

Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission
Police Recruitment, Diversity and Vetting Subcommittee
May 5, 2015 Minutes

Attendees:

Shirley Ginwright, Chair
George Alber, Recorder
Clayton Medford
Dave Rohrer
Joe Hill
Burnette Scarboro
Chio Stokes

Absent:

Greg Fried
Gervais Reed
Bernard Thompson
Robert Fisher

The meeting began with the introduction of the sub-committee members. Sub-Committee chair reviewed the mission of the subcommittee.

Major Joe Hill, FCPD, discussed the department's hiring process. He also discussed the cadet program, which began at age 18 and end at age 21. There are seven cadets in the current program. They are full-time employees of the county. It is a great seed program for the police department. There are a limited number of positions. There is no agreement between the cadet and the department to attend the police academy, even after the department has invested in their education and they have held a two year job with the county. Major Hill indicated that it is expensive to train the cadets.

The cadet or Explorer programs are not well advertised. Major Hill mentioned that advertising is expensive, especially if using a radio station, mostly targeted for a younger population. These programs are advertised on the police website and police magazines. There was concern that individuals accepted into these positions are those of current officers. It was recommended that the program should have more visibility and diversity. Ms. Ginwright stated she would like to see the recruitment process for these programs. Some of the cadets are known as "legacy kids" because they learn about the program from family members who are officers.

Mrs. Scarboro inquired as to whether school career centers are being utilized in the explorer and cadet programs. Currently the department does not use career centers. They do work with the resource officers located within the school. A concern is there are such few positions, and it would be problematic to have someone excited about the program when there are hundreds before them. By

using the career centers, students would have to meet certain qualifications prior to them being recommended for a program.

Mr. Alber asked if the department has ever considered interns. The department has used interns, who are unpaid. They are currently processing 7 or 8 interns who are distributed among the stations.

Fairfax County's retirement is much better than other regions, but we lose applicants because of the annual salary. This year there was a big hiring with the FBI. The average turnover rate is about 5% people per month. Most of these deals with retirements and some leave because financially they can't afford to live here. There are many officers who are eligible to retire. About 25% of the officers live in Fairfax.

There are currently 40 vacancies in the department of a strength of 1345. 13 months ago there was a vacancy of 112. The June academy will have about 30 candidates.

To get promoted, you must have a four-year degree. The county has a program that helps with tuition assistance. George Mason also has a program, sponsored by the county, where you can get a Master's degree in Public Administration. Supervisors are pretty flexible in giving time for school attendance.

A copy of the Diversity Scorecard was provided. This resulted from the Diversity Council established by Chief Roessler. These will be published on the sub-committees webpage. Major Hill went over the figures provided on the scorecard. They are looking for experience, which would be their first choice for recruitment.

How the Department of Justice have defined the ethnicity of some individuals have had an impact on the diversity numbers. An updated scorecard will be provided, which will show the diversity in the June cadet class.

Length of time from application to recruitment has caused some individuals to find jobs elsewhere.

The Civilian Police Academy is another way of introducing citizens into the work of the police department. The Diversity Council has a responsibility to inform the department of opportunities to participate in community activities.

There are some programs that are in place (eg Bike Radio) that can be built upon. Obstacle courses are prepared and kids are given instructions on the proper way to wear helmets. Helmets are provided by Inova. This is usually done in the Meadow wood community. Early exposure to the police is key in building trust.

Mr. Alber asked where the ownership lies in recruitment. Major Hill has the major role on this but it should be everyone's responsibility. Major Hill is the only one who gets measured on the recruitment goal. Public Service announcements have been done, but did not receive the results they had wanted.

All documents will be posted online. The Strategic Plan has not gone into the detail of identifying the number of diverse candidates that should be hired in each year.

Mrs. Stokes reemphasized that we must continue to look for quality candidates and not lower the standards. Because the standards are high, it does cause some problems.

Ginwright gave an overview of the Communities of Trust Committee, to include the establishment of a Public Safety Program, similar to the ROTC program. Arizona has a public service academy that could serve as a model for the program. **Major Hill is to provide additional information on this program.**

Mrs. Scarboro is to provide additional information on the school program run by Prince Georges County. She is also to provide the website and information to Major Hill on contacting the school career counselors. We could possibly have a person from the school come to give us a briefing on their recruitment.

Major Hill is to provide policies from other agencies. Our focus should be on those who have done well in diversity. Major Hill stated we need to look at like agencies because some of the larger counties have a greater diversity pool. Las Vegas and Los Angeles were two cities that were mentioned.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9PM.

George Alber
Recorder