



1515 ARCH STREET
11TH FLOOR
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19102
(215)685-0891
Phila.gov/PAC
PAC@Phila.gov

6 p.m. Monday: Invitation to attend Police Advisory Commission public meeting

PHILADELPHIA (Nov. 16, 2020) -- Philadelphians want stronger civilian oversight of their Police Department. That's the clear takeaway from the overwhelming approval of the Nov. 3 ballot initiative calling for creation of a Citizens Police Oversight Commission that would have broader powers than the existing Police Advisory Commission.

The Police Advisory Commission applauds this development and stands ready to offer guidance on the powers, processes, and resources critical to meaningful oversight. To that end, we have developed a plan based on extensive research of what works in other jurisdictions and can be successfully replicated in Philadelphia. That plan can be found [here](#).

Today we invite residents to join our November public meeting at 6 p.m. to meet our new executive director, **Anthony Erace**, and to continue the conversation on how to make oversight meaningful. The meeting can be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/PACNOV20>

Now that the citizens have spoken, City Council has the authority to create an agency worthy of the public trust. Adequate power and funding will be essential to:

1. **Conduct investigations and recommend discipline.** Currently, the Police Department's Internal Affairs Bureau and the Police Board of Inquiry investigate complaints and make discipline recommendations. It takes an average of nine days for the department to start investigating a complaint and an average 141 days for the investigation to be completed. The Police Board of Inquiry has the authority to recommend training/counseling or a reprimand in lieu of suspension, if appropriate. The Police Advisory Commission currently has no authority to recommend discipline and there is no process to appeal Internal Affairs findings.
2. **Direct access to Police Department documents and data.** The Police Advisory Commission does not have direct access to the department's data, investigative files, body camera footage, and other evidence. To obtain information necessary for oversight of the police, the commission must submit a written request for the department's approval.
3. **Prosecute officers for misconduct.** The Police Board of Inquiry Department Advocate, a sworn member of law enforcement, is the only person who conducts the administrative prosecutions for police misconduct. The Police Advisory Commission does not have the power to assist in the preparation and litigation of cases.

The Police Advisory Commission is gratified by the voters' support for civilian oversight and we are confident that the new Civilian Police Oversight Commission will be empowered to meet the needs of Philadelphians. We believe community feedback is a necessary part of developing oversight, and we look forward to today's public meeting.

###