

## **Police Chief's Vehicle Stops Committee Minutes: DRAFT**

September 8, 2020

Conference Rooms 1A and B, City Hall

Members Present: Bob Aulgur, Toni Dukes-Larkins, Pamela Hardin, Don Love, Chad McLaurin, Matthew Nichols

Members Absent: None

Vacant Positions: 4

Others Present: Crime Analyst Jerry East, Public Information Officer Brittany Hilderbrand

Chair Toni Dukes-Larkins called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. A quorum was established.

### **Agenda**

Bob motion and Don second to approve the agenda as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Minutes**

Don motion and Pam second to amend the August 11, 2020 minutes, inserting in the statement headed "Investigative stop," the language shown below. Motion passed unanimously.

As an example of a variable, Chief Jones said that, as a new officer riding with a supervisor, they had observed two cars with minor equipment violations. The supervisor asked him which one he would stop, then advised him to stop the older vehicle because an older vehicle is more likely to be associated with other violations or more serious criminal activity. The Chief said he now doubts the fairness of basing the decision to make a stop on the age of the vehicle because it unfairly affects individuals with lower incomes, and Black drivers are more likely to have low incomes.

### **Committee Recommendations**

#### **Other Recommendations Proposed by Committee Members**

- Chad proposed an outside performance audit to look at CPD's policies related to organizational structure. It could include, but not be limited to, the Department's records management system; what it measures; how measures can examine officer conduct; and if those measures can examine trends. From there, CPD can look at opportunities for further training, because what is measured will drive the training. This will add a level of accountability for the Department and officers.

Members: Agreed some parts of the recommendation are beyond the Committee's scope, although Chief Jones is open to looking at all recommendations. Would like to take a closer look at some of the elements.

People with appropriate skill sets can do a proper evaluation. City Council and Chief of Police should be involved if an outside audit is found to be an appropriate method. A performance audit is a politicized concept and the Committee isn't the place for that. Committee should focus on elements that truly align with vehicle stops and racial disparities. Going forward, members can specify the training needed to work towards desired change.

Chair Toni motion to pull useful talking points for further discussion. Bob motion to amend by also tabling the recommendation for now. Don second. Motion passed unanimously.

- Don proposed improving and implementing the CPD bias-free policing policy and provided a more comprehensive version of the data check offs recommendation. It builds a case for why check offs are used to gather data and looks at variables based on Chief Jones' requests to see how the Committee wants to try to address the disparities among Black and white drivers. Committee members were asked to read the proposal and discuss it at a later date.

### **Data Check Offs**

Committee members revisited their discussion of check offs used to collect data during traffic stops. Don asked them to consider if there are valid reasons for an officer to ask questions not related to a stop. A stop should not be pre-judged, but it should be justified by strong facts and credible intelligence. For example, in the instance of a plain view search, the check offs could outline elements that justify or do not justify conduct. If an officer is acting on credible intelligence, this creates a further sense of accountability that is reinforced by a supervisor.

Members: Agreed check offs may be a good thing to have. Interactions between the Black community and law enforcement officers have been strained and, because tensions are high, less interaction is more. Consider that the public's interest outweighs the police interest. Factors influencing the intensity of these interactions include the order in which questions are asked; officer experience and approach; and balance between scripted and more casual conversation. This item, including the points below, will be discussed at the Committee's October 13 meeting:

- Telling cops what questions to ask, without providing some context, can be a bit overarching. They should be able to explain pre-textual stops, moving violations, investigative, infractions, etc. without having to explain the extra small talk.
- Even though officers have the authority to detain, this doesn't mean they have the right to ask questions that are not related to the stop. Consider how this policy aligns with the practices. Until things are being measured, officers will do what the culture says and not what is enforced.
- It is expected that there will be different responses from people of different cultures and mentalities, so all responses could be perceived differently. For example, questions can come off as offensive and ignite fear. Others may talk louder, which can be perceived as forceful. Consider how to bridge the gap so officers can ask what they need while also being personable to relieve a person who may be nervous.

### **General Comments by Public Members and Staff**

No comments

### **Next Meeting Date and Agenda Items – October 13, 2020**

At the September meeting, Chief Jones suggested the Committee get acquainted, as soon as possible, with the MU research team assigned to examine vehicle stop data. Chair Toni motion and Pam second to invite the team to the October 13 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Toni motion and Pam second to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously