

Draft CBA Policing Task Force- Reimagining Policing Subcommittee Proposal

CIVILIAN INTERVIEW PANELS

- I. We recommend the establishment of a Civilian Interview Panel as part of the police officer hiring process.

Purpose: To increase communication, cooperation and trust between the police and the communities being policed. The Civilian Interview Panel will allow the community being policed to provide their input on the hiring of those who will be doing the policing. The panel will also allow diverse groups to have a common goal and opportunity to discuss how policing affects their communities within the municipality. The interview process will teach applicants about the various points of view, interests, and concerns expressed by each group and how policing activities affect those groups differently. This panel will create a line of communication between the police department and the people the department is policing. This proposal is in keeping with the community policing concept that has been promoted since the early 1970s.

The panel will meet with and interview the police applicant finalists BEFORE those finalists are hired. This panel can take the form of a meet and greet or a question and answer session at the discretion of the municipality. After meeting with the applicant, the Panel will meet with the Police Chief; Police Commissioners, and/or hiring committee to discuss their recruits' impressions. The Civilian Interview Panel will be advisory and will NOT have veto power of an applicant, but their input and advice WILL be a requirement in the hiring process.

It will be left to the individual departments to determine when in the hiring process to use Civilian Interview Panel. The departments can make this determination based upon the individual factors with in each department and their hiring process.

The panel will be made up of a diverse cross-section of interested and invested groups in the municipality in which the applicants hope to become police officers. The panel will be chosen by the aldermen/women; town counsel or those officials that are elected to represent the different areas or sections of the municipality. Suggested groups from which to select a diverse group to sit on the Civilian Interview Panelists are:

- * Chamber of Commerce/local business groups or boards
- * Local Non-profit organizations (soup kitchens, shelters, etc.)
- * Local religious organizations (churches, synagogues, mosques)
- * Local cultural organizations (NAACP, Latinx organizations, Jewish organizations, Muslim organizations, LGBTQ organizations etc.)
- * Youth groups (who better to know and understand the young people than those who have worked with them before –Boys/Girls Clubs; YMCA; PAL; Youth Baseball/softball/basketball, etc.)
- * Neighborhood Watch organizations/neighborhood community organizations
- * One member should be a patrolman/woman from a surrounding town who has not worked within the town doing the hiring.

This is not an exhaustive list but hopefully gives the towns/cities ideas of who to contact regarding being on the panel. The intent is to have different viewpoints represented on the board so that the board, the communities, the applicant, and the police department can better learn about the neighborhoods that make up the city/town.

- II. We recommend, where allowable under existing contracts and where feasible, that the Civilian Interview Panel be used to evaluate officers being put up for Command Staff level promotions

Purpose: To increase communication, cooperation and trust between the police and the communities being policed. Using the same Civilian Interview Panel to provide input on Command Staff promotions creates some continuity and oversight. Command Staff positions have the ability to affect the entire police force. Allowing the Civilian Interview Panel to have a say in which officers are the best fit for those critical positions will garner trust and foster a sense of cooperation between the community being policed and the officers who will command the police force that will be policing them. This proposal is in keeping with the community policing concept that has been promoted since the early 1970s.

The same panel used for hiring will meet with and interview the police officers who are finalists for Command Staff level promotions BEFORE those finalists are promoted. This panel can take the form of a meet and greet or a question and answer session at the discretion of the municipality. After meeting with the applicant, the Panel will meet with the Police Chief, police commissioners, and/or hiring committee to discuss their impressions of the potential new Command Staff personnel. The Civilian Interview Panel will be advisory and will NOT have veto power of an applicant, but their input and advice WILL be a requirement in the promotion process.

The panel shall have access to an officer's disciplinary record and any internal department reviews when the panel is evaluating that officer's fitness for promotion to a command staff position.