

Below are notes compiled from the Tarrytown Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative meeting 5 held on November 30, 2020 from 6:00 – 7:45 pm. Close to thirty people attended the virtual meeting. The topic for the evening was Brainstorming and Suggestions for the Draft Plan. Chairman Zollo opened the meeting, reviewed the next steps in the process and asked Assistant Village Administrator Josh Ringel to discuss the ongoing survey and review some of the findings to date. Discussion was had regarding ways in which the Steering Committee was helping to spread the word and new ideas to help spread the word. Twenty minutes were spent in an open dialogue regarding questions and comments with Police Chief Barbelet regarding Law Enforcement Standards and Strategies and previous topic areas covered. The Committee then moved to discussing ideas, suggestions, and strategies to be incorporated into the draft plan. Below are notes that incorporate ideas from previously held meetings and from the November 30th meeting.

Topic 1: Suggestions and Strategies on Social and Community Engagement of the Police

Marginalized Groups

- Need to find programs that encourage marginalized groups to engage with police.
- Spanish translation is essential – going to need to hire someone internally in the force.
- Getting community people involved in getting others involved. Ambassadors
- People can sponsor their own Coffee with a Cop and they invite their own friends
- Pop up community BBQs in neighborhoods
- Police to hold zoom meeting for families to learn what the police learned in the anti-bias training and they can answer questions

Youth

- More involvement with the family and get kids to trust the police (take them to a ball game)
- 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
- Starting outreach to the young and need someone very sincere and not just part of the job. Someone kids can trust.
- Police could sponsor teams and do more social/interactive events, it makes them a more visible part of the community. Police can speak to parents. It important to engage kids when they are young.
- Police Youth Council (name of committee) raised question of how can they engage youth that do not have a good rapport with police and youth that have issues with the police. Can work with other youth to reach out to other youth. How can we get the youth more engaged? They need to be ones want to get involved. Need to get the word out to them.
 - Partnering with Sleepy Hollow
- Police hold seminars for the youth based on things they are going through in the community or in their lives (i.e. drugs, bullying, what to do when stopped by the police)
- Subcommittee of the District Equity Committee: Kids listen to kids. Some kind of liaison position could serve this purpose. Gatherings without adults.

- Our community needs to reach out more to our teens and need money for these things. How do we reach out to young people and have this communication?
- Need police officers to be comfortable with dealing with minority teenagers and not the other way around.
- Jacksonville, FL example program where kids worked with the police (sit at desks with them, go out and issue tickets, etc.). It was very successful.

Engagement

- Ongoing meetings with community members to get continued feedback. Ongoing way that police engage with the community.
- Informal gathering with community - Police chief with officers with village meeting with his policies, black lives matter, and police interaction
- Tailor programming around objectives that we are trying to meet.
- See police department use more social media (Example Ossining)
- Need to be coordinating better with Sleepy Hollow (511/512) – not enough to work in the high school. Need to work with on the community level. Look for solutions.
- Ring Program – good idea to have an internal network of residents – but what are they doing to advertise this to more people (Maybe an email to everyone to solicit)
- Fire Chat idea could continue after process ends
- 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.
- Issue annual survey to community for feedback on police department
- Expand reach from current passive level, more proactive outreach
- Neighborhood meetings, should they be initiated?
 - Neighborhood association group meetings is a good starter.
- Continue to have a Citizen Committee: Chance to think about this on a longer-term basis. This has been really interesting. Would love to see if the work of the committee were to continue past the date of the Governor's report submission. Just starting to get into the meat of the topics. Can the committee to continue past April?
 - More involvement of minority populations and groups is tough and slow going.
 - Stakeholder interviews could help. Could fill out surveys with them.
 - More comprehensive outreach is needed
 - Can provide information to the community as well

Topic 2: Police Department Recruiting, Staffing, Training and Accountability

Suggestions

Recruiting

- What is mission of police department overall? There should be a mission statement that they hold true to. Important for when they hire into the department, so police are held to carrying out the mission.
 - June 24th police chief gave paperwork and it included mission statement of the police department, so we should share that as a starting point. On website for department.
- Changes to civil service process and requirements
 - Make it easier to remove for willful misconduct
 - Allow to switch between local and county hiring lists

Staffing

- 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
- Are there ways to think about funding for speed bumps, cameras, etc. or design better streets? Some way to handle traffic without using armed police officers for these issues.
- More interdisciplinary approach (planners, health professionals, etc.)
- Housing- we need it for firefighters and police officers so they can be part of our community, so need a place to live in the Village

Training

- 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.
- Training 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.
- At protests, we learned a lot of what youth experience when there is someone in a home with a mental challenge and police do not know how to handle. They need to see policing that relate to the community and young people specifically for instances where there are people with mental health challenges. Expand training for police in this area.
- Work with County on how to address mental health needs

- Diversity Training: is it just the laws? The training should include the history of the people involved with the police department. Better understanding of the African American history experience, so they have a better understanding of how African Americans approach the police or various Hispanic groups. More you know about people's history, the better you can relate to them
- Review and maintain training
 - It is a specific type of training that committee is recommending - (annual de-escalation, anti-bias, and anti-racist training).
- Pursue/finishing accreditation process
- Expand de-escalation training
- Increasing education requirements, but Grandfathering for current police so not negatively impacted

Topic 3: Law Enforcement Standards and Strategies

Suggestions

Transparency/Standards

- 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.
- Complete installation of body worn cameras
- Lobby state legislature for decriminalizing some traffic infractions

Accountability

- 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
- 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 forms would go to CCRB for review first, as an intermediary.
- 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.
- One of the issues across the country is police investigating themselves, so should be exploring Civilian Complaint Review Board and avoid issues with police investigating police.
 - Review whether this is needed if not an issue in Tarrytown.
 - It should be recommended to build trust with the community
 - Strong support from committee for this. Can be folded into an existing committee. Probably most important thing that committee can do after training recommendations.

- Need increased transparency, accountability and trust to achieve goals
- Need fair and objective process and investigation and people will be accountable
- Preventive action should be focus – so need oversight committee and advisory board
- We do not know if there are not of complaints just because of the current process
- If this is not possible, then we need greater transparency. i.e. Detailed reports posted at conclusion of investigation.
- Could be related to creating a human rights committee
- Global understanding of systematic racism is what has initiated this action, so cannot lose sight of that
- Does the board have any input on discipline? Minor infractions – internal, Major infractions – go to the Board (elected officials of civilians)
- Even if there are not currently complaints, it is still worth having. Could act as a deterrent. Makes marginalized community feel more safe.