

APPENDIX 15 - PD TOWN HALL 1.26.2021

Board of Trustees
Village of Tarrytown
Special Meeting No. 5
Police Reform Town Hall Meeting
Public Hearing #1
Via Zoom Video Conference
January 26, 2021
7:00 p.m.

PRESENT via Zoom Video Conference: Mayor Fixell presiding; Trustees: Brown, Butler, Hoyt, McGovern, Rinaldi and Zollo; Village Administrator Slingerland; Assistant Village Administrator Ringel; Police Chief John Barbelet; Village Attorney Kathy Zalantis and Village Clerk Booth

Members of the Public interested in viewing the meeting should visit <https://www.tarrytowngov.com/home/events/33446> for instructions on how to join & participate.

Welcome and Introduction – Police Reform and Reinvention Committee Chairman Trustee Doug Zollo

Trustee Zollo welcomed everyone to the Tarrytown's Police Reform Town Hall Public Hearing #1. After the killing of George Floyd in May of 2020, it became apparent nationally there had to be a reckoning of police interaction and the killing of predominately black men in the United States. Immediately after the killing of George Floyd, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed an executive order #203, called New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative. Every municipality in the state, in order to continue to receive state support for their police department, was ordered to review employment, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices of their police departments. Every municipality had to convene a committee. Tarrytown formed two committees, a steering committee, which was made up with the Village Administrators, Village Government Officials, Police Chief and the PBA President, two faith based ministers from churches in Tarrytown, whose congregants are predominately black, a member from the NAACP from the Town of Greenburgh and a member from the local DA's office. There was also a stakeholder's committee which was made up of a very diverse group of resident volunteers. We held 6 or 7 meetings through the fourth quarter of 2020. A survey was sent out and the response was quite good. A draft proposal was compiled after the meetings which was sent to the Board of Trustees for review at the end of 2020. Tonight is the first public hearing to get input from the public on the draft report. Anything relevant that comes out of this meeting and a subsequent meeting will be made part of the rest of the draft report. Then a final report will be compiled and the Board of Trustees will certify it either by resolution or law and it will be sent to the state by the deadline of April 1, 2021. The Board of Trustees early on, right after the killing of George Floyd, made it very clear that we totally support BLM, Black Lives Matter and in the same vein, we also totally support our police department. The Police Chief and his officers who are sworn to protect and serve our community do a terrific job. They are human and they are not perfect, so it made sense to review all of their policies, procedures, training hiring practices, police budget and equipment.

Message from Police Chief Barbelet

Police Chief John Barbelet has been employed as an officer here for just under 27 years with the last 3 ½ as Police Chief. Tonight, is another step in our community's goal to fulfill the Governor's Executive Order related to police reform. He thanked all the committee members who donated numerous hours to not only discussions of change but to really learn how the police department here in Tarrytown operates. He stated from the beginning that we have an excellent Department comprised of dedicated men and women. He embraced this process realizing that there is always room for improvement in any agency, public or private. The Department, with the support of our elected officials and Village Administration have already taken significant steps to implement or ensure that this Department operates in a manner that addresses concerns in the Governor's Executive Order. He believes after numerous meetings, presentations, and discussions the Village

can put forth a plan that will only make this Department stronger. While he believes we can use this process to improve, he continues to say that he stands with the men and women who work in this Department. Throughout the process he kept an open mind and listened to comments and suggestions from both ends of the spectrum. While we continue to move forward towards a goal of adopting a plan, he asked that everyone remember what we have here in Tarrytown, a Department with a history of professionalism and dedication. We are here for the community 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and we sacrifice time with our families and memories that are lost that many take for granted. Tonight, the public has an opportunity to weigh in as we move forward. He will be listening with an open mind and welcome your comments and thoughts. We need each other to understand one another and work together. That is the only way it works. It's a team effort.

Village Administrator Slingerland – (a) Summary of the Process and (b) Summary of the Report

Administrator Slingerland thanked Trustee Doug Zollo, Chairman of the Tarrytown Police Reform and Reinvention Committee, Trustee Karen Brown, Trustee Paul Rinaldi, Police Chief John Barbelet, Lieutenants Budnar, Cole and Daly and the entire Tarrytown PD, Assistant Administrator Josh Ringel and all members of the Police Reform and Reinvention Committees, who participated in this process and effort to produce the draft report that is up for public discussion this evening.

