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Public Safety Board

January 16, 2025 (3:00 PM) – City Council Chambers
Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Members: Councilor & Chair Amanda Grady Sexton, Councilor Jim Schlosser, Natch Greyes, Councilor Jennifer Kretovic, Jessica Eskeland, Councilor Jeff Foote, Drew Biemer

Staff: CPD Intern Sarah Curran, CPD Social Worker Nicole Petrin, Deputy Police Chief Barret Moulton, Deputy Police Chief Steve Smagula, Fire Chief John Chisholm, Deputy Fire Chief Elisa Folsom, Deputy Fire Chief Mark Hebert

Guests: Mayor Byron Champlin

Minute Taker: Serina Chase

Welcome from the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 3:00pm by Councilor & Chair Amanda Grady Sexton.

Introductions

Introductions were made by attending councilors, members, and guests.

Approval of December 19, 2024 meeting minutes

Motion made by Councilor Schlosser to approve the December 19, 2024 meeting minutes. Jessica Eskeland seconded. Motion Passed unanimously.

Revisiting the Application and Reporting Process for Non-Profits Funded by the City of Concord to Support the Unhoused Population

The PSAB revisited and addressed the need for better coordination and reporting among nonprofit agencies funded to end homelessness in Concord.

After discussion, the Board reached a consensus to prioritize ensuring that shelter referrals from the Human Services Department are being met, and that City dollars are specifically going toward sheltering those from the City of Concord.



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Motion made by Natch Greyes to encourage City staff to review the City's application and reporting process for nonprofits who apply for funds from the City for the purpose of reducing homelessness in Concord. Jessica Eskeland seconded.

The following key points were discussed:

- Councilor Schlosser sought additional clarification regarding Non-Profit funding, and also asked whether City staff have used a grading or point system to evaluate previous funding applications. He highlighted that reviewing the past evaluation criteria could provide valuable insights for the City in assessing future applications.
- Councilor Foote emphasized the need to clearly define measurable outcomes and the criteria that Non-Profits must meet in both the application and reporting processes.
- Councilor and Chair Grady Sexton confirmed that the earlier motion helps prevent the Board from going in circles and offers a clear directive to the City. By endorsing the motion, the PSAB encourages the City to explore alternative solutions and supports City Manager Aspell in prioritizing the issue, enabling him to dedicate the necessary time and resources to find effective solutions as quickly as possible.
- The costs and challenges associated with the City providing temporary hotel-based shelter to unhoused individuals were also discussed. Mayor Champlin confirmed that while the City had budgeted funds to cover these hotel expenses, it exceeded that budget by approximately \$200,000 in FY24.

The members of the Public Safety Advisory Board voted on the proposed motion, which passed unanimously with no opposing votes.

Proposed Modular Traffic Barrier Policy – Fire Chief Chisholm

Fire Chief Chisholm introduced the modular traffic barrier system, which was purchased through a competitive grant to protect public roadways from vehicle ramming during outdoor events. The barrier system is designed to be a less-than-lethal stop and can be easily operated by one person.

Chief Chisholm continued by noting that City Manager Aspell suggested presenting the draft policy to the PSAB for review, allowing members to provide recommendations before sending it to the Council ahead of the upcoming February meeting. Given the tight timeline for the City Council to accept the terms, conditions, and funding for this grant, the City Manager had asked



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for the draft policy to be proactively brought to the Public Safety Board, as he anticipated it would likely be referred here.

Finally, Chief Chisholm provided a brief summary of the draft policy for the system, which outlines guidelines for storage, deployment, and usage during city-sponsored events. He then opened the floor to the PSAB for comments.

The following concerns and recommendations were raised:

- Natch Greyes suggested encouraging the use of the system during high-traffic events and non-city-sanctioned events.
- Drew Biemer inquired whether the system would impede the ingress or egress of emergency vehicles. Chief Chisholm confirmed that it can be easily operated to allow access at any time.
- Deputy Chief Moulton suggested considering smaller bollard systems for smaller events, similar to those used in New York City.
- Councilor Schlosser recommended giving the City Manager latitude to flex the policy based on staff costs and other considerations.
- Councilor Foote suggested that, at the upcoming meeting, it would be beneficial for Chief Chisholm to cite examples where the barriers had been deployed and proven effective.

Drew Biemer made a motion to accept the draft policy as presented by Fire Chief Chisholm, with the recommendation to cite examples where the barriers had been deployed and proven effective. Natch Greyes seconded the motion, adding that he would like to see the Police and Fire Departments return in the future with barrier options for smaller events.

The members of the Public Safety Advisory Board voted on the proposed motion, which passed unanimously with no opposing votes.

Updates from the Concord Police and Fire Departments

- Nicole Petrin explained to the Board, the purpose of the upcoming Point in Time Count, where staff and volunteers will go into the community to interview individuals and determine who slept outside the night prior. She emphasized that this count is crucial for data collection and statistical purposes.



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- Chief Hebert shared that recently, an unhoused gentleman had been sleeping in a park adjacent to Fire Administration, however he has since been transported to a safer location.
- Jessica Eskeland inquired about the frequency of fires in homeless encampments. Chief Hebert responded that there have recently been a couple fires in encampments, involving more complex, multi-level structures. Chief Chisholm noted that these situations can be especially challenging, as many encampments are located deep in the woods, making access difficult.

Future Agenda Planning

- Update from the Subcommittee on Homelessness.
- Invite a representative from the City of Manchester to speak to the PSAB about the social services that Manchester provides to its unhoused community.
- April – Annual reports from Police and Fire.
- Create a first responder hiring and retention report – Drew Biemer.
- Reach out to City Public Information Officer, Stefanie Breton to highlight the extraordinary work being done by both the Police and Fire Departments, as well as the Social Work program, in order to assist with first responder recruitment and retention efforts.
- Discuss and create a plan for increasing public safety services in line with the amount of development planned in the City of Concord over the next three years

Jessica Eskeland made a motion to reach out to City Public Information Officer, Stefanie Breton, to highlight the extraordinary work being done by both the Police and Fire Departments, as well as the Social Work program, in order to assist with first responder recruitment and retention efforts. Councilor Foote seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion.

Chief Chisholm shared that he had inquired about the plan for increasing public safety services in line with the amount of development planned in the City of Concord over the next three years. He expressed that this is a concern he feels strongly about and believes this forum is the appropriate place to begin more formally investigating it. He would like to add this topic to the discussion moving forward.



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Adjournment

Councilor Kretovic made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jessica Eskeland seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:12pm.