Cleveland Community Police Commission (CPC)
Jerry Sue Thornton Center
TRI-C Campus
Meeting Minutes
June 27, 2017

Attendees: Commissioners: Paul Baeplle; Anthony Body; Kathy Clegg; Mario Clopton-Zymler; Yvonne Conner; Lee Fisher; Lynn Hampton; LaToya Logan; Steve Loomis; Dylan Sellers

Staff: Katie Brennan, The Cleveland Foundation; Jason Goodrick, Executive Director; ChiChi Nkemere Thompson, Community Engagement Coordinator; Peter Whitt, Enlightenment Consultant Group

Absences: Excused: Gordon Friedman

Unexcused: Amanda King

Mr. Clopton-Zymler called the meeting to order at 6:08pm.

Introduction and Co-Chair Report
Commissioner Roll Call
Mr. Clopton-Zymler introduced all the Commissioners present. He explained the meeting’s structure and flow. He explained that the structure would vary slightly from past meetings, with the public comment period earlier in the session.

Commission Staff
Mr. Clopton-Zymler introduced the two new staff members, who started with the Commission in the past couple of weeks. The Executive Director is Mr. Jason Goodrick and the Community Engagement Coordinator is Ms. ChiChi Nkemere Thompson.

Jason Goodrick
Mr. Goodrick introduced himself and explained why he took on the job of Executive Director. He said he is proud to be part of the Cleveland community. It is the staff’s job to support the volunteer CPC as they help reform the CDP. He said the Commission has already done a great deal of work and that the Monitoring Team had positive things to say about the Commission. Mr. Goodrick explained some of the big initiatives of the Commission over the past two years.

He listed several ways as to how the staff will support the CPC. They will:
- allow the CPC to focus on the key issues and do the additional workload to free up the Commission;
- try to increase engagement events to three per month;
- listen to stories of what is working;
- improve dialogue between the Commission (logic, structure) and community (emotions and values); and
- keep everyone informed in various ways. For example, the staff is revamping the website.
ChiChi Nkemere Thompson
Ms. Nkemere Thompson is the Commission’s new Community Engagement Coordinator.

**Acknowledge Community Groups**
Mr. Clopton Zymler asked all representatives of community groups to stand, introduce themselves, and say which group they are representing. The groups included:
- League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland
- ACLU of Ohio
- Standing Up for Racial Justice
- God Before Guns
- Old Stone Church
- Black on Black Crime

**Update on Commission Work**

**Office of Professional Standards (OPS) and Civilian Police Review Board (CPRB)**
Mr. Clopton-Zymler introduced Damon Scott and Tom Jones of the OPS and CPRB, respectively. They explained the current state of their community outreach plan. The Civilian Oversight Work Group met with them a couple of weeks ago, to discuss their community outreach. The purpose of the plan is to make sure the community is more aware of the civilian oversight process in Cleveland. They are open to any feedback they can get from the community in this process moving forward. They also welcomed Jason Goodrick.

Mr. Clopton-Zymler quickly reviewed past feedback the CPC has provided to the OPS and CPRB based on the conversation at the May Full Commission Meeting. Community members will get an opportunity to discuss this in the public comment period.

**Semi-Annual Monitor Report**
Mr. Tramble of the Monitoring Team outlined the highlights of their Semi-Annual Report. The report is over 70 pages, but there are key elements of which citizens should be mindful. Key points include:
- The Monitoring Team is going to monitor the process differently than it has in the past 20 months. They are the arbiter, which means they are supposed to make assessments to the court. So far, they have been doing more than that, so they will step back in the coming months.
- The Semi-Annual Report’s format has changed. This report gives a status as to where the City and CDP are on the Consent Decree, paragraph by paragraph.
- The Monitoring Team commended the City on its Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) and Use of Force Training.
- Cleveland’s Community and Problem-Oriented Policing Plan (CPOP) is currently being created. The Monitoring Team had 18 community meetings and engaged over 1,000 individuals. They received over 300 completed surveys by the City’s residents. All the Parties of the Consent Decree were involved in this process.
- There are a couple of major issues that have not yet been sufficiently addressed. These include:
  - The OPS/CPRB are still struggling to address civilian complaints.
  - The Equipment and Resource Plan is not in a suitable state.
  - Changes still need to be implemented in terms of investigating officer use of force, supervision, misconduct, etc.
Public Comment Period
Mr. Whitt explained the public comment period ground rules and facilitated the discussion.