The process:

On June 24th 2020, Tarrytown issued a preliminary report and held a public forum to start the discussion and review of policing means and methods which was done in conjunction with the Tarrytown Administration and the Police Chief. We know that we have a fine Police Department that does not have a history of violent incidents, or that has exhibited racism or discrimination by our officers. Nevertheless, there are always new things to be learned, new perspectives to be considered, and new training and education that can be provided to help our officers and staff more humanely and effectively protect and serve the people in our community. Back during the summer of 2020, we set forth a plan and schedule for the Board to appoint a committee, hold public meetings and discussions, seek out public input – which we did through a survey that was answered by over 1,000 people – and now seek public input and comment on the report, so that the Board of Trustees can make an informed decision. The Committee met on seven occasions – twice in October, three times in November, and once in December and January. The information and discussions that took place with the members of the Committee formed the basis for the report that was circulated in draft in December, and that was issued as a public draft on January 8, 2021.

The report:

We have specific recommendations that are before the public, the committee and the Board of Trustees for consideration:

- Review and maintain training to remain current with the times and needs of our community
- Pursue and finish the accreditation process which is already underway.
- Complete the installation and implementation of body worn cameras by our police officers
- Expand outreach from a current passive level at retail and restaurant establishments to active meetings with homeowners associations or tenant associations, the Chamber of Commerce and other groups.
- Actively reach out to young people in the community.
- Request County and State action to create and restore funding for mental health support in substance abuse, domestic violence, identify persons with histories of mental health issues and other similar situations.
- Review and examine the department's dare program.
- Review department policies and methods for subduing violent offenders to ensure the safest non-lethal means and methods are being utilized.
- Advocate for changes in civil service processing requirements related to the hiring and discipline of police officers as police officers.

- Advocate at the state level to decriminalize minor vehicle and traffic law violations.
- Issue an annual or biannual report meaning every two years survey to the community seeking input and feedback on the police department.
- Create a long term Police Advisory Committee.
- Create a separate Citizens Police Review Board.
- Build a dashboard presenting such statistics as arrests and ethnicity associated with those arrests for Tarrytown review and post for public view at least on an annual basis.

Members of the Committee sent a communication to the Board for consideration of five targeted recommendations:

- 1) Establishment of a Citizens Review Advisory or Review Board.
- 2) New de-escalation, anti-bias, anti-racist training and continuation of education for all police personnel on a regular basis.
- 3) New programs initiated that would be dedicated to enhancing and maintain officer wellness including mental and behavioral health services.
- 4) The appointment of a professional community responder who could respond to mental or behavioral health and other calls.
- 5) The establishment or extension of a policing committee for ongoing discussions and listening sessions with the community.

At this time, we have two scheduled public comment sessions – one tonight, and one on February 9th – after which the Board will consider the comments, decide which recommendations they plan to adopt, and then take any necessary actions at a public Board Meeting on either Tuesday, February 16th, or Monday March 1, 2021, so that any policies or programs that may need additional funding, like training or the body cameras, can be included in our tentative Village Budget that will be introduced on or before March 20th. Please keep in mind that tonight is not a time to comment about what may be happening around the Village, or about any individuals or groups. Tonight is for everyone in attendance to review and comment on the Police Reform and Reinvention report, after which the Mayor and Board can review the public comments and suggestions and determine which ones they want to consider and adopt moving forward.

