

2023

ANNUAL
REPORT



**OFFICE OF THE
POLICE OMBUDS
COMMISSION**



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OPO COMMISSION



Ladd Smith, vice-chair (left); Lili Navarrete (middle); Luc Jasmin III, chair (top right); Jenny Rose (bottom right)

Our Mission

The Office of Police Ombudsman Commission exists to promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the members of the Spokane Police Department by providing, through the Ombudsman, independent review of police actions, thoughtful policy recommendations, and ongoing community outreach. The Commission also assists the OPO in communicating with Spokane's diverse communities and the general public about the complaint filing and investigation process.

509-625-6755 (voicemail) | 509-625-6748 (fax)

opocommission@spokanecity.org

my.spokanecity.org/bcc/commissions/ombudsman-commission

Monthly meetings every 3rd Tuesday at 5:30pm at City Hall

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Luc Jasmin III



In 2023, the OPOC experienced a continued lack of support from the City Administration and City Council. Despite the City Administrator's invitation for the Police Ombudsman to participate in contract negotiations, the Police Guild collective bargaining agreement (CBA) adopted by the City Council not only ignored the Ombudsman's input but also curtailed the Ombudsman's authority without prior discussion. The OPOC aligns with the OPO's advocacy for negotiations to align the CBA with the City Charter.

Significant budget cuts to the OPO and OPOC 2024 budget further confirmed the Administration's efforts to limit the OPO's authority. Budget independence is crucial to the overall success of civilian oversight. However, the OPOC recognizes the City's current budget deficit required all departments to make concessions. The OPO agreed to reduce expenses on its already bare bones budget. Then, additional funding cuts were unilaterally made that greatly impacted operations and employee benefits. The OPOC fully supports the OPO's efforts to reestablish its budget and gain budgetary independence.

Additionally, the Spokane Police Department (SPD) declined to adopt four of the OPO's recommendations from the previous year. These recommendations primarily concern misconduct allegations discovered during different complaint reviews or use of force incidents, which the SPD categorized as "minor" policy violations and handled outside the formal complaint investigation process in a new category called "Administrative Review." This artificially lowers the number of alleged policy violations and denies officers due process and creating a new review system separate from established protocols.

Summary of

OPOC ACTIONS & DEVELOPMENTS

The OPOC held a combination of six regular meetings and one special meeting. The OPOC continued use of the hybrid format of in-person and virtual meetings to provide greater public access to monthly meetings.

7

OPOC meetings

13 OF 13

*OPO
recommendations
approved*

Approved OPO recommendations to SPD

1. In August, the OPOC approved five recommendations, R23-01 to R23-05, based on two closing reports. One report was on an Internal Affairs complaint, C23-052 / C21-051 / C22-052, and the other report was from a pursuit review, P22-011.
2. In September, the OPOC approved three recommendations, R23-06 to R23-08, based on one closing report on a use of force, F23-009.
3. In November, the OPOC approved five recommendations, R23-09 to R23-13, based on two closing reports on use of force cases, F22-064 and F23-035.

OPOC hosted a police reform panel discussion

In February, the OPOC hosted a panel on police reform which included stakeholders from the community, City officials, and law enforcement. This panel inspired the OPOC to regularly invite local leaders to speak at OPOC meetings and provide greater visibility of their organizations to the community. Guests have included the Spokane Chief of Police, SPD Police Guild President, City Council President, the OPO intern, local pastors, and the Spokane County Sheriff. The OPOC looks forward to building and expanding this initiative in the upcoming year.

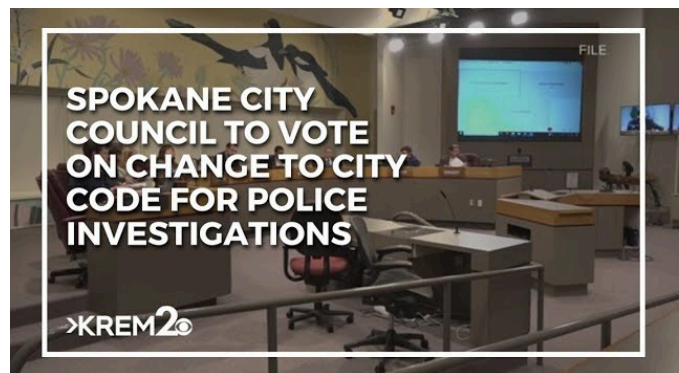


Left to right: Breean Beggs, Walter Kendricks, John Nowels, and Craig Meidl

OPOC voted on procedural language for investigations on the Chief of Police

After the OPO's initial independent investigation, concerns arose regarding investigating the Chief of Police. Previously, the Spokane Municipal Code (SMC) provided complaints against the Chief of Police be forwarded to Human Resources. In June 2023, the City Council amended the SMC to empower the OPO to investigate the Chief.