General Consent Decree
- A member of the public noted that the City of Cleveland and Department of Justice are the two parties in the Consent Decree. He asked whether anyone present was representing either of the groups. A member of the Office of Professional Standards was present, but the community member said he was not sufficient representation from the City. He said that these meetings were not useful, as neither party of the Consent Decree participated.
- An individual explained that the law enforcement cracking down on Cleveland citizens simply changed from the CDP to other officers (e.g. sheriffs) after the Consent Decree. He believed that the process is not changing anything as external officers are not beholden to the Consent Decree.
  - A Commissioner had the same frustration because there are a lot of policing groups functioning within the city limits that are not subject to the Consent Decree (e.g. CMSD, RTA, Cleveland Clinic, CMHA, University Circle police, sheriffs).
  - A Commissioner said there are plans in process for the outlying police agencies to be partners with the Consent Decree. The intersection of these groups will be addressed. Chief Williams has said he is working on this process.
- A community member mentioned that the crime rate in Cleveland has increased since the Consent Decree. Therefore, he has made the conclusion that the police are standing down and allowing crime to happen. He asked why crime is increasing and people feel more unsafe when Cleveland is trying to improve the police force.
  - A Commissioner explained that officers and the Consent Decree cannot be solely blamed for increased crime. There are some officers who are afraid to do their jobs because of the new policies, but there are a lot of other negative influences and everyone approaches situations with differing viewpoints.
  - An officer Commissioner said that officers are limited in what they are allowed to do now. He stated that everywhere that there has been a Consent Decree, violent crimes have increased in those cities.
    - A member of the Monitoring Team responded to this statement. He said Consent Decrees are not meant to shackle police; rather they are just meant to improve policing practices.
  - A member of the public noted that part of the crime increase is connected to the opiate epidemic that was not present a year ago. This element is not directly connected to policing.
- A member of the public said neither the CPPA nor Black Shield supported Alan Buford like they supported other officers and called the groups racist for this.
  - A civilian Commissioner knew the young man who was killed and he agreed with the community member that it was not an equal situation.
  - An officer Commissioner said that the media was not covering the case like it does with white officers. The CPPA is still covering Buford and taking the case as seriously as any other, but it is not being discussed in the media.
Another officer Commissioner implored the community member to ask Buford if he felt supported.

**General CPC**
- A community member asked what had happened to the first Executive Director candidate.
  - A Commissioner replied that the first ED could not take the position due to a family crisis.
  - Another Commissioner explained that the ED is not appointed. They were selected for hiring and went through a long hiring process.
- A member of the public submitted the following comment in writing: The police officers on the right side of the table (Steve Loomis and another officer whose name I do not recall [Paul Baeppler])—particularly the officer in uniform [Baeppler]—exhibited implicit and explicit hostility towards community members presenting grievances AND to the entire idea of the Consent Decree. In light of the Police Monitor and repeatedly negative assessments of the CPD’s responsiveness to the Consent Decree, this culture of seeing 21st century policing as “shackles” and typecasting anyone the police chase as “bad guys” is a HUGE problem and contrary to the mission of this Commission. We, the community, need the officers who attend these meetings to exhibit commitment to that mission—NOT hostility. What actions will the Commission take to:
  1. Ensure officers attending the CPC meetings are committed to seeing the Consent Decree work and resolve these problems, not blame them on the Consent Decree.
  2. Address this police culture of feeling “shackled” by accountability. This has to be eradicated throughout the force if the community will ever trust CDP. This issue needs to be discussed and addressed somehow in policy with tangible results.
- An individual edited the suggestions form to state the following: Please confirm all Commission members agree that the Cleveland Community Police Commission can develop policies and procedures that will achieve comprehensive law enforcement reform and build better community-police relations based on trust and legitimacy. We strive to advance the highest standards of 21st century policing through policy reforms affecting bias-free and constitutional policing, use of force policies, fairness, transparency, accountability, and the development of a culture and practice of policing that promotes the protection and dignity of all people, especially the most vulnerable.
  - This community member also wrote the following comment: It is non-productive to allow Commission members to make biased statements such as the consent decree is ‘shackling’ the police. The Executive Director appears to be able to see the need for productive collaboration of all community members. Can we get CCPC police representatives who can take that same approach?

**Improving Community Presence at Meetings**
- An attendee’s brother was killed by the police in 2002 and she said victims’ families were not present at the Commission meetings and the CPC needed to reach out to them. She suggested putting some information about meetings on campuses, in newspapers, neighborhoods, rec centers, and sending physical letters to citizens. She said she would put some flyers out, but outreach needed to be more than emails and social media.
A Commissioner explained that the CPC knows that there has not been enough outreach to Cleveland citizens and is trying to change this. Before the meeting, two Commissioners (Ms. Logan and Mr. Body) went into neighborhoods to discuss the CPC. Ms. Nkemere Thompson will also be reaching out to the community in her new position as Community Engagement Coordinator.

The Commission has flyers that they can distribute to the community. Additionally, all the information is on the website. All meetings take place at the Jerry Sue Thornton Center on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

The CPC is interested in getting input as to how to connect to other community members.

