

Police Advisory Committee Meeting 10/7 (7:10pm to 8:45pm)

Q AND A SESSION/DISCUSSION RE THE POLICE (POLICE NOT PRESENT)

Present: Annie Crane, Erica Linden, Susan Smith, Melanie MacDonald, Jackie Smith, Patrenia Owens, Margay Blackman, Dan Brockway, Karen LoBracco, Bob LeSuer, Bill Plews, Howard Ward (by Zoom)

Dan—presentations have been informative but all speakers were insiders in the police system. Will we hear from outside of that bubble (folks working on reform, activists)?

Answer: Yes, Men of color from the college, the high school diversity club, Dr. Torrence Jones (clergy/phD in Education, focus on race and leadership)

Bob —what about hearing from some local people, e.g. the Spencerport school district administrator who was part of the Daniel Prude protests and admonished by the Spencerport school district. Jackie—disagreed. He was disrespectful to our police, don't know how much he would add. Other people, activists would have a clearer message. Bob—but what is an activist's role?—one's disrespect is not another's disrespect.

Howard—Bring in area clergy. There's a diverse group of clergy helping people on both sides of the fence (law/activists). What's the role of clergy in helping law enforcement understand racial injustice. Dan—what about pastor Myra Brown from Spiritus Christi? Margay—what about a small panel of clergy instead of just one speaker?

Karen—There's a lot of energy around tweaking the edges, but there are some strong voices saying that we need to start over again. It's a disservice if we don't consider those voices.

Bob—how do we put the Executive Order 203 in practice for our situation. What about microaggressions; is brutality a threat? Jackie—let's think of everything that could come up.

Bob—Is there a way to have public input before public hearing?

Answer: Yes. We can do that.

Karen—some kind of engagement—question of the week/month in the Suburban News, Village Facebook page?

Bill—as much as we've heard from police, I still wonder, what are the personal opinions of members of police force about what has happened across the county.

Answer: we had an inkling of that in a 4 hour workshop Rev. Marlow Washington and Dr. Torrance Jones held with the entire police department this summer. They (young members) spoke pretty freely, in part because of the skill of the workshop leaders and the respect they

showed for the uniform and because the BPD were all together. They saw minority/diversity recruitment as a problem because of civil service test results dictating hiring hierarchy and expressed the “all lives matter” perspective.

Melanie—There are a life time of microaggressions that have built up over a lifetime among police. There’s only one person in charge of mental health for all the community (Kim Butler) who has now lost her job. Someone who can address broader mental health issues is needed. How often do the police interact positively with people with mental health challenges and people of color? Mentioned the DOT project—how many positive interactions students have with a faculty member. Can we look at positive contact police have with constituents in a similar way?

Karen—There are multiple truths that we need to be aware of. What the police have shared re policing is true, but there are other realities.

Dan— I've lived in multiple neighborhoods (urban and suburban) around Philadelphia and Los Angeles, but I've never seen the level of constant police presence that we have in Brockport. Could be the fact that we're a small town, have multiple police departments with the college and Sweden overlapping, and that I live so close to the college -- but I see police officers in their cars almost every time I leave my house (on Utica St). I walk to work in the morning and they're parked by the Alumni House. I come home in the evening and they're in my neighbor's driveway watching for folks to run the stop sign. I do a 3 mile walk around the college campus and school district every morning at 5:30am and see 2 or 3 cop cars along the way. Not an evening goes by without the police pulling someone over on Utica St right in front of my house, lights flashing, sometimes with the siren going. It's even happened multiple times in a single evening. Scares the shit out of my kids every time. None of this makes me feel safe. I think back to the chief's comments in our very first meeting about how the officers are required to drive up and down each street multiple times per shift, and honestly, I think it's too much. I'd like the Brockport PD to be a bit less visible, personally. For what we pay in village taxes and how much time they seem to have to drive up and down my block, I wonder if it's overkill.

Margay—Indeed there are multiple “truths” or perspectives. Many longtime residents in Brockport are accustomed to the police presence and like to see it. In 2017, campaigning door to door, one resident complained about the high cost of the police and noted that she never saw them on her street and wondered why not. Also, much of the pulling vehicles over on village streets has to do with drivers who run stop signs. The police often do special details at trouble spots (Utica Street for one, and the 4-way stop at Park Avenue and State Street where I was hit by a car on my bike this August when I had the right of way). Many people also react very positively to seeing the police out of their cars and walking streets—community policing.

How do you make community policing *for* the community, how do you make them less threatening?

Bob— it's really worth reflecting on Dan's perspective. There are times when people don't want the police around. Similar to the analogy of having faculty around students—an established hierarchy. Putting on the uniform is necessary for the job. You can't/shouldn't get too comfortable with them. Provide police with other ways of providing assistance

Mentioned Coffee with the chief.

Bill—mentioned former immigration judge who is trying to put together a course for police force on dealing with undocumented immigrants

Karen—police may feel in the middle of things.

Jackie: What do they have to do by law, what is discretionary? We need to understand some of this. Referenced a presentation at NYS Association of Counties on Executive Order 203 She followed up providing the slide which spelled out the essential components of the plan for addressing EO 203, below:



Any type of report—how many other crimes than house checks? A breakdown of what types of calls they get. What types/times of stops/arrests. Perhaps this should be a report that should be made. Where are hot spots, etc. Do they know the hot spots?

Erica—from now on will be some additional data gathered for traffic stops per State requirement

Karen—what I would like, more reports, more numbers, more data. Last annual report is from a long time ago. When is force used, how often, what kind?

Annie—keep track of their use of force. (Margay—internally they may be but it's not shared)

Need de-escalation training and practices—what are they?

Orlando (vis email)—no real issues with BPD. Would like more outreach with school system. Doesn't understand purpose of the committee.

Jackie—re the training session. Who are these people, why did they come in front of us?

They were recommended by Howard Ward who worked with Lee Struble at RIT

Karen—recruitment—are other communities saying same thing about re civil service requirements?

Annie—how does university police training differ from the training our police receive?

Bob—(summarizes his position). Not convinced police force is meeting needs of our non-white residents, but I don't know if cause of that problem is my ignorance of what they are doing; whether they've had inadequate training to address needs of residents; do they have the resources to do the job, or is it because of the lack of diverse representation on the police force. The problem here is data collection—we don't have the data. Brockport's diversity issue: our relationship between police and migrant workers and with minorities (students/faculty/staff) who are here for the academic year. We are ignorant of any models or examples. May want to look at case studies of other college communities.

Bill—There is no other organization like the ecumenical council in Brockport.

Melanie—Oak Orchard Health has a good relationship with the migrant community and may be a good model. Bill noted that he does work with Oak Orchard.

Bill—Western NY Coalition of Farmworker Serving Agencies.

Erica—Howard has been talking to Chief Cuzzupoli and plans to provide diversity training to our BPD

Karen—re relations with UP. Opportunities for conversations.

Jackie—Interest in having diversity group from the college as well as the high school here to talk about police.

What are the resources the police use—e.g. FIT—and other outreach programs. What about dealing with the homeless. What is the police relationship to them.

Erica—mentioned the case of a recent homeless college student that the police department and village government dealt with. We have no facilities for the homeless. Nearest is Rochester.