To ensure continuity, the OPOC voted on procedural language that made the Commission the final authority on complaints against the Police Ombudsman.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Commissioner Rose (left) and Sheriff Nowels with students from the Community School

In 2023, Commissioners continued to focus on community engagement. Commissioners attended: the Martin Luther King Jr. March, Community Police Reform Panel, National Night Out, a panel of community leaders at the Community School, Northeast Youth and Family Services Masquerade Ball and fundraiser, and Neighborhood Council meetings, NAACP meetings.

TRAINING

Training opportunities in civilian oversight continue to be an area of focus for the Commissioners. However, the opportunities during 2023 continued to be limited with non-essential travel being restricted by the Administration. Despite this, two Commissioners attended the NACOLE (National Association of Civilian Oversight over Law Enforcement) Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois. In March, the OPOC conducted a follow up strategic planning/training retreat that was facilitated by the Executive Director of NACOLE.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The OPO wrote five closing reports and issued 13 recommendations. Closing reports are based on complaints, uses of force, collisions, and pursuits. To view full recommendations and SPD's responses, please visit <https://my.spokanecity.org/opo/recommendations/2023/>.

Update on 2022 Recommendations

1. Prohibition on striking handcuffed subjects - **In Progress, collaboration with the OPO**
2. Request for public records - **TBD with City Administration**
3. Universal policy and disclosure agreement for all city employees - **TBD with City Administration**

Police Chief's Responses



8 of 13 implemented

Implemented



4 of 13 not implemented

Not Implemented



1 partially/not implemented

**Partly Implemented /
Partly Not Implemented**

Recommendation Topics

Implemented

SPD implemented 8 of the 13 recommendations made by the OPO. The common themes of these recommendations were proper classification, communicating department expectations, and review procedures of cases going through the chain of command. OPO recommendations include:

- procedures when an undocumented use of force is discovered;
- strengthening the Administrative Review Panel's analysis;
- evaluating the necessity of each application of force;
- Administrative Reviews should be clearly addressed by policy;
- providing feedback to supervisors with departmental guidance;
- tracking recommendations made during chain of command reviews;
- clearly defining the limits of the Training Failure category; and
- using metrics to ensure supervisory and review board evaluations are tracked and evaluated to uphold policy and high standards.

Partly Implemented / Partly Not Implemented

SPD partly implemented and partly did not implement an OPO recommendation on implementing a tracking system that accounts for all uses of force. SPD cited being limited by technology but would be willing to work with the OPO to come up with solutions. They hope to have the requisite technology by the fourth quarter of 2024 pending approval for funding.

The second part of this recommendation involved updating the terminology in its manual on non-reportable force. SPD implemented this portion of the recommendation.

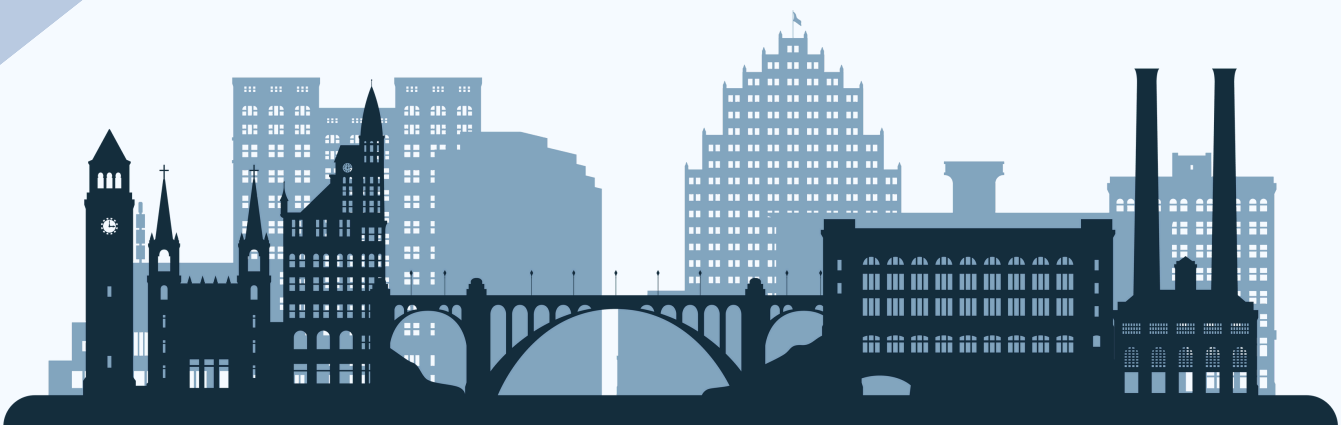
Recommendation Topics (cont).