Assemblyman Tom Abinanti, noted that he did review the report and you do address one of the issues of his concern. That is with dealing with people with some type of an intellectual impairment, whether it be a mental health issue or a developmental disability issue. The report speaks for the need for the restoration of the mobile crisis team. This has been an issue that I have been talking about in Albany. He has been trying to get the Department of Health, the Department of Mental Health and OPWDD to focus on this. And he sees that the Governor just put something in his budget, talking about crisis teams etc. I don't have an explanation on what that is yet. He thinks this is really an important area. A Police Officer may think he's dealing with someone who's dangerous, when in fact, the person could actually be asking for police help, because that person is having a problem. It may very well be that the police officer is not the person to go to those situations. However, the police officer is usually the first one to arrive on a scene. We need to have continuous training on how to identify a situation like that. How do you deescalate something like that? How do you get the right help as backup? And your report touches on all of those things. He is willing to work with the Village on that issue. He has just become Chairman of a brand new committee that the speaker is setting up dealing with people with disabilities. He looks forward to working with the Village and moving forward with that. He agrees that you really need the County Crisis Team, there has to be an appropriate backup. We also need places for people to go once you're identified them. Secondly, he noticed that the report speaks about hiring and firing and disciplining officers who may need some discipline. He looks forward to working with the Police Chiefs and he anticipates we may get some pushback from some of the rank and file labor organizations. He believes if there is a police officer who is just not working out and he or she needs to go, there should be a process that works for everyone. He looks forward to working with the community. He feels the police reform reports looks very good and thorough. He agrees that your police department is an excellent department, but there's always room for improvement. As the world changes, we have to adapt. We have to be very sensitive to the changes in the community and to the people who pass through our community. We are finding more and more there are people with different backgrounds, different

understandings and different cultures and that could put stress on first responders. It's important that our police officers have the training to be able to respond to that.

Assistant Administrator Ringel noted that tonight we are seeking comments on the draft plan and recommendation. The Board and staff are not going to be providing any commentary or responding to questions during tonight's meeting, as this is a listening session to hear from the community. Interested speakers will have three minutes and speakers must raise their hands by pressing the raise their hand icon or by pressing star nine if calling in by phone. Now is the time to start getting into the queue. The meeting is being translated into Spanish in real time.

Diana Loja, Tarrytown resident, noted that the police website includes different languages, including Spanish. However, the police forms are all in English. It would be helpful if the forms could also be made available in Spanish too.

Harvey Loeb, Deputy Chief Counsel with the Westchester Legal Aid Society, commended the committee for a great job. It's a very progressive report. He had the following suggestions: 1) The Police Department should put its use of force policy on the website and some other policies such as the stop and frisk policy. 2) The Police should have a mechanism for a person to submit a complaint about the police department anonymously. He realizes a person who submits an anonymous complaint cannot receive any feedback, but it's his experience that some people are intimidated by the police and they are afraid to complain but may be willing to do so if it's anonymous. 3) The police department keep demographic information not only of arrests, but also of anyone who stopped in traffic stops or just any stop on the street. 4) He is not sure if it is part of the police's use of force policy, that an officer who sees another officer or a superior use excessive force, should they be required to report that excessive use of force to superior officer. If it's not in your use of force policy, he thinks it should be. He commended the police department for instituting body worn cameras and for the reforms that you are going to make to your police department.

Anneliese Galgano, southend Village resident for over 50 years, appreciated all the work that's gone into the review of the police procedures and the suggested reforms. The Police Department does a great job and they are working hard to become even better. She has never seen any problems in terms of unhappy, untruthful or un-satisfaction with the police as a whole and has never seen any racial bias. She appreciates the idea that you're going to be allowing some citizens to join the committee that are associated with this process and would like to know how to find out to put her name in.

John Stiloski, Stiloski Automotive, noted that he reviewed the police reform and he saw comments from Village Trustees in regards to softly arms and softly dress. He questions about taking guns away in the section two of 136. He does not feel that the officer's faith should be put into somebody's trust that thinks that somebody should be softly armed. He believes they took the money away from psychiatric care and social services and that created putting the people into the street for the police officers to deal with. We have employees in this Village that are paid to lead, Police Chief and Lieutenants and there are a lot of people in management that can review a complaint. He has a problem hearing that you are trying to put a board or review committee together to review the actions of one of our officers. His question is at what point do you go to an outside source about a police situation, who has no knowledge of how things works and leaves the officers faith in the hands of somebody that doesn't do the job that's being performed. He thinks the Police Chief and the upper management should review any kind of complaint to see if the complaint is justified or not. They have to have policing knowledge to be able to assess the situation. As far as the anonymous calling, we've seen that in the past with the newspapers like Lohud, anybody can put anything they want and make accusations and wouldn't have to put a name to it. All of a sudden the complaint becomes null. Everybody has a right to make a complaint, but when it is unfounded, there needs to be an action against the person who makes a complaint.

