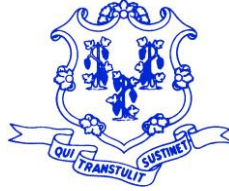


Connecticut General Assembly

Police Transparency & Accountability Task Force

Daryl McGraw, Co-Chairperson



c/o Judiciary Committee, Room 2500
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Ct 06106

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 30, 2020

2:00 PM in Room 1D of the LOB

The meeting was called to order at 2:05PM by Chairman, Daryl McGraw

The following task force members were present:

Shafiq Abdussabur, Ken Barone, Rep. Joshua Hall, Chief Thomas Kulhawik, Daryl McGraw, Chief Keith Mello, Hans Rhynhart, Commissioner James Rovella, Acting Chief State's Attorney John J. Russotto, Sgt. John Szewczyk, Chief William Wright

Daryl McGraw:

Calls to order meeting, states where the emergency exists are in case of emergency

(2:05 PM)

(All):

State name, what they do for work, why they are here

(2:07PM)

Sen. Gary Winfield:

Addresses how the task force was established

In response to numerous incidents across the state between public and police

Specifically, to incidents concerning those with mental health issues

S.B. 380 in 2019 was one bill addressing this

States we need people with expertise to address the current relationship between people with mental illness and the police (especially in situations like that of traffic stops and the process of producing tickets)

Also, to address bills relating to law enforcement accountability

(2:10PM)

Daryl McGraw:

Introduces himself

States he has been in and out of the Department of Corrections for ten years, now works as a criminal justice advocate and people with addiction

(2:13PM)

Ken Barone:

States that the second charge of the task force is to increase information available to motorists during traffic stops

Would result in additional documentation to be filed on behalf of the police

Regarding this, he states that there is already a lot of reporting/demands of law enforcement

Every time force is used, paperwork must be filled out

Acknowledges that up until recently, there was no place for departments to find all these forms, leading to a lack of uniformity in reporting

States there has also been a lack of uniformity in the state informing officers of new laws that affect how they should handle various situations and what they now need to file

Calls this "overwhelming", but also mentions that there is lots of duplicity in what is asked of them

(2:17PM)

Daryl McGraw:

Discusses who Crisis Intervention Team trained officers are and what they do

Claims people with mental health issues often find themselves in situations that are not preferable

Asks to set a schedule for meetings for task force moving forward

Twice a month in the beginning, once a month afterwards

Meetings will either be at CGA or CCSU

(2:21PM)

Ken Barone:

Will meet in February to discuss Post Officer Standards and Training (POST) and advocacy groups that work with populations in discussion

Recommends second meeting focus on increasing information available to motorists at traffic stops

Also mentions that first and second meetings will be informational in nature

Overall, task force should work towards making recommendations on how to solve this issue

Have a year to make final report

Believes subgroups should be made

(2:23PM)

Chief Keith Mello:

Supports law enforcement training discussion

Has a full calendar for February meetings

(2:25PM)

Shafiq Abdussabur:

Discusses training

States officers make vehicle stops numerous reasons

Would it be possible for them to cut back on the amount done?

Believes we need to create a standard use of force policy

Would include a standardized pursuit policy as well

All of this could be taught at POST

Suggests creating a universal way of filing police complaints

POST already requires four hours of minority training

Should they be required to train officers on multiple individual ethnicities?

If so, POST would need more funding to do so, as they are already on a tight budget with little room for growth

Believes POST should also come up with a standardized mission statement to inform them and guide them in what their jobs require them to do

(2:31PM)

Chief Keith Mello:

Addresses lack of consistency between ~110 local departments

Mentions that POST does have mandated policies and auditing capabilities that require local departments to follow certain procedures

Worked with Sen. Winfield to create a use of force form

On pursuit: POST counsel, Department of Corrections, and commissioner have just completed a new pursuit policy as of January 1

Is already effective with State Police, as well as the majority of local departments

This addresses numerous issues, and Sacred Heart Univ. Is already compiling analysis on data being collected

(2:37PM)

Daryl McGraw:

Are we considering anything other than use of force?

Asks, what is giving our state a “black eye”?

How can we form better relations with law enforcement?

Could this be solved through community policing?

(2:38PM)

Keith McGraw:

Use of force is standard is federally complied with through Tennessee v. Garner

Connecticut law is based on this (set by the United States Supreme Court)

As law enforcement, looking at force is ugly and never looks good, even to those that must initiate it

As a result, the community is in favor of looking at methods to reduce these situations

Believes we must consider how law enforcement feels in these situations, too

(2:42PM)

Ken Barone:

Feels it is important to mention that what accountability means is different for police departments and officers

Proposes we explore department accountability

Also asks, what can we do to get police departments Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) accredited?

How many are CALEA accredited?

(2:44PM)

Chief Thomas Kulhawik:

Mentions that some departments can't get accredited due to resources

Still, would like to see all agencies CALEA accredited (rather than tier 1-3)

(2:45PM)

Chief Keith Mello:

Milford has received an accreditation award to do so

Costs \$11,000 plus additional costs for each officer assigned

(2:46PM)

Chief William Wright:

Wallingford is tier 3 certified, not CALEA accredited

This is due to resources available

Still, believes doing so would be "invaluable"

(2:47PM)

Daryl McGraw:

Asks, does CALEA accreditation make a difference?

(2:48PM)

Ken Barone:

Experience with CALEA accredited agencies has shown that they are much more organized/transparent

(2:49PM)

Chief Thomas Kulhawik:

CALEA mandates things the state later requires earlier on

There are sixteen, soon to be seventeen CALEA accredited agencies in the state

The State Police is the largest Coventry is the smallest

POST is almost accredited in training

(2:51PM)

Shafiq Abdussabur:

States that police like those who are CALEA trained

Proposes we look at the cost of work law enforcement does

Uses the example of a traffic stop

Says that wrongful death suits come back at the state through departments and officers asking for reimbursement

Believes we need to put more emphasis on the prevention side of things

States that young officers move jobs constantly

Even so, they follow what they were trained at their first department

(2:55PM)

Daryl McGraw:

For the next meeting, asks if February 20, 2PM at CCSU's downtown campus works for everyone

(2:56PM)

Ken Barone:

Says CGA would be a better location

(2:56PM)

Chief Keith Mello:

Asks if 2PM is good

(2:57PM)

Daryl McGraw:

Says to plan on Wednesday 19, 2PM at CGA

Meeting adjourned

(2:58PM)