

Northampton Policing Review Commission  
Policies and Services Subcommittee Agenda  
Tuesday January 26,2021  
**7PM-8:30PM**  
Remote Meeting

**Join the Remote Meeting:**

<https://zoom.us/j/98023593250?pwd=dm5Sbmp5NDVSYmNNc1owUFpSYXQzZz09>

**Meeting ID:** 980 2359 3250 **Passcode:** 618690

**Or by telephone, call:** +1 929 436 2866 US

1. Call to Order by meeting chair, Nick Fleisher
  - a. Announcement of Zoom Recording
  - b. Roll Call
  - c. Approval of Minutes
2. Welcome new member Kris Banks
3. Police Chief -Discussion of questions and planning to meet
4. Review complaint procedure
5. New Business
6. Proposed Agenda for next meeting
7. Adjourn

## **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Nick Fleisher at 7:03 PM.

## **ROLL CALL:**

<b>Nick Fleisher</b>	<b>present</b>
<b>David Hoose</b>	<b>present</b>
<b>Elizabeth Barajas-Roman</b>	<b>Arrived at 7:07</b>
<b>Nnamdi Pole</b>	<b>present</b>
<b>Cynthia Suopis</b>	<b>present</b>

## **ANNOUNCEMENT OF ZOOM RECORDING**

Commissioner Nick Fleisher made an announcement that this meeting was being recorded for the public record. The recording will be available on Northampton Open Media, as well as, the City of Northampton website.

## **Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 12, 2020**

Commissioner Nnamdi Pole moved to approve the meeting minutes from December 12, 2020.

Commissioner David Hoose seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minute passed.

The commissioners discussed how to help the women on the committee feel heard, as well as ways to make communication more accessible and sustainable.

## **2. Welcome new member Kris Banks**

Commissioner Nick Fleisher said Kris Banks decided to join the Outreach committee instead of the Policing Policies & Services committee.

## **3. New Business**

Commissioner Cynthia Suopis discussed the new commission timeline.

Commissioner Nnamdi Pole said he felt in objection to more inefficient time. He said in addition to the two hour meetings once per week, he's interested in a more thoughtful way of using their time which would make it easier for him to sign on. He wondered what processes will be put in place to ensure the time is used wisely.

Commissioner Cynthia Suopis said she and Commissioner Dan Cannity committed to getting to the final goal and getting a general consensus. She said she sees a general direction

happening which leads toward abolition and that there needs to be rational, documentation, steps, as well as acknowledging this work is ongoing. She said Commissioner Dan Cannity brings an incredible skill set. She said there might need to be a hard boundary around time.

Commissioner Elizabeth Barajas-Roman thanked Commissioner Cynthia Suopis and Commissioner Dan Cannity for their work. She said she feels confident about having a direction for the time spent and that the new timeline makes sense.

Commissioner Nick Fleisher asked if this timeline changes the committee's direction or immediate thoughts about the committee.

Commissioner David Hoose said this committee has overlapped so much with the Alternative committee and he's unsure how to avoid that. He said there are things the committee has not yet talked about that they should talk about, for instance body cameras. He said he sent a letter to the co chairs calling for the disbanding of the committees. He suggested making sure the committee covers all of the bases. He said maybe the hardest one is policy regarding street disturbances in terms of when it is appropriate for police to respond.

Commissioner Namdi Pole responded to Commissioner David Hoose and stated it sounded like he is advocating for the committee to continue.

Commissioner David Hoose said he located a law professor who is writing an article for the Stanford Law Review talks about how to get the police out of law enforcement. He said he would like him to address the subcommittee or at a public hearing.

Commissioner Nick Fleisher suggested talking about speakers during new business. He asked for any suggestions on how the committee can cover the main points and wondered if it would involve delegating individual work?

Commissioner Cynthia Suopis said she thinks it's important to think about the ending point. She said there's been a lot of documentation already sent to the commission that can honor over David's suggestion. She said the committee should be in the beginning of the wrap up process.

Commissioner Nnamdi pole said the subcommittee isn't done with getting an accurate picture of the NPD. He said the committee hasn't heard in a thoughtful way how the NPD would defend themselves.

Commissioner Elizabeth Barajas Roman said hearing from the Chief of Police and getting the responses to the questions is information gathering, which is different from preventing a case. She said this information will allow the committee to be able to paint a picture of what might be next steps and what the recommendations could be. She said it's not about the chief defending whether the department is good at policing, it's about whether or not the committee thinks they should be. She said this is not offering to give the chief an opportunity to defend herself and the NPD, as if the outcome will tip because of their

responses. She said because of the overwhelming response the commission has been getting at the meetings and over email, it's clear the public doesn't want police involvement. She said the public is calling for a reduction of the footprint. She said that's the job of governance; ultimately the commission needs to respond to the overwhelming public response.

Commissioner David Hoose said there has been language about overwhelming support for abolition. He said "overwhelming", in terms of people who have voiced their concerns at the meetings. He said 80% of the public will say the commission is nuts if it tries to defund the police. He said his biggest fear is that the commission will end up with a sociology paper as its final report. He said the commission needs to add very specific plans.

