



INGLEWOOD, CALIFORNIA  
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**Special Citizen Police Oversight Commission  
Meeting  
September 30, 2009  
City Council Chambers, Ninth Floor, City Hall  
Minutes**

**Members Present:**

Chairperson Adrienne 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 6:36 p.m. A quorum was present.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Nartey.

**INVOCATION**

The invocation was given by Commissioner Spencer.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

It was moved by Commissioner Mathieu and seconded by Commissioner Bowles that the minutes of the July 23, 2009 and August 12, 2009, meetings be approved. The motion was carried.

Chairperson Sears requested that the "Commission Members Remarks" be moved up on the agenda prior to "Commission Advisor Reports"

The Commission concurred.

### **COMMISSION MEMBERS REMARKS**

Commissioner Kaplan welcomed members of the community to the meeting. Commissioner Kaplan read a letter expressing his reasons for contemplating resigning from the Citizen Police Oversight Commission. Commissioner Kaplan expressed his disappointment regarding the Office of the Independent Review's (OIR) Report not being released as promised. He stated that the City Council failing to notify the Citizen Police Oversight Commission that the OIR report was on the City Council agenda at a recent public meeting is beyond any justification. He also stated that the Commission possesses no substantive oversight authority.

Mr. Kaplan further stated that he believes that the commissioners' presence on the Commission remains futile. He said further that he is seriously considering resigning and urges the other Commissioner members to also consider resigning.

Commissioner Mathieu stated that he feels that it is incumbent on the City Council to share the OIR report with the Commission. He further stated that if the report is damaging, the Commission could at least make recommendations. Mr. Mathieu stated that he wants to avoid placing the Inglewood Police Department under a consent decree with the United States Department of Justice because it would be very costly.

Mr. Mathieu stated that the Commission has had a rapport with the police department, however, it has changed. He also stated that it is difficult to understand where the Commission is headed because the bylaws are not being adhered to.

Commissioner Bowles thanked Commissioners Kaplan and Mathieu for their remarks. She also commented that the Commission stands together.

Commissioner Spencer stated that he thought that the Citizen Police Oversight Commission was going to be something solid that the citizens could depend on and that resources would be made available. He stated that the initial promises were made; however, the ordinance was redacted. He further stated that the Commission needs to be given the resources so that the Commission can be respected as an entity.

Commissioner Nartey urged Commissioner Kaplan to remain on the Commission. He stated that when he joined the Commission he immediately felt the frustration of the Commission and addressed it right away. He stated that the frustration was from the Commission not being able to fulfill the Ordinance. He further stated that there are gaps in the Ordinance that keep the Commission from fulfilling the Ordinance. He stated that Commission is a Commission in theory only. He believes that the reason why the relationship with the police department has been smooth is because the Commission is not a threat. He further stated that the relationship does not have to be a hostile relationship; however, if there is no threat of reprimand, the Commission does not pose a threat, and it is easy for the police department and the community to not take the Commission seriously.

Commissioner Nartey stated that the Commission received a last-minute notice of a public meeting, however, they were able to voice their frustration at the meeting.

Commissioner Brown-Price stated that she has been on the Commission since its inception and that the Commission has been led down the wrong paths. She further stated that at this point the Commission has a plan. The Commission has begun placing their concerns in writing so that the Commission's efforts do not go unaddressed. She stated that she is happy with the Chairperson, and the Chairperson is very tenacious and should be commended for her efforts.

Commissioner Brown-Price further stated that the complaint process needs to be more timely so that the Commissions' recommendation can be considered.

*Commissioner Hall arrived at 7:03 p.m.*

Chairperson Sears stated that several members of the Commission have served on the Commission since its inception and that many members were urged to resign because many individuals (including the Commissioners themselves) felt that the Commissioners were wasting their time. She further stated that prior to the Ordinance being established; the first two pages of the Ordinance were redacted. She stated that frustration has come from the lack of authority and communication between the Commission and the City, and the Commission and the Police Department. The lack of transparency has been frustrating among the Commission.