**OPS/CPRB**

- An individual asked whether the OPS/CPRB ever had policies and procedures before. He said he heard that they had no policies and did not think they were doing their job with any success for the past twenty years.
  
  - A representative of the Office of Professional Standards explained that there is a new policy in place for the OPS/CPRB that has been approved by the Monitoring Team and the Federal Court. There was a non-expansive policy before the Consent Decree, but it needed to be improved. It explained the process of filing a complaint, but it was not specific. They are working to come into compliance with the Consent Decree.

- A member of the public wanted to better understand the expansion of the policy.
  
  - The representative of the OPS explained that there is one policy for the OPS and one policy for the CPRB. He explained the complaint process and each group’s role. The OPS reviews complaints first and then passes the cases onto the CPRB, which is a civilian body made up entirely of Cleveland residents.

- Another community member said the OPS/CPRB have policies, but there is still a two-year backlog and a lack of efficiency, which she experienced firsthand. It was suggested that the community member and Mr. Scott have a private conversation about the process.
  
  - The representative said the OPS has expanded its staff to address the backlog and are able to close the cases at a faster rate than previously.

- A participant suggested that the City of Cleveland’s website put a complaint number up with a sliding scale or summary so everyone who knew the number could see where in the process the case was. This would be similar to the process when individuals get a ticket and would likely be a simple addition to the website.

**Training**

- A member of the public asked whether the broader Cleveland community would have access to the two-day, scenario-based training. He said he thought the community should have the chance to scrutinize and give input on the training. He noted that officers can exploit loopholes so the public could help recognize those.
  
  - A Commissioner replied that the CPC has asked to witness the training. The Commission will ask if the community can get involved as well.
Mr. Whitt summed up the conversation by saying that race and racism exist and that must be acknowledged. Everyone needs to work on recognizing their implicit bias and have conversations about these difficult topics in a productive way.

**Matters for Approval**

**Approval of April and May 2017 Full Commission Minutes**
The April and May Full Commission minutes had been distributed via email. Mr. Body moved to approve the minutes. Rev. Conner seconded the motion. All ten present Commissioners approved.

**Approval of Core Working Hours for Staff**
Staff need to maintain a 40-hour work week and have created their schedules to fit the CPC meeting schedule. The proposed times for staff to work are as follows:
- Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 8am-5pm
- Tuesday, Thursday – 11am-8pm
With an hour for lunch each day.

Mr. Body moved to approve the staff working hours. Det. Hampton seconded the motion. All ten present Commissioners approved.

**Notice of Commission Expenditures Document**
Mr. Clopton-Zymler included this on the agenda so Commissioners were aware of the expenditures document’s existence.

**Chair Elections**
Mr. Clopton-Zymler submitted his Co-Chair resignation last week. He has been a chair since the beginning of the Commission but is stepping down from the position at the end of June. Initially the by-laws were written for three chairs, but they have since been changed so the CPC has two.

**Nominations**
Mr. Clopton-Zymler nominated the following individuals:
- Rev. Yvonne Conner:
- Ms. LaToya Logan
- Mr. Dylan Sellers
All three accepted the nomination.

Mr. Body nominated the following individual:
- Dean Lee Fisher
Dean Fisher declined the nomination, stating that this was not a good time for him to step into such a role.

**Presentation of Qualifications**
Each nominee presented their qualifications to the Commission. Summaries of their presentations are below:

**Ms. LaToya Logan**
- She is originally from Detroit.
Ms. Logan is the youngest of 15 children and six of her brothers have gone through the criminal justice system. One of her brothers was brutalized by the police. Another of her brothers was murdered and she saw the police working hard to catch the murderer.

She began advocating at seven years old, and, as an adult, became a social worker. Personally and professionally, she is dedicated to reforming the cranial justice system, and most especially law enforcement.

Ms. Logan believes that a decrease in negative interactions between community and police officers will result in an increase in positive interactions.

She seeks to understand everyone’s narratives and represent everyone equitably, not equally. She wants to see the CPC move in that direction.

Mr. Dylan Sellers

Mr. Sellers has been part of the Commission since its inception and has seen what is possible when the Commission does what it is meant to do (e.g. the CPRB’s new policy came directly from the CPC’s research and hard work).

He is the oldest of five kids, and his father was a police officer, of whom he is very proud.

He helped found the Children’s Defense Fund with the goal of creating the beloved community to help each other work to get better.

Mr. Sellers noted that the Commission needs to be more connected to the community and the staff can help with this.

He has taken a sabbatical from work, so has more time on his hands, which is useful because the time commitment of a Co-Chair is far greater than for a regular Commissioner.

