

INGLEWOOD, CALIFORNIA

Website: www.cityofinglewood.org

Citizen Police Oversight Commission Meeting October 14, 2009 City Council Chambers, Ninth Floor, City Hall Minutes

Members Present:

Chairperson Adrianne Sears
Vice Chairperson Joy Brown-Price
Commissioner Kofi N. Nartey
Commissioner Wayne Spencer
Commissioner Judy Bowles
Commissioner Donald Nicholson
Commissioner Alan Kaplan

Commissioner Gilbert Mathieu

Commissioner Rita Hall

Members Absent:

Commissioner David P. Stewart (excused)

Staff Present:

Mr. Michael D. Falkow, Deputy City Administrator/CIO Ms. Kathy Ares, Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Sears at 6:48 p.m. A quorum was present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Kaplan.

INVOCATION

The invocation was given by Commissioner Hall.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Leslie Cooper, 30-year Inglewood resident and member of Families for Community Safety Campaign read a list of Demands from the Organization.

Ms. Cherise, Member of Families for Community Safety Campaign, stated that she is interested in how the City of Long Beach addressed police accountability. She asked how often the Long Beach Commission has found officers guilty of misconduct and how many officers who were accused of misconduct have been fired since the Long Beach Commission was created.

Ms. Portero, Member of Families for Community Safety Campaign, asked the Executive Director of the Long Beach Citizen Police Complaint Commission, who has the power to hire, fire, and implement discipline of officers, and who has the power to implement recommendations.

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Mr. James, Organizer of Families for Community Safety Campaign, stated that he applauds the Citizen Police Oversight Commission for inviting Ms. Anitra Dempsey, Executive Director, Long Beach Citizen Police Complaint Commission to the meeting. Mr. James asked Ms. Dempsey if there are provisions to prevent former officers from being commissioners, what is the relationship between the Black community and Commission since they have the highest number and proportion of complaints, and what policy changes that the Commission has recommended have actually been implemented.

COMMISSION ADVISOR REPORTS

There were no commission member remarks.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

Discussion by Ms. Anitra Dempsey, Executive Director, Long Beach Citizen Police Complaint Commission (CPCC), as to the structure, function, and practices of the Long Beach CPCC.

Chairperson Sears introduced and read a brief biography of Ms. Anitra Dempsey, Executive Director, Long Beach Citizen Police Complaint Commission (CPCC).

Ms. Anita Dempsey introduced Commissioners of the Long Beach Citizen Police Complaint Commission and read their biographies. Ms. Dempsey distributed handouts and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Long Beach CPCC. Ms. Dempsey stated that the CPCC was created in 1990 by the vote of the Long Beach electorate and is a Charter Commission. The CPCC is comprised of eleven Commissioners. Commissioners represent each of the City's nine council districts, and two at-large are appointed by the Mayor.

The CPCC is housed in the City Manager's Office. The CPCC meets the 2^{nd} Thursday of each month in the Long Beach City Council Chambers at 6:30 p.m.

All Commissioners of the CPCC are required to have fingerprint clearance, an orientation, a ride-along, and annual in-service training. Commissioners can serve a maximum of two two-year terms, and any portion of an unexpired term will not be counted as a term. Commissioners must reside in the City of Long Beach. Ms. Dempsey stated that grounds of removal from the Commission include failure to comply with confidentiality requirements and failure to attend trainings.

Ms. Dempsey further stated that cases including police reports, unit history, call history, and any other evidence, are sent via carrier to the Commissioners one week prior to the meeting. After deliberations, all documents are maintained and subsequently destroyed by staff.

Ms. Dempsey stated that staff accepts complaints via walk-in, phone and referrals from other offices. She further stated that staff conducts personal interviews with the complainant. Interviews with officers are conducted through Internal Affairs.

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Ms. Dempsey discussed the complaint process. She stated that the Commission only accepts community complaints. Community complaints go to the Chief of Police, but cases cannot be closed until they come to the CPCC. CPCC submits its findings for formal complaints to the City Manager. Notices are sent to the complainant when their cases will be heard before the CPCC, and complainants may attend the public meeting.

Ms. Dempsey stated that in the City of Long Beach, the community, government, and law enforcement have trusted the CPCC to conduct its work in a professional, fair, and impartial manner. The CPCC has earned its trust through a firm commitment to the public good, the mission of the agency, and to ethical and professional standards. The CPCC's primary obligation is to the community. She also stated that the CPCC has a good relationship with the Long Beach Police Department.

Ms. Dempsey played a media clip regarding the City of Long Beach CPCC.

Ms. Dempsey answered the following questions from the public:

1. How often has the Commission found officers guilty of misconduct?

The Commission does not find an officer guilty; however, the Commission will sustain an allegation.

2. How many officers accused of misconduct have been fired since the Commission was created?

I do not know how many officers have been fired as a result of the work that the Commission performs or during the time the Commission has done work. Officers have been terminated based on cases that the Commission has seen, as well as administrative cases that the Commission has nothing to do with.

