

Below are notes compiled from the Tarrytown Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative meeting 4 held on November 17, 2020 from 6:00 – 7:30 pm. Thirty people attended the virtual meeting. The topic for the evening was Law Enforcement Standards and Strategies. Chairman Zollo opened the meeting and asked Village Administrator Richard Slingerland to discuss the work schedule and plan. Josh Ringel, Assistant Village Administrator, discussed the development and administration of the public survey and sent a copy to the Steering Committee. Twenty minutes were then spent in an open dialogue regarding questions and comments regarding the Committee process, the survey, and remaining thoughts and questions to Police Chief Barbelet. Police Chief John Barbelet responded to the questions and then presented on Law Enforcement Standards and Strategies. He had Lieutenant Cole from his staff present the accreditation process, as well. Breakout sessions were then held. Facilitators asked participants questions that they wanted addressed by the Chief and continued to discuss issues and strategies related to all topic areas.

Notes from the Opening Meeting Discussion

- Questions and comments about the survey
 - Will the committee get to review the survey?
 - The survey will go out tomorrow, so there will not be a chance to revise at this point.
 - Many committee members contributed to development. (Keisha Bush, Sarah Levine, Loretta London, Chief, and others)
 - Based on a best practice survey developed by International Association of Police Chiefs. Overarching topics and broader since the first survey.
 - Committee members need to know what is on the survey, if it is going out as part of the committee work
 - Suggested to delay and share with committee before distributing
 - Review of survey included review of surveys done by activist organizations
 - Sending to members now
 - Steering Committee should at least sign off on it.
 - How is survey being sent out?
 - Survey is electronic, but also putting out postcards that tell people where to take it. Library can help people take it if needed. Sending through email lists and partner organizations.
 - Survey is open until December 11th
- Need to connect with youth before developing a plan. Police are one part of system and trust is a big problem. System-wide problem and need to hear from people that can express those problems. Hard to make those spaces safe to hear from them. How do we have those conversations?
 - Chief has been on multiple calls for the Youth Committee movement in partnership with Sleepy Hollow, so this is underway.

Notes from Breakout Groups

Committee Process/Survey

Issues

- Need to monitor how rooms are divided and not only have one person of color in group.
- Outreach: who will it reach and who does it need to reach? We need to evaluate approaches. More meeting people where they are. Communities of color where they are in a way that is non-threatening. Need to think about who you want to reach and what society has told them what to fear and how to self-preserve. Taking away arms and uniform is a first step.
- Feeling uneasy about Committee not see the survey ahead of time. Concerned that Committee didn't get to participate in its development. Should have seen before finalized – transparency.

Suggestions

- Make sure to tell people that must take first 15 questions to move on in the survey
- Glad that a Spanish version was created as well
- Open Q&A was good at the beginning of meeting and suggest that we do more of it. Be able to ask direct questions.
- As part of the Community Engagement piece, there should be fireside chats where people are just allowed to talk openly (January)
- Consider the use of Subcommittee

Police/Community Engagement

Issues

- How many of the arrests went to court? Wrongful or rightfully done?

Suggestions

- Fire Chat idea could continue after process ends
- Next meeting can we have an update from Robin regarding the youth meeting
- Police officers assigned to walk up and down Main Street. One on each side greeting people and engaging with people on the street and softens image of the police and makes them more approachable. Created positive interaction.
- Neighborhood and door to door walks.
- Back to cops on bikes
- Cops on foot or bike patrol that are not armed or more softly armed or not in full uniform so more approachable.
- Neighborhood meetings, should they be initiated?
 - Neighbor association group meetings is a good starter.
- Yonkers effort with youth – would like to learn more about what this is – transparent/honestly is important to this process – not trying to seek information from the youth when running these events is important

Staffing and Training

Issues

- Can we get a summary of the curriculum of the de-escalation and anti-bias/implicit bias training?

- Like to hear more about police experience/how respond in: allegations of child abuse, senior victims, and domestic violence and human trafficking – might need to bring in County – but what does this look like?
- Whose jurisdiction is what? Village versus County services – laying out for Committee what various departments handle which issues so we know what we can do and then how to coordinate with other levels of government
- Do parking enforcement officers fit under police department – can we have more data on that department – how many tickets do they issue? How many get overturned? Maybe this comes down to a planning solution, not tickets – ways to reduce the traffic? – design issue
- Training for identifying different mental health disorders did not have on de-escalation listed. Was it part of that training or was it about identifying mental health disorders?
 - Yes, it was it included.
- Is there training involved in the contractual line item?

Suggestions

- Should continue the dialogue regarding ways in which we can help the police through the support of other groups/structures especially in regards to mental health issue/substance use disorders
- Training on de-escalation and other training should be a priority for changes even though it is expensive and time consuming. Train more and differently than before (harm reduction, anti-bias). Need to go above what is recommended.
- Take away committee should be focused on what we do with three groups: Young teenagers in school. People with Mental health issues. People with drug abuse issues. Maybe involve others already trained in these services.
- More training, so how do we get more de-escalation training? We need to do better and be ahead of things and be a leader. How do we vet? Specifically around assesses mental health/drug.
- Training budget needs to be increased
- Leveraging expertise for training and imagine bringing in experts in what we are looking to train in an ongoing manner.
- Focus on anti-bias and anti-racist training and the difference. Not be scared of exploring anti-racist training.

Law Enforcement Standards and Strategies

Issues:

- Complaint mechanism discussed by Chief was interesting and we would like to hear more discussion on how it is used/how does it get processed – are there ways to report complaints not directly to police – anonymously
- Who investigates complaint?
- Learn more about accountability – complaint mechanism should be discussed in more detail
- CCRB – and whether there was talks about it? Would like Chief's opinion of it and whether they are effective. How would Village implement this, especially in regards to complaints.

- Use of force form – can department provide statistics on this information – what force was used?
- What is additional cost for extra training on de-escalation/anti-bias? What is percentage of funds is allocated to training? How much are we using of the budget on training?
- What are we doing about de-escalation? How often do they train in defense tactics? Is there an instructor.
- More information on the accreditation is needed. Like what we heard – what makes this special? Is it something everyone is striving for? What's the cost? Any pamphlets or reading material on it.
- Overtime: How is much of overtime related to arrest? How is it allocated and approved? Is it automatic? How much time does it take to process an arrest? How much proactive oversight of the overtime to identify problems?
- How many officers on duty during each shift?
- What is definition of procedural justice and forced continuum?
- Broken windows policing: Is there a way to use other resources to handle it as a civil matter instead of criminal matter? It has a lot of interactions and way to lighten the touch of the interactions. How to rethink that enforcement.

Suggestions

- Dashboard for community that police create– data can be put in it every quarter, etc. Learned a lot from data so it might be beneficial to share for transparency, etc.
- Want a complaint form/mechanism that you don't need to go to police station/police officer.
- System for complaint form – needs to be on Village website with a link and fill it online – make it visible – fillable form – hard to get to online
- Complaint forms would go to CCRB for review first, as an intermediary.
- Don't see where on the form/site that notes that the person making the complaint is going to be protected. Needs to make this clear. People need to feel that there will be no retaliation.
- Complaint process:
 - Take it away from the police and use a community run process/complaint board. The board can be on the lookout for issues.
 - Complaint form is available online.
 - It is difficult to conduct an internal view in an unbiased fashion. There will be a bias in favor of the officer. Create a civilian review board (NYC example). Tarrytown Board of Ethics or a group of volunteers. Should be independent of the police, but in cooperation with them.