmental and station level accountability.

As with the internal, County government outreach, the Executive Director's Office has engaged in a multi-faceted external, Countywide outreach to introduce the work of the Panel to the most remote parts of Fairfax County. Thus far, this office has visited every Supervisors District and FCPD facility and has met with most stationhouse commanders. Particular attention has been focused on the Mount Vernon District and the Route 1 Corridor, where most index crimes continue to take place. To date, this office has met with the commanding officer and deputy commander of the Mount Vernon station, on numerous occasions, and engaged in discussions on police/community interactions. This office has also participated in the Police National Night Out and at the Bethlehem Baptist Church weekend community event, informing County residents on the work and authority of the Panel. Additionally, the Executive Director has given presentations to the Fairfax County NAACP at their quarterly meeting, and at a Faith Communities in Action meeting. The Executive Director is also working with the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, Community Impact Unit, to connect with community and faith-based groups throughout the County on a more consistent basis. In working with the County Trust Policy Coordinator, the PCRCP Executive Director is building bridges with County residents from Central and South America, who may display trepidation with regards to reporting police

interactions because of immigration status concerns. Together, our offices are developing a comprehensive outreach strategy to first build trust between our offices and our Latino community members. The Executive Director will also be meeting with the Fairfax County Public Defenders Office, to work with Public Defenders in getting the Panel's contact information into the hands of their clients, along with other County resources.

With regard to trainings designed exclusively for the Panel, remember, each Panel member is now a member of the National Association for the Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE), and can access trainings exclusive to members. Moreover, the PCRCP Executive Director is currently in discussion with US Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, the Center for Police Equity, and (NACOLE), for a series of presentations before the Panel. Additionally, in conjunction with the FCPD, there are discussions about the FCPD hosting police department operations training and an Internal Affairs Bureau training (to be held on a Saturday). In an effort to augment those trainings, the FCPD has extended the offer for Panel members to participate in a "Ride-Along" with FCPD patrol officers to better understand the perspective and particulars of patrol services. Lastly, regarding training, the Executive Secretary for Police Review and Advisory Board for Cambridge Massachusetts, and former NACOLE President, Brian Corr, has agreed to do a presentation/training this Fall. In line with Chairman Hargraves vision to create a "best in class" Civilian Review Panel, the Executive Director is diligently seeking out qualified individuals and entities to come before the PCRCP to further equip the Panel to carry-out its mandate. An email requesting participation in the "Ride Along" invitation will be forthcoming, and I hope that you will all take advantage of this illuminating opportunity.

The establishment of the Executive Director position has already been proven invaluable, in the onboarding of the Panels Independent Counsel, Bynum and Jenkins, and in securing and managing the

process for stationhouse reviews. A relationship, based upon a mutual respect and vision for police/community relations, is developing between this office and the FCPD, and has opened doors of access and cooperation germane to the work and mandate of the Panel. There is now a daily, accessible, empathetic, point of contact for the Panel, and an office where community members can visit, feel at ease, ask questions, and, if willing, lodge complaints. Throughout my travels in the County, a common refrain has been voiced – that the Panel is “window dressing” or has no real authority. With the establishment of the Executive Director position, there is now more accountability, subject matter experience and investigative expertise, and a fulltime advocate for justice, reform, accountability, and community involvement. The work of the Panel is and has been serious, vast, and nuanced, but primarily reactive; however, wherever possible, the Executive Director will engage proactively through preemptive community outreach and engagement, and in sharing the cares and concerns of the County’s most vulnerable communities with the FCPD command staff. The goal is to increase community/Countywide participation in all public Panel meetings and reviews, both in person and virtual, and to earn the confidence of those we serve. Ultimately, if successful, the establishment of an Executive Director will warrant more responsibility and oversight authority for the Panel, through conscientious, informed, and professional engagement with all stakeholders.