

City of Spokane Office of Police Ombudsman Commission (OPOC)

Regular Meeting Minutes January 5, 2016

Chairperson Debra Conklin called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

She moved to adopt the agenda. Commissioner VanderPol seconded. Motion passed.

VanderPol moved to approve the minutes from 12/8/15. Commissioner Scott Richter seconded. Motion passed.

Conklin asked Coordinator Marty Huseman to send the Commission a reminder to look at the June notes before the next meeting.

Conklin, Richter and Commissioner Smith will be attending the training on January 22.

Scott attended 3 Interim Ombudsman Selection Committee meetings. As a member of Police Advisory Committee, he was called to attend a briefing about an officer-involved shooting that was taped on a body camera. He said it will now Spokane Police Department's (SPD) policy, once they have conducted their investigation and turned over all evidence to Prosecutor, to release the video to the media at the same time. He said his hat is off to them for that.

Smith said they did show us the video, along with some transcripts. He appreciated being allowed to be there. SPD wanted to know what kind of questions and concerns we had, that they could be prepared for release to public.

Smith said on 12/9 he attended the Spokane Police Advisory Committee. He brought copies of the updated brochure for the Commission about the Committee. There will be an open meeting 3/17/16 at 5:30pm at the West Central Community Center, and the public will have access to the police chief. He completed a ride along with officer Elana Bishop. They responded to a theft investigation. He said it was eye-opening and something he would never forget. Officer Bishop did an extraordinary job of being respectful and personable, and he was thoroughly impressed. Also, he spent an hour with Kathy Armstrong, who is conducting a cultural audit within SPD. She is gathering information from a variety of people to assist with the process. He said he was very impressed with her, and that she is top-notch and an excellent communicator.

Conklin encouraged all Commissioners to go to neighborhood community meetings.

VanderPol went to Spokane Police Accountability and Reform Coalition (SPARC) meeting. It was a strong, diverse group, and he talked about the Commission's view of police accountability, and what we looked for in an Ombudsman. Conklin said that the Peace and Justice Action League (PJALS) staffs SPARC. Conklin said that group (PJALS) represents the organizations that got us police oversight; they have been working for over 10 years now. She requested that a Commissioner is interested in attending a meeting, that they send SPARC an email for coordination purposes, since no more than 2 commissioners can attend at one time.

Conklin went to the SPARC Meeting, and the East Central Neighborhood Council. She updated the Council on the Ombudsman process. The neighborhood very much appreciated the update in person.

No one from the community chose to speak in the Public Forum.

Brean Beggs gave an update on the Ombudsman hiring process. He said the city of Spokane is the applicant, and the request for the work visa will get out the door in a few days to immigration authority. They have 15 days to rule. The only issue is whether the Police Ombudsman falls under the broader header of Management Consultant under the NAFTA. Immigration can ask for additional materials and if the city provides those, they have another 15 days to give an answer. As soon as the contract with the immigration attorney was figured out, the contractor was on it. He said we're on schedule.

Richter reported on the 3 Selection Committee meetings. The first meeting was the start of the process and deciding who to interview for the 5th Committee Member, the second was conducting interviews and selecting Phillip Tyler as the 5th member, and the third was selecting the 6 candidates for interviews. He voiced appreciation for members Dennis Hession, Phil Tyler, Lt. Justin Lundgren and Sgt John Griffin; he was impressed that they dropped everything, during a holiday month, to focus on this process.

Beggs said this committee has been working very smoothly, and he couldn't be happier with how it's gone. He said the candidates all seem to be qualified, and there's a good group of people to consider. Smith asked if the 3 candidates' information will be forwarded before the special meeting. Beggs said the 3 names will be public. Huseman will be working on background checking.

Conklin said she has been very impressed, and she particularly appreciated the Committee asking Scott and her what it is they are looking for. It's been a very cooperative and helpful process. Confidentiality of the names is by the request of candidates. Once we have the 3 finalists, their names will be made public, and we'll have a public conversation. She very much appreciates how the Committee has worked together.

After discussion, the Commission scheduled a special meeting for 1/29/16, where the candidates will be interviewed. It will start at 4pm. Huseman will be scheduling the candidates.

A discussion took place on proposed changes to section 2 of the draft OPOC Rules of Procedures. They will start with section 3 at the next meeting.

Conklin said she and Richter will work on annual workplan. She asked Richter to email the list of proposed content for the 2015 report.

Beggs said that Kathy Armstrong is looking for input on the cultural audit, and she would prefer to have it in writing.

Richter noted some concerns about how the OPO website works. He also had a concern about a new SPD document that talks about how to file a complaint with the PD, but does not talk about how a

complaint can be filed with the OPO. Conklin asked Scott to look into these issues some more and get back to the Commission, and to let her know if there needs to be an agenda item.

Conklin adjourned the meeting at 7:43pm.

Submitted by Marty Huseman and approved by Commission on February 2, 2016.