Chairperson Sears stated that she has spoken with the OIR and that the OIR report has been submitted to City Council; however, it has not been produced by the City Council. She further stated that she would be disappointed if the City Council chose not to share the OIR report with the Commission since part of the report specifically addresses the Citizen Police Oversight Commission. She also stated if the City Council chose not to share the entire report, the City Council could share the part that pertains to the Commission.

Commissioner Kaplan asked if he could interrupt. Chairperson Sears granted Commissioner Kaplan's request.

Commissioner Kaplan thanked the Commissioners for their encouragement. He stated that his reason for contemplating resigning is not about frustration or commitment but what the Commission is actually doing or where the Commission is going.

Chairperson Sears resumed her comments. Chairperson Sears stated that she has invited Chief Seabrooks to address the Commission regarding the investigative process. Ms. Sears stated that Chief Seabrooks will be in attendance at the next meeting to share with the Commission what she is attempting to put in place to streamline the investigative process.

Commissioner Spencer suggested that "public comments" be reopened. Chairperson Sears stated that she would reopen "public comments" prior to adjourning for closed session.

### **COMMISSION ADVISOR REPORTS**

Mr. Falkow stated that on behalf of City Administration and all staff members, Mr. Cleveland Brown, Commissioner representing the 1<sup>st</sup> District will be de deeply missed.

Mr. Falkow announced that today completes twenty-three months in the Acting Assistant City Administrator capacity and as the Commission's advisor. He stated he has been the Deputy City Administrator for six months.

Mr. Falkow advised the Commission that he has spoken with Ms. Anitra Demsey, Executive Director of the Long Beach Citizen Police Complaint Commission, and she has accepted the invitation from Chairperson Sears to attend the next scheduled Citizen Police Oversight Commission Meeting on October 14, 2009.

Mr. Falkow reported that the memo on behalf of the Commission was distributed to each member of the City Council, and to date, he has not received a response from any member of the City Council.

Mr. Falkow announced that there will be a Special Meeting of the City Council tomorrow, October 1, 2009, at 1:30 p.m., to conduct interviews for the Assistant City Administrator/Chief Financial Officer position.

Mr. Falkow reported that last night, September 29, 2009, was the last City Council meeting of the Fiscal Year. He also reported that the final version of the proposed Budget was adopted, and it depicts a \$5.3 million structural deficit, which is being balanced with the use of undesignated reserves. He also reported that the City Council gave direction to Administration to begin discussions with all bargaining groups on consensus to filling the gap.

Mr. Falkow distributed agendas for the N.A.C.O.L.E. Conference scheduled October 31-November 3, 2009 in Austin, Texas. Mr. Falkow stated that if Commission members desire to attend the conference, it may require a request on behalf of the Commission to utilize budgetary resources. He also stated that he believes that the request would have to be submitted to the City Administrator, and then the City Administrator would submit the request to City Council.

Mr. Falkow advised the Commission that if any Commissioner is interested in attending the conference he or she would need to contact him individually since the item is not on the agenda to vote upon.

Chairperson Sears advised the Commission that the estimated cost to attend the conference is approximately \$1,300.00 per Commissioner.

Mr. Falkow distributed a City of Inglewood Press Release. Mr. Falkow advised the Commission that on September 16, 2009, the City Council made an official statement regarding the Office of Independent Review and Citizen Police Oversight Commission and it was posted on the City's website and was made available to all media outlets.

Chairperson Sears requested that Mr. Falkow advise the Commission of any press releases involving the Commission.

Mr. Falkow advised the Commission that he was not made aware of the press release until he received a phone call from Chairperson Sears.

Chairperson Sears stated that she will be working with the Public Information Officer to rectify the matter. Chairperson Sears suggested that Commissioners interested in receiving press releases from the City of Inglewood should get on the Public Information Officer's distribution list.

