

**City of Syracuse  
 Citizen Review Board  
 Meeting Minutes  
 Thursday, April 12, 2018  
 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM  
 Common Council Chambers  
 Public Comment - 20 minutes at 6:30 PM**

<b>Name</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>
Carter, Mae	X		Natale, Dana	X				
Comeau, Herve	X		Nelson, Mary	X				
Grinnals, R. Daniels	X		Nilsson, Lori	X				
Holmes, Hatisha	X		Ryans, Clifford	X				
Kutz, Ruth	X		Releford, Ranette	X				
McCarthy, Peter	X		Pearson, Betty L.	X				

On Thursday, April 12, 2018, the City of Syracuse Citizen Review Board (CRB) held an open, stated meeting at 304 City Hall in the Common Council Chambers.

Ms. Kutz, Board Chair, called the meeting to order and announced that the meeting was being held pursuant to notice and that a quorum was present.

1. On motion duly made by Mr. Ryans, seconded by Ms. Natale and adopted, the Board approved the Minutes of the March 1, 2018, Board meeting.
2. Introduction of new CRB member Raymond Daniel Grinnals – Ms. Kutz introduced and welcomed Mr. Raymond Daniel Grinnals as the newest CRB member, replacing Ms. Mallory Livingston as an At-Large appointee. Mr. Grinnals shared his background as a retired lawyer.
3. Chairman’s Items
  - a. Administrator’s six-month evaluation (Board review only) – Ms. Kutz reported that the evaluation would take place during Executive Session and is less formal than the annual review.
  - b. Administrator’s Annual review – Ms. Kutz reported that the annual review would take place in June.
  - c. Board Vacancy – The Second District appointment remains open. Ms. Releford encouraged Interested individuals to contact Councilor Chad Ryan for consideration.
4. Administrator’s Report
  - a. Activity Report
 

Search For A New Police Chief – Ms. Releford reported attending the public meetings the City of Syracuse is holding for community participation in the search for a new chief of police. Deputy Mayor Sharon Owens is heading the search. The meetings

begin with an introduction and overview of the search. Group sessions follow, allowing the public to complete surveys and provide input. Each session ends with a discussion of the next steps in the search process. The city will also meet with community organizations, neighborhood groups, representatives of law enforcement and elected officials.

“What To Do If You Are Stopped by the Police” Workshop – Ms. Releford reported that on Wednesday, March 28, she presented at Roberts Elementary School.

Prevention Network – Ms. Releford reported that on Thursday, April 5, she attended a Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition meeting.

“Know Your Rights” informational session – Ms. Releford shared a flyer drafted for Board review for a “Know Your Rights” informational session with teens to be held on Thursday, May 31, 6:00 PM at NEHDA, Inc./Syracuse Northeast Community Center, 716 Hawley Avenue. The Onondaga County/Syracuse Commission on Human Rights will train the CRB and provide assistance for the event if needed.

- b. 2017 Fourth Quarter and Annual Report – Ms. Releford stated that the report was completed by the March 31 deadline. It was submitted for posting on the CRB website. She offered to e-mail to anyone interested.
- c. Monthly Financial Report – Ms. Releford shared the detailed breakdown of expenditures for the year to date. The CRB Budget hearing before the Common Council was Tuesday, April 10, 2018, 3:00 PM.
- d. March case statistics – Ms. Releford reported that seven new cases were received in March. She stated the total received in 2018 is 21 and that seven cases will be reviewed during Executive Session.
- e. Conducting Proper and Effective Investigations – Ms. Releford reported that the Budget Office and Mayor Ben Walsh approved her attending the training June 18 to 22, in Nashville, TN.
- f. Media Relations – Currently Ms. Releford represents the CRB with the media. Is there a need for a media relations/confidentiality policy? Should one be drafted for presentation at the May meeting? There was a discussion on when and where Board members can and should identify themselves as members of the CRB. That came about, in part, because Mr. Comeau, who is a lawyer, was a passenger in a car pulled over by a police officer for one thing and the officer demanded identification from everyone in the car to do a “routine warrant check.” Mr. Comeau refused to give his ID and told the officer that in New York State individuals are not required to carry identification if they are not driving. He wrote a letter to the editor about the experience in which he stated that he is on the New York Civil Liberties Union board and the Citizen Review Board and works for the Volunteer Lawyers Project. Should he not have mentioned the CRB? Ms. Holmes stated that facts come out when

educating the public. Where is the line? How does a Board member know when to limit what they say about being a Board member? On motion made by Mr. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Ryans, the Board unanimously voted not to draft a media policy for presentation at the May meeting.

5. Committees

a. Community Outreach and Public Education – Education – Ms. Holmes reported that the CRB participated in:

- Building a Stronger Safer North Side Community: A Community Safety Summit, Saturday, March 24, 2018, 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon at Dr. Weeks Elementary School.
- School safety forums hosted by the Syracuse City School District, in partnership with the Syracuse Police Department, on Tuesday, March 27, 6:00 to 7:30 PM at Henninger High School, 600 Robinson Street and Monday, April 9, 6:00 to 7:30 PM at Corcoran High School, 919 Glenwood Avenue. At the forums, parents and community members had the opportunity to discuss school safety with both the SCSD superintendent, Jaime Alicea, and Syracuse Chief of Police, Frank Fowler. The summit covered the safety procedures currently in place such as the district's single-point of entry policy, metal detectors and bag searches, electronic visitor management systems and emergency response plans. Information regarding active shooters and the responsibility of School Resource Officers was also discussed.