Francesca Spinner, Wilson Park Drive, noted that she was impressed with the draft report. She was surprised to see the small number of women in the department and she was wondering if that can be changed to increase the number of women who might be

interested in police work as a career, maybe through guidance counselors at school. She thinks that it would improve the culture in any department or business and find that they are stronger when they have a more diverse community in their midst.

Tina Bellino, Martling Avenue, noted that she came to this meeting because she saw something online that one of the Trustees said about being softly armed. Knowing how many police we lost in 2020 versus 2019, the number nearly doubled from 135 to 264 respectively. She finds it abhorrent that it would actually be brought forward as a possibility, knowing what police have to do to keep themselves safe, but also to keep us safe. She feels we have a great police department and yet it is being vilified because of the actions of one policeman on the other side of the country. She finds it so unfair. As far as anonymous complaints, people will allege things and when they don't have to give their names. Legal Aid stands on the side of the accused, but we still have to protect our law enforcement. There are people in the Village that believe this whole police reform is coming from a place of vilification rather than just trying to give the police what they need to do their job better.

Jackie Voelpel, Main Street, asked what the goal of this meeting is. Is it for suggestions or ideas? She is not aware of anything, she saw this on the website. Administrator Slingerland explained the goal of this meeting.

Melanie Frazza, Sleepy Hollow Gardens in Tarrytown, appreciates the Village putting this report together and notifying the residents and she feels grateful she lives in a generally progressive community. She thinks it's important that we are doing these reforms. We may not have these issues in Tarrytown, but nationwide, we've seen white supremacist groups have infiltrated various law enforcement groups. There's issues with excessive force, racial profiling and stop and frisk and extreme force being used around mental health calls and all these things can't happen anymore. She appreciates that we are keeping up with the reforms so that some of the issues that are happening globally, won't happen here. She missed the opportunity to be included in the poll and wondered if there was going to be another round of collecting that data.

County Executive George Latimer, noted that the County is going through the very same process, we have come close to the end of our recommendations for the County level of this activity. One of our recommendations is that we intend to expand the number of mental health crisis response teams that we have. It has come up in the police reform discussions, on how we can have mental health professions respond to certain kinds of emergencies, rather than the police. The County has the regional capacity to do that at a greater level. That's one of the things we seek to do in our reform package. We will also be looking to change the training that we provide at the County Police Academy, on issues like excessive force and so forth, that would apply to any of the new police officers that you hire. We are trying to absorb the recommendations from the local municipalities and create some things at the County level that will assist Tarrytown and try to make this as progressive across the board as possible.

Diana Loja, Tarrytown resident, noted that she agrees that the police department should share the data on the demographics and backgrounds of the people they are stopping and giving tickets to. The police department should meet with the community and reach out to the local churches. She feels there is a lack of communication in terms of reaching out to the Hispanic population.

Sarah Levine, Tappan Landing and also a member of the Police Reform Committee, noted that she wanted to clarify a point of confusion on the record on the idea of softly armed and what it is referring to. During discussions with the committee, we shared ideas around improving engagement with different communities in Tarrytown and specifically, this executive order is looking at engagement and improving relationships with BIPOC communities. The idea of softly armed is not something that as a committee, we have hard coded in this work, it came out of conversations on how do we increase engagement and build relationship. The idea was about interacting and meeting police officers at events, not on duty. We are not trying to disarm the police. That's not what this work was about and it is inaccurate information being portrayed to the public. She wanted to set the record

straight because it was brought up a couple of times tonight. The softly armed on pages 132 and 136 was a suggestion for engagement.