Not Implemented

SPD did not implement 4 of the 13 recommendations the OPO made. As discussed above, proper classification and review procedures of cases going through the chain of command were the focus of closing reports in 2023. SPD policy requires reviewers make “in” or “out” of policy determinations and any potential misconduct discovered should be sent to IA for investigation. However, in practice, the chain of command makes disciplinary decisions without an IA investigation which shortcuts officer due process rights.

These include recommendations on:

- forwarding new allegations of misconduct in a review to IA for investigation;
- allegations of misconduct labeled as “Administrative Review” be sent to IA for investigation;
- update use of force policy language; and
- updating policy to ensure proper determinations that limit findings to “in” or “out” of policy and forwarding allegations of misconduct to IA for investigation.



OPO EVALUATION

In 2023, the OPO's community engagement increased significantly. They responded to 1820 contacts, conducted 93 interviews with community members regarding complaints, and participated in 94 officer and complainant interviews within SPD. Additionally, they attended 415 SPD meetings and 13 review boards. The OPO oversaw 36 complaints against SPD, totaling oversight of 77 complaints, and made 61 referrals. They remained active in statewide and national oversight efforts.

In terms of reporting, the OPO issued five reports with 13 recommendations, focusing on policy and procedure improvements. These reports addressed opportunities for enhancing policy, training, and communication within the department, particularly regarding case review procedures and feedback mechanisms.

Mr. Logue actively furthered the OPO's mission by engaging with the Administration, Police Guild, and Spokane Police Department to address challenges. Despite negotiation setbacks, he persisted, enhancing oversight of investigations. He offered strategic recommendations to the police department based on Spokane incidents, complaints, and relevant events from other areas.

Beyond his office duties, Mr. Logue maintained a strong presence in the oversight community. He participated as a panelist at the 2023 NACOLE Annual Conference and serves on the national board of NACOLE, he chaired both the Board and Executive Board for Leadership Spokane, and is a commissioner for the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission.

Ms. Omana consistently enhanced the OPO's professional reputation through thorough research and recommendation presentations. She adeptly facilitated mediations and collaborated closely with the IA Lieutenant to guide investigations, providing detailed feedback for improvement. As a review board member, she reviewed various reports and body camera footage, sharing insights for training and policy enhancement. Additionally, she played a key role in organizing a panel for the 2023 annual conference, featuring representatives from the OPO, Police Guild, and the former Denver monitor.

OPO EVALUATION (CONT.)

Ms. Coty efficiently manages OPOC meetings, offers exceptional customer service, and enhances administrative practices. Despite challenges, particularly in accounting and travel, she diligently works to achieve positive outcomes and improve processes. Her meticulousness ensures prompt availability of office products and effective preparation for public meetings. She excels in problem-solving and contributes significantly to creating and implementing solutions.

Overall, the OPOC commends Mr. Logue's leadership in advancing police oversight in Spokane in 2023. Despite obstacles, he remains a steadfast advocate for the OPO's mission, driving progress forward.



RESOURCES

Crime Check / 911:

509-456-2233

City of Spokane 311:

311 or 509-755-2489

SPD Tipline:

509-242-8477

SPDtipline@spokanepolice.org

Internal Affairs:

509-835-4588

spdinternalaffairs@spokanepolice.org

Police Headquarters:

1100 W Mallon Avenue

509-625-4100

North East Precinct:

5124 N Market Street

509-363-8281

Downtown Precinct

111 N Wall Street

509-622-5823

South Precinct:

524 S. Stone Street

509-625-3310

Northwest Precinct:

1100 W Mallon Avenue

Neighborhood Resource Officer Locations

C.O.P.S East Central

524 S. Stone St.

509-625-3330

C.O.P.S Southwest

1403 W. 3rd. Avenue #B

509-755-2677

C.O.P.S Nevawood:

4705 N. Addison Street

509-625-3353

C.O.P.S North Central:

806 W. Knox Avenue

509-625-3348

C.O.P.S Northeast:

5124 N. Market Street

509-625-3343

C.O.P.S Northwest:

2215 W. Wellesley Avenue Suite D.

509-625-3336

C.O.P.S Southeast:

2727 S. Mount Vernon St. Suite 3C

509-622-3326

C.O.P.S West:

1901 W. Boone Avenue

509-625-3340



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