



**Organizational Meeting of the Independent Police Review Board
January 20, 2023 - 3 PM**

Call to Order

Justin Leavitt Pearl was selected interim chair by consensus of the members in attendance. Mr. Pearl called to order the organizational meeting of the Independent Police Review Board at 3:05 p.m. on Friday, January 20, 2023, in Conference Room 1 of the Allegheny County Courthouse.

Roll Call

The following board members were present:

- Lynn Banaszak
- Richard Garland
- Stacey Hawthorne
- Coleman McDonough
- Justin Leavitt Pearl
- Regina Ragin-Dykes

Absent were members Robert E. Meinert and Keith Murphy.

Additionally, staff members Jared Barker and Amie Downs were present, along with county assistant solicitors Dennis Biondo, Jr. and Rosalyn Guy-McCorkle.

Staff members advised the board that the appointment of the final member, Dwight Boddorf, would be considered at next week's Council meeting. Barring anything unforeseen, he should be seated before the next meeting.

Organization

After discussion by the board, nominations were opened for the position of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

Mr. Garland nominated Coleman McDonough as Chair. The nomination was seconded by Ms. Hawthorne. Once nominations were closed, the members voted unanimously to approve Mr. McDonough as Chair.

Mr. McDonough nominated Justin Leavitt Pearl as Vice Chair. The nomination was seconded by Ms. Hawthorne. Once nominations were closed, the members voted unanimously to approve Mr. Pearl as Vice Chair.

Ms. Banaszak nominated Richard Garland as Secretary. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Pearl. Once nominations were closed, the members voted unanimously to approve Mr. Garland as Secretary.

Following organization, Mr. McDonough took over the meeting as Chair.

Discussion

The board discussed an anonymous letter which had been sent to Mr. Meinert outlining issues with the ordinance. As it is anonymous, there is no one to respond to, but Mr. McDonough requested that a copy of it be provided to the solicitors for review.

The board discussed whether the adoption of bylaws was necessary. Because of the detailed ordinance outlining a number of things, the decision was made to operate from the ordinance until such time that any issue came up which may need to be adopted in bylaws. The group would like to have rules that govern attendance, and attendance by phone. Mr. Barker offered to provide the relevant portion of County Council's rules to the board as a starting point which was accepted.

The board discussed the process for hearings and had several questions for the solicitors regarding who conducts the hearings and the role of board members. The solicitors advised that the hearings are a fact-finding process as complaints are received and suggested that board members be assigned as lead on a rotating basis as complaints are received.

Training of the board is a requirement of the ordinance that was also discussed at the inaugural meeting of the board. Mr. McDonough relayed to the board that he had spoken with Lou Blauth, an attorney and police officer with the County Police who provides training at the Allegheny County Police Academy and MPOTC. He was amenable to providing an overview of the topics outlined in the ordinance. The board discussed that some provisions of the ordinance would be just limited to County Police as no other municipality has opted in. There was also discussion about having third party training on some topics as well, and the use of other tools such as a use of force scenario simulator.

The board has a number of questions related to the ordinance for the solicitors. Mr. McDonough indicated that he would send a preliminary list of questions and asked board members to forward on any questions they may have. He would then consolidate them and send them to the solicitors for review and response.

The board discussed wanting more information on best practices from similar boards, what other organizations do, and how trainings and other matters are handled. Mr. Barker and Ms. Downs indicated that they would do the research on those items and provide that detail to the board members prior to the next meeting.

The board also discussed setting a regular meeting schedule for the remainder of 2023 and determined that they wish to meet monthly for the time being. Ms. Downs will send out a poll to members to determine the best day and time for future meetings. While that work is being done, the decision was made to hold the February meeting of the board on Friday, February 17 at 3 p.m. Mr. Barker will take care of the advertisement and posting of the agenda, when available, and Ms. Downs will update the website accordingly.

Section 905.07 of the ordinance speaks to office space and staff, but there is no further information on those arrangements and what may be available. Ms. Downs was asked to speak with the administration about what may be possible and to report back to the board.

One of the first items that the board will need is a complaint form. The information that is needed is outlined in the ordinance and so the solicitors were asked to prepare a draft complaint form that the board could consider at its next meeting.

The board asked for a contact list for all members. Ms. Downs offered to put one together and would send following the confirmation of the final member.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:03 p.m.