Commissioner Elizabeth Barajas-Roman said she is in agreement with getting down to specifics. She said it's interesting to hear 80% of people feel that way. She said she thinks it's startling that for a community saying it's liberal, the people the city chooses to listen to is startling. She said Commissions have the same type of people coming to give public comment. She said a few people come and they get their voices heard, so their requests get passed. She said that happens over and over. She said for this commission, hundreds of people have spoken their viewpoint, and we dismiss these voices because they are not the right voice. She said this is the most amount of public participation seen on commissions, and somehow they're getting dismissed, or the commission tries to locate the "large number of people we haven't heard, who have the true voices." She said the commission is hearing the voices in a more robust and represented way than many other commissions have received in this community.

Commissioner Nick Fleisher asked Commissioner David Hoose, if he knew there was going to be an alternative entity likely to evolve from this commission ( the commission don't know what that entity would be and alternate could mean an additional or substitute entity), but if you knew there was going to be an entity, could some of your questions be forwarded to be developed overtime by that entity. He asked, would it help if the committee knew someone was going to continue this work and that their work was to aim it and drive it in the right direction, would that help with his process. He said knowing that would help himself. He said he feels like some things need to change and some things need to be done not by the NPD.

Commissioner David Hoose said the police won't be abolished on March 18. He said the city needs to commit beyond this commission and there needs to be another commission to implement this or there needs to be a committee of city council. He said he thinks it's important the committee say, you haven't thought about a world without it, but here's how it works. He said the city would create different departments, civil authorities without guns who would enforce minor traffic situations without getting into granular detail.

Commissioner Nnamdi Pole- said the committee wants the product to be taken seriously. He said he feels obligated to keep the police out of schools. He said he also feels an obligation to recognize concern from parents who feel more safe having a police officer. He said he feels

obligated to say something to those parents and to recognize school shooting concerns. He said there is a way this can be addressed while being thoughtful about needs of the community getting met by reforms the committee proposes.

Commissioner Cynthia Suopis said she envisions the report having sociological pieces in order to help make the case. She said the outreach committee is doing interesting work documenting cases, but there will also be other parts that will have varying levels of granular. She said, to Commissioner Elizabeth's point, she thinks it comes down to where each committee member stands with this. She said this work will take years, but it's important to establish this structure. She said the report has to be succinct, tangible, and make the case. She said bringing the chief in won't tip things one way or another.

### **3. Police Chief -Discussion of questions and planning to meet**

Commissioner Nnamdi Pole said he is looking for her explanation. He said it is up to the committee what it wants to believe or what the committee finds useful.

Commissioner David Hoose said he is looking forward to cross examining the chief. He said he doesn't want to feel constrained to fixed questions and that it seems fair to tell her about the general areas of questioning..

Commissioner Nnamdi Pole said the committee can tell her the questions and also noted there may be follow ups. He said he is looking for her to bring her best available answer.

Commissioner Cynthia Suopis said she wants this process to be respectful and that none of this will be a surprise to her.

Commissioner Elizabeth Barajas-Roman said the committee doesn't need to shorten the list in any way. She said the committee can send them as is, and explain that these are all of the topics we could address but there won't be enough time to go through all of them.

The commissioners discuss the format of how they will ask the questions.

Commissioner Nick Flesher wondered if someone could join him in reviewing the questions to reduce duplication and to get the questions as focused as possible.

Commissioner David Hoose agreed to help with the project.

## **7. New Business**

Commissioner Nick Fleisher asked the committee whether it would like to talk about the potential speaker on traffic tonight.

Commissioner David Hoose said he was going to suggest a public hearing but that if people don't want him to come it's fine with him.

Commissioner Cynthia Suopis suggested perhaps the committee can view the article.

Commissioner Nick Fleisher said he wanted to bring up that the commissioners lost a member of the commission and asked if anyone had anything they wanted to say about former Commissioner Lois's Ahrens resignation.

Commissioner Cynthia Suopis said it's not just Lois' resignation but, it's two others as well. She said to note the majority of the people who are speaking on the commission are men and that there's no way the commission can get around that. She said she wants people to note that this is the kind of commission we have now.

Commissioner Nick Fleisher said it's important to say and important we remain aware. He said there may be more to say and if anyone wants to bring it up the committee can do that.

Commissioner Nnamdi Pole suggested the committee could think creatively about how to include the voices of those who have left the commission, like writing commentary on the final report.

Commissioner Cynthia Suopis said this can be addressed at the full commission meeting.

Commissioner Nick Fleisher said it's a significant loss.

## **6. Proposed Agenda for next meeting**

The commissioners discussed the proposed agenda for the next meeting.

Commissioner Nick Fleisher suggested finalizing the invitation and procedure for the police chief, reviewing commissioner David's idea for bringing a speaker for traffic enforcement, as well as discussing the complaint procedure.

**The commissioners discussed the ongoing meeting schedule and decided unanimously to meet Mondays 6:30-8pm ongoing.**

## **8. Adjourn**

**Commissioner Nick Fleisher moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:41pm. The motion adjourn is passed unanimously.**