Dylan Besescu, grew up in Sleepy Hollow, thanked Trustee Brown for all the work she has done on this. In his one year experience in the Tarrytown schools, police officers were first introduced into the school. Since, he has heard from people that there is a chilling effect on students. If we must keep officers in schools, which he really doesn't think we still should be doing that, he encourages the Board to consider mandating a very strict, narrow and limited use of force policy and intervention in schools because we've seen that when cops have as free a hand in schools, as they have in the public, it exacerbates the school to prison pipeline, it produces a chilling effect on education. He urged the Board to limit the extent to which police operate in schools and to keep them out of sight, out of mind and if they really do have to be there, they are used only in situations of dire threat to life, health or limb. Secondly, in reviewing and examining the department's DARE program, studies show that nationally, black people are four times more likely to be arrested for the use of marijuana. He suggests if we really want to get serious about youth, we want to make sure that we're catching alcohol use, and having students collaborate in assisting law enforcement with catching illegal alcohol use, which is much more harmful and damaging to students. He suggested that the police department should adopt a policy of declining to make arrests for the simple possession of marijuana, especially for youth individuals both to assist in the apprehension of illicit substances such as alcohol, which is far more harmful and to tamp down on racial disparities, which are seen both nationally and in almost a perfect microcosm in Westchester County.

Calvin Chin, Hudson Harbor, noted that he is a person of color and a resident and he actually would like to see the police in the schools in a show and tell format that way young people can interact with police in a non-stress situation. He believes the police forms should be translated in Spanish. He suggests that some of the members of the police reform committee should see some police simulation or trainings where they actually have to engage in high stress situations to see what police go through. Most of us should have some empathy and respect for the police and the job that they do. Because if we mess up in our jobs, nobody will get seriously hurt or die perhaps. He thanked everyone for all their hard work. He has had interactions with the police in the 3.5 years he has lived here and they've always been very professional. He feels very safe here and based on the surveys, he thinks most people do feel safe and feel that the police force is very professional and that we don't have problems.

Blake Harrison, Neperan Road, noted that he appreciates that we are taking this very seriously and the time you are providing the community tonight. Given the animosity in our Country right now, coming back to empathy to guide this process, he thinks that is very important so that our community does not feel divided from one another. He does think more information about how much work the police department does, what crimes or issues they have resolved each year should be on the police website. He thinks having demographic data is important and having complaints publically available. The question about anonymous feedback, he is a business owner and he has struggled with this himself. He had requested anonymous feedback from his employees and he said he would never do that again. But he does think it could serve a purpose, you just have to be very intentional about it.

Keisha Bush, Hamilton Place and member of the Police Reform Committee, noted that she thinks it is important for us to stay focused that just because it doesn't happen here, doesn't mean that it cannot happen here. She is a woman of color, who has three sons who went to the high school here, two of them were in the Westchester Youth Police Academy, but it did not stop them from being racially profiled by some police in this community. Although she respects the police department here, she thinks that we do have minimal issues here, she thinks racial profiling continues to be an issue across the country. Despite what she hears others say about not knowing of any situation that has happened in this community, she thinks it's very difficult when you are not a person of color to really speak for people of color, because you really don't know what that experience is like. She asked people to keep an open mind as we work through this. She thinks that we all went into this with very open intentions and the Chief and his police officers and other people who joined our team meetings, were very receptive and were very open and honest with each other.

We do not want to vilify the police department. We want to work with them and we want see a better relationship between the police department and the community.

Diana Loja, Tarrytown resident, noted that she believes that when someone wants to make a complaint against the police, they shouldn't have to do it with the help of the Lieutenant. She thinks that people should be able to make a complaint against the police with another Village department other than the police. It makes you feel very uncomfortable to do it with the police department. She strongly feels that complaints should not be anonymous because people make up stories. She feels that when people have to deal with domestic violence, there is no privacy in the courts. There should be some privacy when dealing with domestic violence. She thinks the police's communication with the Hispanic community needs to be increased and information should be available in Spanish. The messages are not clear, for example, in regard to the marijuana rules and process. There should be more clear communication with the Hispanic parents and the youth. She believes there should be more women police officers. Most women feel comfortable going to another woman.

