



HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
Special Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams
Thursday, November 5, 2020
6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

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AGENDA

1. Call to Order – Chair Aja King – 6:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call/Attendance –Staff Liaison Wokie Freeman-Gbogba – 6:02 p.m.
3. Approval of Agenda – All – 6:04 p.m.
4. **Approval of October 15, 2020 Minutes** – All – 6:05 p.m.
5. Recognize Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC) members present – Chair Aja King – 6:07 p.m.
6. **Discussion about Proposed Preventative Strategies for Policing and Community Engagement** (Developed by Staff) – Brooklyn Park City Manager Jay Stroebel, Police Chief Craig Enevoldsen, Recreation and Parks Director Jody Yungers – 6:08 p.m.
7. Determine Next Steps – Chair Aja King – 6:48 p.m.
8. Adjournment – All – 7:00 p.m.

Brooklyn Park

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

DRAFT MINUTES

Date of Meeting: October 15, 2020

City Hall Facility: Virtual Meeting

Time Began: 6:04 p.m.

Time Adjourned: 8:01 p.m.

Meeting Attendance—Commissioners							
Member	District	Present		Member	District	Present	
		Yes	No			Yes	No
Thomas Brooks	West	X		Mark Hostetler	West	X	
Kate Walton	East		X	Christian Eriksen	At-large	X	
Nausheena Hussain	East	X		Cindy Shevlin-Woodcock	Central	X	
Minn Wang	Central	X		Scott Volltrauer	At-Large	X	
Aja King	At-large	X		Open	Youth		
Wokie Freeman-Gbogba City Staff Liaison		X		Lisa Jacobson	Council Member Liaison	X	

Meeting called to order by Chair Aja King and attendance taken by Staff Liaison Wokie Freeman-Gbogba.

Commissioner Eriksen moved to approve the agenda. Motion seconded by Commissioner Brooks. Motion approved.

Commissioner Hostetler moved to approve the minutes from September 23, 2020. Motion seconded by Commissioner Eriksen. Motion approved.

Acknowledge Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC) members present – None because the MAC is meeting at the same time this evening.

Discuss Report from Recommendations Subcommittee – Commissioners Thomas Brooks and Christian Eriksen

Criteria used were: Ease of implementation, minimal financial cost, but potentially measurable, non-controversial

Items recommended for presentation on Nov. 16 with discussion.

- Advocate for community policing. This would need to be expanded or fleshed out. What this means is police officers are assigned with a beat (that get to know the community). A friendly amendment – Define community policing in Brooklyn Park. Possibly, as BPPD to define community-oriented policing and what BPPD is doing in this arena. Maybe another round of engagement with the police about community policing. What are the strategic plans and partnerships? The RFP will measure this. NICJR addressed it also. Should the commission wait for results of RFP? Maybe recommend that the Council get familiar with NICJR. Previous conversation acknowledged that the BPPD does a lot of engagement with youth. There seemed to be less focus on adults
- Expand relationship building opportunities between officers and youth.
- Review funding for mental health team.
- Support ongoing mental health training for police officers, including options beyond week-long initial training. Issues with limited capacity. Looking for additional training opportunities through community

partners. What special topics are specific to our community like “trauma in immigrant/refugee community”

- Develop an inclusive communications system to build community awareness (especially in crisis situations). The HRC acknowledges that any crisis situation could take place at any time.
- Clarity on HRC and MAC job description (especially as it relates to police-community relations). Something that the HRC has discussed for additional definition and clarity (identifying parameters) for boards and community. The HRC doesn't want to work within the gray area. For example, additional steps need to take place with bias complaints
- Improve and increase de-escalation training with an emphasis on culturally appropriate procedures.
- Implement crisis response team. This item is already in process by the Chief, CM Jacobson and HRC chair
- Add a recommendation to “address the issue of perceptions about police through strategic communications and public relations”

How does this list of recommendations relate to the full workplan? There are a lot of items in the workplan that have value and would be effective. Some items from the workplan need additional research and data. Need the results from the RFP that would provide more information.

An item not addressed on the draft is the trust issue. That's not going to go away without doing something specific. Can there be a communications/marketing campaign to build good will and positive public relations? It's a perception issue that the police don't care. We need to have a plan.

One thought was to potentially add an item to clarify and improve the bias complaint process.

As a commission that meets once or twice a month, there's only so much that the commission can do. It will be limited. The Council asked for recommendations to the City and BPPD, not what the HRC can do.

This should be an actionable priority list. The consensus was to remove the first item from the list.

Select HRC Representatives for Human Resources Manager Interviews and RFP for Police Evaluation Selection – Chair Aja King

Commissioner Brooks will be available for the first-round interviews (November 12, 1 to 5 pm and November 13, 8 to 5 pm).

