



Citizens Police Oversight Commission

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA CITIZENS POLICE OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS' PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

February 7, 2023

Via Zoom

Present: Maryelis Santiago, Benjamin Lerner, Jahlee Hatchett, Rosuara, Hakim Peay, Hassan Bennett, John Solomon, Melanie Dubouse (arrived 6:07 pm)

Absent: Afroza Hossain (excused)

Staff: Anthony Erace, Daniel Guy, Taleah Grimmage, Damon Green, Janine Zajac

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM

- A. Approval of January Public Meeting Minutes: motion by Lerner, seconded by Bennett. All in favor, no opposed.
- B. Community Comment: no community comments submitted ahead of time, no comments by attendees during prescribed period. At the end of the meeting community attendee Sylvia Metzler thanked the commission for its work and note the importance of being up and running after the recent killing of Tyre Nichols by police in Memphis, Tennessee.

Reports:

1. Executive director report – Anthony Erace
 - a. There was a city council hearing on Monday 2/6/23 to discuss a ballot question to be placed on the May 2023 ballot that would exempt CPOC employees from civil service. This was the intent of the writers of legislation, and allows flexibility for hiring and designing positions as the office grows. It also maintains independence from same employment pool as PPD. The hearing also covered an ordinance that applies to CPOC commissioners and campaign contribution limits. The original legislation was stricter that ethics board rules regarding campaign contributions, so the ordinance was to bring the legislation into agreement with current standards and allow commissioners to contribute to State and Federal races, but not local races.
 - i. Lerner was unsure on exactly what the rule is. Erace will forward the ordinance to commissioners once it passes, and suggested asking for an opinion from the Board of Ethics with more specific guidance because ordinances are not always worded clearly.
 - b. Hiring process – positions posted for auditor/monitor, policy analyst, constituent services, and director of investigations. First or second round interviews are occurring, and an offer has been made and accepted for director of investigations. The hope is to fill all open roles by March, which would be an almost 100% expansion of staff.

- i. Lerner asked when the commissioners can be informed about the new director of investigations, their qualifications, etc., and why commissioners were not involved in the process for hiring this person.
 - 1. Erace noted the hiring process done in accordance with the legislation regarding hiring and firing all staff and the current hiring plan was laid out for the commissioner chair for approval in August 2022, but more information can be shared in executive session. JH proposed an executive session after the public meeting, BL and HB seconded.
 - c. Erace is meeting with the PPD executive team this Friday with a primary focus to educate them on our office, units, and their requirements as stated in the legislation, such as data reporting and complaint management.
 - i. Lerner noted that if a broader meeting related to the Commission's plans for the coming year were to occur, there are commissioners who would like to attend the meeting to get a firsthand view of how the executive team reacts to CPOC. Erace agreed a long-term strategy meeting with PPD could be possible if the commissioners wanted that; a plan outline would need to be created and it could be scheduled. Thomas and Bennet are also interested. Lerner and Bennett discussed having advance notice of activities of staff.
 - d. The staff office space is being reorganized to accommodate new hires, while also working to secure larger office space as staff continues to grow.
 - e. Budget season is coming, so if commissioners are able to rally their networks and communities for support that would be appreciated.
 - f. CPOC has received 16 complaints year to date.
- 2. Executive director search update – Bennett, Hatchett, Lerner, and Dubouse are on this committee, they have been meeting for the past 3-4 weeks once a week. They have narrowed the pool from 60 to 10 applicants, and will be inviting them to interviews by the end of the month. They are meeting next on February 25, 2023.
- 3. General counsel search updates – Thomas, Santiago, Hossain, and Solomon are on this committee. They have several candidates they are interested in but would like more candidates to apply. They want to share the posting with local law school networks, and Hatchett offered to share with his networks as well. Staff member Daniel Guy confirmed this posting was shared on NACOLE's website along with the Executive Director posting. This position will be posted until March 15, 2023.

Discussion and announcements

The next public community meeting is on Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 6:00 pm via [Zoom](#). The meeting was moved to Thursday this month and will be on Zoom to accommodate the guest speakers. The office will send an updated about this meeting to the mailing list with more details.

Bennett noted that people have told him it is hard to find the zoom links for the meeting and they have trouble logging in. Guy noted the meetings are also livestreamed on YouTube, which may allow for live comments, and a staff member could monitor that platform in the future. Guy requested that more

information about log in issues be sent to CPOC@phila.gov so that the office can help troubleshoot, more information is needed to understand what the specific problem is.

Hatchett adjourned the meeting to executive session at 6:38 pm

The next CPOC Commissioners' Public Meeting will be held Tuesday, March 7 @ 6:00 pm on Zoom.

Access the meeting on Zoom by following this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87890869627?pwd=M2d4TFZDUzJDcW9vejJqTTIYS3o3Zz09>