

CIVILIAN REVIEW BOARD

MINUTES

January 16, 2020

Present: Civilian Review Board voting members Chairman George Buntin (Western), Secretary Mel Currie (Southwestern), Jillian Aldebron (Southeastern), Ebony Harvin (Southern), Tiera Hawkes (Northeastern), Fred Jackson (Northwestern), and Natalie Novak (Northern); non-voting members Kobi Little (NAACP-Baltimore Chapter) and Amy Cruice (ACLU-Md).

Absent: voting member, Marcus Nole (Eastern); non-voting members Baltimore Police Department Commissioner designee, the Fraternal Order of Police, Vanguard Justice Society.

Also present:

Evangula Brown, Investigator, OCR

Tiffany Jones, Investigator, OCR

Rae Parrott, Deputy Director, OCR

John Wesley, Public Information Officer, OCR

Roland Patterson, member, Baltimore Police Civilian Review Board Coalition

Jonathan Johnson, member of the public

I. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:10.

II. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved without amendment or discussion.

III. Review and approval of December 19, 2019 minutes

Minutes were approved without amendment or discussion.

IV. New Complaints

CRB2019-0205. The complainant, a witness, alleges that a single BPD officer falsely arrested her spouse, who is currently incarcerated. The Board voted to conduct an independent investigation.

CRB2019-0206. The complainant is a former BPD officer who is alleging a campaign of harassment by the BPD in retaliation for filing an EEOC complaint for hostile work environment. The Board voted to conduct an independent investigation.

CRB2020-0001. The complainant alleges false arrest and harassment by several BPD officers. The Board voted to conduct an independent investigation.

V. OCR Report – complaint and investigation status

The OCR statistical report is attached. Members noted that 26 completed investigations have been held back by OCR, 17 of which have expired allegations. The excuse for not forwarding them to the Board was that OCR had not yet received the PIB investigation reports for these complaints (note that the PIB report is not used by OCR investigators in the preparation of their reports). OCR agreed to forward all 26 complaint files to the Board and, in the future, send OCR investigations to the Board as soon as they are completed, whether or not a PIB report has been received. This will enable the Board to review the investigation and take appropriate action before the allegations made in the complaint expire. OCR also agreed to send all Blue Team notices (notices of complaints within CRB jurisdiction that are sent to OCR but have not been converted to formal complaints on the unified complaint form) to the Board every Friday; additionally, OCR will forward the list of all civilian complaints received from BPD every Friday for review and response by the CRB Chair and/or Secretary as to whether the allegations are in CRB jurisdiction.

VI. Public Comment

- Roland Patterson – expressed concern over the failure of BPD to submit completed complaint investigations within 90 days of receipt of a complaint, as required by statute. He remarked that the persistent failure of BPD to meet statutory timelines, despite repeated promises and negotiations, *demonstrates the failure of discussions conducted with the BPD by the OCR on the Board’s behalf. He suggested that the CRB retain independent counsel from the Maryland OAG (since the CRB is a state agency) to see how best to resolve this matter.
- Jonathan Johnson – expressed disappointment in the apparent lack of efficacy of the CRB and its lack of “teeth”.

VII. Old Business

The Board decided to table review and approval of the bylaws because of the serious nature of the document and length of provisions to consider. Moreover, the Board felt that the bylaws should be open to stakeholder and public comment before adoption. For these purposes, the Board will schedule a meeting solely dedicated to producing a “finished” draft that can be shared publicly on the website before its regularly scheduled February meeting. The meeting date and place will be posted as soon as arrangements are made.

VIII. New Business

- Board members considered and approved a letter of demands addressed to OCR Director Darnell Ingram that is intended to resolve barriers to CRB performance of its mandated duties. The letter is attached.

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- Marcus Nole, Eastern Division representative, is resigning from the Board for personal reasons. As soon as his resignation is received, the Chair will advise the Mayor's Office on the need to appoint a replacement.
- Amy Cruice presented information on two bills that will be before the 2020 General Assembly related to police accountability. The Board created a legislative subcommittee to handle advocacy with members of the General Assembly on these bills and any other matters that will improve transparency and accountability for police misconduct in the areas of CRB jurisdiction. Advocacy includes, but is not limited to, oral testimony at hearings, written testimony, participation in press conferences organized by coalitions supporting the legislation, and others. The Board appointed George Buntin to chair this subcommittee.
- The Board elected Mel Currie (Southwestern) as CRB Chair for the 2020 term, and Jillian Aldebron (Southeastern) as Secretary for the 2020 term.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.