Chair King will be available for second-round interviews (November 20, 8 to 5 pm).

Chair King will be available to evaluate RFP proposals.

Review Draft Community Engagement and Communications Plan to build trust with Brooklyn Park Police – Staff Liaison Wokie Freeman-Gbogba shared the draft Community Engagement and Communications Plan, as well as the Brooklyn Park Police Department (BPPD) Community Engagement Guide. Looking at the BPPD Engagement Guide, the commissioners are interested to know which activities are active and how often (frequency), success rate for the programs? What else would the department do with more resources? When was the last time they evaluated to see what's working? It would be interesting to know from the community perspective what the impact is or what community even know about these items? Who in the community could give testimonials about the engagement? What programs are still strong, which ones need to be discontinued?

Look at strategies: What happens with the tracking and investigating of misconduct and other tracking?

BPPD leaders want the HRC to weigh in on things like: Traffic stops are demoralizing the African American community. Do we stop doing them? Is the HRC ok with some crime and we'll stop disproportionately policing African Americans. We over-police African Americans now. Black people more likely to be victims as well.

What's community's role? How can they help? This was a theme from the listening sessions. BPPD don't know what we don't know.

The long-term solution is building relationships that are mutually respectful and trustful. Until we build a relationship with someone and has that trust, we can abuse that relationship. We need to potentially look at our programs through that lens. As long as there is a power dynamic, it's challenging to have a mutual relationship. For ex. the HRC previous chair wanted to have a BBQ with police and community. What could that look like? They would pro

The commission believes the City has to talk about racism. They would like to see the BPPD admit that racism exists and that we are working to eliminate it.

Determine Next Steps – Chair Aja King

Chair King will be presenting the report to the City Council

Finalized list of items recommended for presentation on Nov. 16

- Work with researchers as a part of the Police Evaluation process.
- Expand relationship building opportunities between officers and youth.
- Review funding for mental health team.
- Support ongoing mental health training for police officers, including options beyond week-long initial training.
- Develop an inclusive communications system to build community awareness (especially in crisis situations).
- Clarity on HRC and MAC job description (especially as it relates to police-community relations)
- Improve and increase de-escalation training with an emphasis on culturally appropriate procedures.
- Implement crisis response team.
- Address the issue of perceptions about police, particularly for BIPOC community members, through strategic communications and public relations

City Council Liaison Report

Council Member Lisa Jacobson thanked the commissioners for the additional work. The Council was very supportive of the RFP. She would like to have the BPPD look at the long list of Community Engagement activities and evaluate them. November 16 is important. There is pressure to come in with a 0% budget.

City Staff Report

Staff Liaison Wokie Freeman-Gbogba talked about the Community Forum on Race – Wednesday, November 18 at 6:30 pm (virtual). The theme is around Racial Healing.

She reminded commissioners that the Mayor proclaimed October 2020 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month in City of Brooklyn Park, as requested by the HRC. Pick up purple light bulbs to change out your porch lights and bring awareness to domestic violence, if you have not already.

Old Business – None

New Business – None

Commissioner Eriksen moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Brooks. Motion approved.

Minutes respectfully submitted by City Staff Liaison Wokie Freeman-Gbogba.

Proposed Preventative Strategies for Policing and Community Engagement
(Generated by City of Brooklyn Park Staff)

Desired outcome of session:

List of staff recommendations for:

- 1) “upstream”/“pre-911” preventative strategies
- 2) “post-911”/after the fact strategies

Critical questions needing to be answered:

- What are we really trying to fix?
- What are our expectations?
- What does success look like?

Discussion on root causes that cause distrust of Police with Black/Brown Communities:

- Battling negative perceptions for POC
- Systemic racism and poverty
- System failure (primarily county examples)
- Lack of trust
- Over policing
- Fighting negative national narratives
 - But people in these communities also still want the police to help
- Cops are always the bad guys
 - Cops are having to respond to many social ills

Additional Ideas for Solutions (Mostly new)

Pre-911

- Targeted community engagement strategies for African American community
- Officer well being
- Public relations campaign for what Brooklyn Park is doing
- Street outreach and violence interrupter programs
- Address racial bias at the community/neighborhood level
- SPIDR Tech- Customer Service Survey (community input for continuous improvement of police services)
- Focus on holistic solutions (economic inclusion, stable housing, etc.) to disrupt the violence in African American communities (beyond policing)
- Stipends to community organizations for proactive community engagement
- Stipends to hold an “African American Police Academy”
- Restorative justice options for misdemeanor crimes

Post-911

- Community Response Unit
- Response with “right professionals” for the situation and for optimal resolution
- Diversion and alternative pathways partnership with the county (*post-meeting add*)
- Mental health assessment of arrestees at Brooklyn Park jail (*post-meeting add*)