Jill Sternberg, Altamont Avenue, thanked the committee and the Village Board and the police for their hard work on this police reform and reinvention. She emphasized the reinvention part of this task. She doesn't think there's anybody on the committee who will deny that racism exists in our society. We are a country founded on genocide, racism and slavery. That legacy is with us today. We have different experiences. She is thankful that we are living in a time where we can actually discuss these things. She doesn't want to be the person who dehumanizes others. She would like to work with her community to make sure that we live in a community where everyone is welcome. She welcomes the recommendations of continuous and rigorous training to really understand the depth of racism. She thinks that the police interactions with the community, whatever someone has done, should truly respect the people they are interacting with. We all make mistakes, we have all caused harm in our lives. It's up to us to be human with one another. She recommended that we look at the website of the San Jose, California Police Department. It's amazing in terms of transparency. It includes statistics, policies and procedures. She encourages us to have a police department that's transparent and continually engaging with the community. She supports the recommendations of creating a citizens police review board and citizens advisory board. She works in the area of restorative justice, which is accountability, and healing and repairing harm. It's a way of dealing with the problems in society that doesn't continue to harm people, destroy people and dehumanize people. She encourages our Village to look at how we adapt a more restorative approach to dealing with the conflicts that we have.

Gemma Maver, Central Avenue, noted that she feels Tarrytown is a warm and welcoming place. One of her experiences she had growing up in the city as a child was to know the local cop on the beat. She would like to see more police officers walking the streets of Tarrytown. She thinks the police should get out of their cars and walk the streets especially meeting with the kids, whether it is at the basketball courts or just walking in the neighborhoods and seeing people in their yards and front steps. It's important for community outreach, police officers and the community getting to know each other. Through her experience in the city getting to know the local police officers, she learned to respect them at a very young age because of her encounters with them.

Lisette Mendez Boyer, Grove Street and member of the Police Reform Committee, noted that she is grateful for all the work everyone has done. She focused on police wellness from a community perspective. She has done research on how trauma affects our vulnerable communities, particularly our minority community. Our community is still struggling with having a hard time finding work, from discrimination, from redlining, but with all this negativity, we still strive. She realizes what police officers go through and they also experience trauma, but this is the trauma they experience 8 hours a day at work. The trauma that the community experiences is not only for a lifetime, but for generations. She hopes that trauma and the need for wellness would bring them together, not to see them as something to fight, but something to fight for. She thinks the Tarrytown Police Department can be amazing, not only doing the minimal, but to find solutions, not only for our town, but for our country. She thinks Tarrytown has what it takes to do it. This can be the Police Chief and Village Trustees' legacy.

Krista Barron, Grove Street, noted that she is grateful for all the work everyone has done. She underscored the five recommendations that the committee emphasized at the bottom of the draft. The recommendations seem to have a spirit of openness and the sharing of information. The establishment of a citizens advisory review board, which will allow experiences with the police a little bit more accessible for everyone and doesn't really alienate people. De-escalation, anti-bias and anti-racist training. To enhance and maintain officer wellness, the appointment of a professional community responder to mental or behavioral health and other calls, not every situation may require a police response. The establishment or extension of the policing committee, which is for ongoing discussion and listening, which is sort of how she views this experience.

Joe Cesarano, Main Street and member of the Police Reform Committee, thanked everyone on the committee for all their hard work. Tarrytown is not an island, when you have black and brown communities, historically victimized by police violence across the country, it's kind of naïve to think that would not affect the perception of police and policing among members of those communities in our Village. We are not trying to create animosity between the community and police with these reform proposals, we are actually looking to create more community. We are trying to ensure that every citizen here feels comfortable and protected and served equally by the police department. We are grateful for Chief Barbelet's efforts in this process and looks forward to continuing the dialogue and conversations within the community. He believes establishing regular listening sessions, particularly with affected populations, particularly with the black and brown citizens of our Village would be necessary going forward and strongly recommends that the Village create such a commission to do that.