Mr. Sellers emphasized that the Commission can accomplish everything that needs to be done by keeping the police and other parties accountable. He noted that the City is just as culpable as the police.

Although he disagrees that the new policies are shackles for police officers, he also noted that police perceptions are very important to consider.

Mr. Sellers’ goal is to get everyone to the table and keep the reform process moving.

Rev. Yvonne Conner

Rev. Conner noted that she applied and was selected for the CPC from over 200 candidates. She stated that she is proud that the Commission is moving into its third year.

She is originally from Kalamazoo, Michigan and came to Cleveland to pastor a church. From there, she became more involved in social justice. She has since retired from pastoral responsibilities.

Rev. Conner stressed the importance having an equitable representation of community members is for her.

As a Commissioner, Rev. Conner has worked to support the CPC, helped CPC find locations for early meetings, and was part of the Community Outreach and Engagement Committee (in that position she has helped organize town hall meetings. She successfully led the campaign for a new CDP mission statement. She also played a large role in creating the Commission’s first business cards, the CPC’s banner, and the first Commission brochure.

Rev. Conner expressed her pride in what the Commission has already accomplished and her belief that the Monitoring Team’s Semi-Annual Report will lay the groundwork for the Commission’s coming tasks.

She noted that the CPC now has staff who can help undergird the Commission’s work under the Consent Decree.
- She emphasized the need for Commissioners to show their commitment to the Cleveland community.
- Her goal is to create an overarching team and delegate responsibilities and authority to some Commissioners. She also noted the importance of connecting to innovative people and activities who work alongside the CPC.
- Rev. Conner recognizes leadership as: recruitment, retention, and relationships.

Mr. Clopton-Zymler said there needs to be a differentiation between what the ED’s roles are and what the Chairs’ roles are. He asked the nominees to comment on that.

Ms. LaToya Logan
- Ms. Logan said she would allow the ED to do the job they were hired to do within the job description.
- She said the Chairs’ and ED’s separate responsibilities are clear and distinct.

Mr. Dylan Sellers
- Mr. Sellers expressed a similar opinion to Ms. Logan.
- He emphasized that there needs to be constant communication between the Co-Chairs and the ED. For a little while, there will be some gaps of responsibility, though at this point where those are is unclear. This collaboration will help determine the right solution.
- Mr. Sellers also said the Co-Chairs need to stay in constant contact with Commissioners to make sure they are always aware of where Commissioners stand on issues.

Rev. Yvonne Conner
- Rev. Conner noted that she has been an Executive Director as well as a Board Chair and would draw from both of those experiences. She compared the volunteer Commission to a nonprofit board.
- She said she would respect the duties of the ED and be available, especially early on, to all the staff (most especially the ED).
- She explained that the board generally works alongside and embellishes the responsibilities requested by the Executive Director.
- The Board usually comes alongside and embellishes responsibilities as the ED requests.

Mr. Clopton-Zymler noted that the CPC must be aware of the roles of the Commission and staff. Staff are City employees but report to the CPC. The staff serves the Commission and needs to execute the Commission’s will, not their own will. It is important not to set a precedent which includes staff making the Commission’s important decisions. The Chairs need to remember their role as director supervisors to the ED.

Co-Chair Election
Mr. Clopton-Zymler introduced the two-tiered election, as stated in the by-laws. Each Commissioner votes for one person on the first ballot and the individual with the highest number of votes becomes the first Chair. The remaining candidates are voted for in the second round, with the highest number of votes determining the second Chair.

Commissioners discussed the usefulness of this method of voting. Rev. Conner moved to suspend the rules but was told that this was not allowed in this situation. Dean Fisher said that he suggested the process originally but viewed it as cumbersome and recommended that the by-laws be changed so the
process is easier next time. It was determined that the CPC could change the by-laws but they would not take effect until the next meeting. The Commission determined to remain with the process.

The Co-Chairs’ term will last a year, ending on July 1, 2018.

First Chair
Rev. Yvonne Connor – 8 votes (out of 10)

Second Chair
Ms. LaToya Logan – 8 votes (out of 10)

**Proposed PPA Agenda/July Full Commission Meeting Items**
- A Commissioner suggested looking into and connecting more deeply to a camp for 9-18-year-olds expressing themselves through hip hop. He said the youth are rapping about things they care about in the community. This camp has received funding from foundations and connecting to it could help the CPC interact with young people in a better way.
- A Commissioner suggested that the CPC discuss how much control the ED will get over the Commission’s budget moving forward.
- A Commissioner suggested discussing the CPC’s equipment needs (laptops, tablets, etc.). Another Commissioner noted that these are already in the Commission’s budget, their purchasing just needs to be executed.

Mr. Clopton-Zymler said he would connect the new Chairs to the City and other elements of the process before officially stepping down the last day of June.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22pm.