Ms. Holmes asked the public for locations for pop-up meetings. Pop-up meetings are designed to reach pockets of citizens whose voices might otherwise not be heard and increase the number of residents learning about and participating in the civic process. It is a chance to open up the doors of conversation to people who do not feel like they have been included. Pop-up meetings have power in building brand awareness and impressing a new audience.

b. Board Developments and Training – Mr. McCarthy reported that the full-day training will take place on Saturday, May 19, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM at Bishop Harrison House, 1342 Lancaster Avenue.

Mr. McCarthy spoke on his ride-along and the effect the experience had on him. Six Board members attended the Syracuse Police Department's Civilian Police Academy, April 3 to 5. Mr. McCarthy shared that he appreciates the training except that one of the trainers stated more than once, "the CRB does not want us to hit people." Ms. Releford explained that the training is to give insight into how police are trained, not to gain empathy for the police. Ms. Holmes encouraged the public to attend in the future.

c. Government Relations – Ms. Nilsson expressed interest in being on the committee.

d. Police Relations – Ms. Releford reported that Officer Mark Rusin will attend CRB meetings.

6. New Business

The Citizen Review Board monthly meeting on May 3, 2018, will be in 215 City Hall, iLab Room. Common Council Chambers will be in use for budget hearings.

7. Public Comment (6:30 pm)

- Mr. Yusuf Abdul-Qadir, Director of the Syracuse Chapter of the NYCLU, stated that he has worked closely with the first two administrators of the reformed CRB. He served as a panelist at the Westchester Coalition for Police Reform Forum at Pace University in White Plains in April 2017. He has a working relationship with Mr. Brian Corr, Director of the Cambridge, MA Police Review and Advisory Board and President of the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). The Syracuse Citizen Review Board has a fundamental lack of understanding of civilian oversight of law enforcement and the CRB's role. The CRB needs to recognize and use its power and that its job ends at the recommendation. He suggested contacting the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board for help and training. He read a portion of the state civil rights law, Section 50-a, that shields the personnel records of law enforcement officers from public disclosure. He feels there needs to be a change to the ordinance to keep OPS from getting complainants' personal information (address, telephone number, etc.) as it can cause individuals not to want to make complaints.
- Mr. Koy Ian Adams spoke regarding the CRB's participation in the Civilian Police Academy, stating there is no neutral eye in the Civilian Police Academy and that the CRB needs to keep people first. Going to the Academy appears to take the side of police and you cannot debate whether someone deserves basic humanity.
- Mr. Kevin Donovan, Overdose Prevention Coordinator at ACR Health, spoke on Narcan® (also known by its generic name naloxone) used to counter the effects of opioid overdoses. It counteracts life-threatening depression of the central nervous and respiratory systems. New York State is trying to get Narcan/naloxone into the hands of those most likely to encounter a drug overdose while performing their job – first responders. Currently the Syracuse Police Department does not administer Narcan/naloxone, as it is not in their contract to do so. First responders can administer it with no liability to them. On motion made by Mr. Comeau, seconded by Ms. Carter, the Board unanimously voted to support getting the use of Narcan/naloxone, into the SPD contract.
- Ms. Liza Acquah, mother of the student assaulted by a School Resource Officer at Nottingham High School asked what else can be done. Has the officer been removed from schools? Will the officer be at the school when her son returns? She will keep fighting for justice for her son and other children.
- Ms. Margaret Birdleough stated that the Syracuse Police Department is the most unprofessional group she has ever dealt with. How is it that not every officer has a body camera? She does not feel safe in the city in which she was raised because the police harass her since charges brought against her were dropped. The police think the CRB is a joke.
- Mr. Mikiel Anderson shared that at the April 11 public meeting for the chief of police search Jeff Piedmonte, the Police Benevolent Association (PBA) president, stated

that it is the police's job to intimidate people. Mr. Anderson questioned why those who are punished by the police can have a stigma placed on them, but police personnel records cannot be made public (state civil rights law, Section 50-a). He stated that more pressure needs to be applied to SPD to take the CRB seriously; and that the Common Council needs to take the CRB seriously too because at the CRB 2018-19 budget hearing, Councilor Khalid Bey stated the CRB having subpoena power and outside counsel is a duplication of services.

- Ms. Anika Flagg shared that although she has a sibling who is a member of SPD, she receives no better treatment than any other resident does. She appreciates the diversity of the CRB members. She thanked the Board for not passing the motion to draft a media policy and asked if the conversation would have been the same if anyone other than Mr. Comeau had written a letter to the editor.
- Mr. William Boyde of By His Faith Ministries asked for clarification on whether or not police only have to answer to their chief.

8. Meeting continued in Executive Session.

During the Executive Session, the Board voted on the following cases to determine whether to forward the case to a CRB hearing:

12-037	Not Reopened/No Hearing
16-106	No Hearing (Complainant Deceased)
17-017	No Hearing
17-030	No Hearing
17-050	No Hearing
17-069	No Hearing
17-101	Hearing

On motion duly made, seconded and unanimously adopted, the Board adjourned its meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Betty L. Pearson  
Typist II, Citizen Review Board