Robert Cannata, Benedict Avenue and member of the Police Reform Committee, supports the creation of a Civilian Complaint Review Board or CCRB. He noted that he is an attorney and former prosecutor at the Manhattan District Attorney's office. The first part of his career, he worked alongside of police officers where he prosecuted over 1,000 cases. The second part of his career, was in the public corruption unit, where he investigated and prosecuted police corruption. He has seen police officers at their best and their worst. He believes the creation of a CCRB would benefit both the public and the police department. It will increase trust, provide greater transparency and will provide greater accountability for misconduct. The community needs to know that if they make a complaint against a police officer, it will be taken seriously and investigated impartially. The independent CCRB will provide two benefits to the police department. 1) It increases police officer safety and 2) By moving the investigation of misconduct allegation to an independent body, it takes away from the Chief and his supervisors, which he assumes is one of the more unpleasant parts of their jobs. There are few towns and villages in Westchester that have a CCRB, let's be leaders. Let's make the Tarrytown Police Department an example for all of Westchester.

Tina Bellino, Martling Avenue, thanked Lissette for her comment about understanding how the police suffer trauma as well in their profession. When we feel that the police are being vilified, we come from a place, that the police suffer the highest risk for suicide than any other profession. Then to hear from one of the Trustees that they should be softly armed that would put them more at risk. It doesn't mean that we don't realize that people are still at times being profiled, but those of us in Tarrytown who have lived here for over 30 years, have seen wonderful things from this department. It's not that we don't want reform, we want to feel that our officers are being appreciated for risking their lives every day. Tarrytown is a great diverse community and we all want the same thing, we want our kids to be safe and we want our police officers to be safe. Facebook can blow things out of proportion and some of the comments she has seen have been very negative against the police.

John Stiloski, Stiloski Automotive, noted that Mr. Cannata may have experience in dealing with certain things that a police civilian complaint board would be involved in, but other citizens chosen to the Board may not. You can't have politics play into a complaint. This can basically put the integrity and the trust in our police department in question. Mr. Cannata said the police department needs to be overseen because things happen in towns. The Tarrytown Police Department, in the past, present or future would do nothing but the right thing. To turn around and say that some board has to oversee our police department is

really a slap in the face to the Police Chief, the Administration and the Village Trustees. You can also have the DA office involved in a situation, if necessary. He agrees that Tarrytown is not an island, fifteen minutes from here, the shootings are up 332%, crime is going through the roof in the city, and we are only 15 miles away. Everyone acts like we are Mayberry, but we are not. Regarding the team that will be called when someone is having a mental or social issue, where is that coming from? The police are out there struggling with someone for 10 and 15 minutes and they have to wait, and possibly the team is on another call, to come with a van. The bottom line is that the police are first responders and they have to deal with these problems. He thinks it's questioning the integrity of our upper management and the community to have a makeshift board oversee the police.

Robin Warner, Mechanics Avenue and member of the Police Reform Committee, noted that she has been a resident for over 50 years and she feels that the Tarrytown Police Department is in a class by itself. She thanked Tina and John Stiloski for supporting the police department and thanked everyone on the Committee for doing a great job.

Trustee Rinaldi noted that in reference to "softly armed" police officers that was raised by a few speakers that is something that he raised during discussions with the committee. He wants to be open and transparent about that. It was raised in the spirit of talking about things, thinking outside the box. He wants to be clear that it was an idea that he raised, but it was not raised in any way to have our officers not be safe, which seems to be questioned.

Administrator Slingerland noted that the next Police Reform public hearing will be on Tuesday, February 9th from 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. If anyone has comments, they can also email comments to administrator @tarrytowngov.com.

Mayor Butler commended the Police Reform Committee for all the hard work they have done. Especially, in the leadership of Trustee Zollo, because he knows that this was not an easy task and everyone did an outstanding job. The Board will listen to the comments on the Committee's recommendation and he is sure in the end, we will have a good product. In the past 10 years, approximately 35% of the police force are women and minorities. One thing that he respects about Police Chief Barbelet is that he looks for the best candidate. He noted, as a black man who came out of the civil rights movement back in the 60's and the 70's, here we are 50 years later and we are having the same conversation that is a very important conversation. But in 50 years, you would have thought that we would not be at this point. However, with some of the issues that have evolved recently, he understands why it's very important to have this conversation. He thanked the community for voicing their opinions and together we will continue to work hard to make this a great Village.

ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Trustee Zollo, seconded by Trustee Rinaldi meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m. by vote of seven in favor, none opposed.

Carol A. Booth
Village Clerk