3. Who has the power to hire, fire, and implement discipline of officers?

The Chief of Police and City Manager have that power.

4. Who has the power to implement recommendations?

The Commission, Executive Director, and City Manager.

5. Are there provisions to prevent former officers from being Commissioners?

Yes.

6. What is the relationship between the Black community and the Commission, since they have the highest number and proportion of complaints?

The relationship between the Commission and all members of the community is great.

7. What policy changes that the Commission has recommended have actually been implemented since the Commission was created?

The Commission has various ways to make recommendations, such as through the Commission's Annual Report. However, the Commission does not have to wait until the annual report to make a recommendation.

8. What kind of recommendation does the Commission make?

The Commission has made recommendations regarding bicycles.

9. What starts a CPCC investigation?

Anyone can file a complaint. An investigation can be started by a phone call, or the Commission can receive an anonymous complaint.

Chairperson Sears thanked Ms. Dempsey and the Commissioners for attending the Citizen Police Oversight Commission meeting.

Chairperson Sears asked Ms. Dempsey what was the process for choosing the model for the City of Long Beach Citizen Police Complaint Commission. She also asked how she managed the relationships between the City, Commission, Police Department, and the Police Union.

Ms. Dempsey stated that she was not serving in the position at the time but was informed that the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, and City Attorney came up with the recommendation to have a Commission. A consultant was to go out and look at other models and bring a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council. Various models were reviewed, and a recommendation was made for the Commission to have the model they currently have.

Ms. Dempsey further stated that when it was recommended that she be appointed to the Executive Director position, she requested a meeting with the president of the police officers association.

Chairperson Sears acknowledged Chief Seabrooks' presence at the meeting.

Commissioner Nartey thanked Ms. Dempsey and the CPCC for their attendance at the meeting. He asked Ms. Dempsey if there were any recommendations on some of the challenges that the CPOC is facing, and how can everyone work together.

Ms. Dempsey stated that the City of Long Beach CPCC could not do the work they do without relationships. She stated that the Commission must agree to be on the same page.

Commissioner Kaplan thanked the CPCC for attending the meeting. He asked the CPCC if they would serve on a Commission that has no investigative authority.

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The CPCC Chairperson stated that it would be hard to do the job if you did not have an unbiased investigation to use as a reference.

Commissioner Mathieu thanked Ms. Dempsey and the CPCC for their attendance. He asked if there is a residency requirement for Long Beach Police Officers which states that officers must reside within a reasonable distance from the City.

Ms. Dempsey stated that the officers are not required to reside in the City of Long Beach. She stated that as far as a reasonable distance, she was not certain and would have to consult with their attorneys.

ACTION ITEM

N.A.C.O.L.E. Conference

Chairperson Sears requested the status regarding the request to use funds to attend the N.A.C.O.L.E. Conference scheduled October 31-November 3, 2009.

Mr. Falkow stated that the request was made to the City Administrator to allow the use of the Commission's budget to send several members to the N.A.C.O.L.E. Conference in Austin, Texas. The response was that the members that desire to attend should contact their appointing authority member.

Chairperson Sears requested that the response be placed in writing.

Commissioner Brown-Price asked Mr. Falkow if the Commission made the request by the proper protocol.

Mr. Falkow stated yes.

CLOSED SESSION

The Citizen Police Oversight Commission recessed for closed session at 9:08 p.m. and reconvened at 9:51 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION REPORT OUT

Mr. Falkow stated that closed session was held and directions were given to staff.

STAFF REMARKS

There were no staff remarks.

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COMMISSION MEMBERS REMARKS

Commissioner Nicholson stated that he participated in a ride along with Sergeant Cavazos. He further stated that the ride along was good.

Commissioner Bowles thanked the City of Long Beach CPCC for their attendance and stated that the presentation was interesting.

Commissioner Hall stated that the City of Long Beach CPCC presentation was very informative. She further stated that the CPOC needs to streamline its meetings.

Commissioner Spencer stated that he liked the model for the City of Long Beach CPCC and would like that model for Inglewood.

Vice Chairperson Brown-Price stated that the City of Long Beach CPCC presentation was extremely informative and would like to see Inglewood move toward that model or something similar. She further stated that there are monies in the CPOC's budget, and no one on the Commission should have to pay to attend the N.A.C.O.L.E. conference.

Chairperson Sears thanked the CPOC for their attendance. She stated that the City of Long Beach CPCC presentation was extraordinary. She further stated that Ms. Dempsey has made herself available to the CPOC. As such, if any Commissioners have any questions, she would forward them to Ms. Dempsey so they could be discussed in open session at a CPOC meeting.

Chairperson Sears requested that Mr. Falkow follow-up on the response from City Council in regards to the OIR report.

Mr. Falkow stated that the response to the request was that the document is likely to be withheld on the grounds it is an attorney and client privileged document.

Chairperson Sears requested that the response be placed in writing.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.