### **DISCUSSION ITEM**

**Discussion regarding the Council statement concerning the effectiveness of the Citizen Police Oversight Commission and their intent to form a community-based blue ribbon panel that will be charged with providing recommendations on restructuring the Commission.**

Chairperson Sears stated that several Commissioners attended a special meeting and spoke about the Commission, the level of frustration, and the fact that the Commission is ineffective and in need of an overhaul. Chairperson Sears also stated that the City Council agreed that the Commission in its current form is ineffective and needs to be strengthened.

Chairperson Sears suggested that the Commission place in writing a request to the City Council that the Blue Ribbon Panel be created within thirty days.

Commissioner Nartey stated that a time frame needs to be set for the formation of the Blue Ribbon Panel. He further stated that an additional time frame be set for revisions or recommendation so that an effective Commission can move forward with goals and a revised Ordinance.

Vice Chairperson Brown-Price stated that she attended the special meeting, and staff was directed to research on the number of members that would serve on the Blue Ribbon Panel and their mission. Staff is to report to City Council in thirty days with their findings.

Commissioner Nicholson suggested that students from UCLA or USC be recruited and the community be mobilized to demand that something be done in regard to the Commission.

Commissioner Nartey stated that in moving forward with the Blue Ribbon Panel, he does not want the Commission to lose focus on the value of the Commission's input. He stated that the Commission cannot turn to someone who has not been involved and expect them to know what reform is necessary to make the Commission more effective. The Commission can convey exactly what is needed in writing without turning to someone else for additional guidance

Commissioner Nartey further stated that the community should be involved, but in their involvement, the community must be made aware by the Commission of the needs of the Commission.

Chairperson Sears opened the floor for Public Comments.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. James, Organizer of Families for Community Safety Campaign, commented that he agrees that the Commission does not have power. He also commented that the community feels betrayed by the rampant murders and misconduct that has gone unchecked in the City and the untold shooting that has gone without accountability. He stated that it has created a level of fear and distrust in the community.

Ms. Leslie Cooper, Inglewood Resident and Organizer of Families for Community Safety Campaign, commented that she believes that the Commission needs more power. She also commented that she is displeased with the City Council not sharing the OIR report with the public. She stated that the City of Inglewood must give its Citizens Police Oversight Commission the power to coordinate and initiate investigations concerning police shootings.

Ms. Dica, Inglewood Resident and Member of Families for Community Safety Campaign, commented that there are community members willing to organize to help make a change. She commented that they had received surveys from over 200 persons and over fifty percent said that they would like to see change in the police department. She commented that the community is here to support the Commission as long as the Commission is willing to make a change.

Mr. Christian read Demand #4 from Families for Community Safety Campaign. "The City of Inglewood must provide counseling, emotional and psychological support services, and financial assistance to families whose loved ones are killed by Inglewood Police Officers."

Ms. Rogers read Demand #5 from Families for Community Safety Campaign. "The City of Inglewood must go on record in supporting the repeal of the California Police Officer Bill of Rights."

Ms. Portea read Demand #6 from Families for Community Safety Campaign. "The City of Inglewood must go on record in pressuring the District Attorney to be more aggressive in prosecuting police officers who shoot people unjustifiably."

Ms. Leslie Cooper, Inglewood Resident, read Demand #3 from Families for Community Safety Campaign. "The City of Inglewood must hire a truly independent agency-not the Office of Independent Review-to conduct investigations on police shootings."

Chairperson Sears thanked the public for their attendance and comments. Chairperson Sears extended an invitation to the public to attend the next scheduled Citizen Police Oversight Commission Meeting. She announced that Ms. Anitra Dempsey of Long Beach Citizen Police Complaint Commission will be in attendance.

**CLOSED SESSION**

The Citizen Police Oversight Commission recessed for closed session at 8:05 p.m. and reconvened at 9:00 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSION REPORT OUT**

Mr. Falkow stated that closed session was held and that there was nothing to report out.

**STAFF REMARKS**

There were no staff remarks.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.