

**City of Syracuse
Citizen Review Board
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 3, 2019
5:30 PM to 7:30 PM
Common Council Chambers
Public Comment - 20 minutes at 6:30 PM**

<u>Name</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>A</u>
Carter, Mae	x		R. Daniel Grinnals		x			
Mary Nelson	x		Natale, Dana		x			
Priscilla Santana	x		Ryans, Clifford	x				
Holmes, Hatisha	x		Cynthia Brunson	x				
Kutz, Ruth	x		Nilsson, Lori	x				
McCarthy, Peter	x		Releford, Ranette	x				

On Thursday, October 3, 2019, the City of Syracuse Citizen Review Board (CRB) held an open, stated meeting at 304 City Hall in the Common Council Chambers.

Peter McCarthy, 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 Clifford Ryans seconded by Mae Carter and adopted, the Board approved the Minutes of the September 5, 2019, Board meeting.
2. Chairperson's items
 - a. Bylaws Amendment related to participation. Should this be agreed upon document be added to the Bylaws. We have the ability to add to that document through member vote. Hatisha Holmes stated that we should keep the document separate at this point so that we don't have to keep changing the Bylaws and it takes affect January 1, 2020. Lori Nilsson mentioned that we have been in discussions related to changing the Bylaws so as stated by Hatisha Holmes we should wait to change them instead of changing them now and making other changes two months from now.
 - b. Mr. McCarthy will be sending an email/Doodle Poll to members regarding Annual Board training asking about Saturdays in March.
 - c. Mr. McCarthy asked if anyone was making changes to their contact info to do so as soon. He indicated the need to have the information related to term expiration to be correct especially those Board members whose term ends in December of 2019. Ms. Releford indicated that she received one email change and contact information change. Mr. McCarthy indicated the Board member should contact his or her appointee with respect to your term expiration as soon as possible so that the replacements can be made prior to the beginning of the next term.
 - d. Mr. McCarthy has received some response from people volunteering for administrator evaluation panel. The law states that there will be one Mayoral Appointee, one At-Large and one District Appointee. Mr.

McCarthy moved that Mr. Ryans, Ms. Nilsson will be on the evaluation panel, no second, with no further discussion, all agree. Mr. McCarthy sent an email to Deputy Mayor Sharon Owens asking if she would be serving as the Mayor or Mayor's designate on panel; Majority Leader Steven P. Thompson, chair of Public Safety Committee was notified and a request was made to set up appointment for first meeting. In addition it important to get Ms. Releford evaluation done as soon as possible because they have to appoint new chairs to the Public Safety Committee.

3. Administrator's Report

- a. I bring you greetings from the 2019 NACOLE Conference in Detroit MI; celebrated its 25 years as an entity that supports Civilian Oversight. There was an attendance was of 498 people; who are either in oversight of Jails, Prisons or Police departments. It provided insights, encouragements some insider knowledge and reaffirmed that we still have a lot to do and that we are not alone.
- b. We have been quite busy collaborating to do many presentations around the City. The CRB received three (3) new cases in the month of September making our total number of cases to seven six (76) for this year. August was a pretty busy month with twelve (12) cases coming in which is largest number of cases we received so far this year. The Board will be discussing three (3) cases in Executive session tonight; two (2) from 2016 and one (1) from 2019.
- c. In terms of monthly financial reporting please take a look at budget sheet, you will see what was spent last year for each budget line and what was left over. Please keep numbers in mind when looking at current budge. Mr. Ryans questioned why there was an amount in red and Ms. Releford explained that it means there was a deficit in the training budget but because we didn't utilize funds in other areas we were able to move money from another budget line to cover the deficit. This is why we asked for more money for the training budget in this year's budget in order not to have the same situation. As years go NACOLE Membership fee, NACOLE Conference Registration Fees, Hotel Accommodations, Use of Force Summit and other training fees increase.
- d. A document adopted by the City Clerk regarding Ordinance number 559 for 2019; gives the CRB a \$5,000 for training and training related travel expenses. This grant was received from JAG for SPD and the CRB looking to obtain grant money. We have been allocated these funds and see this as an opportunity to bring in speakers for our annual training day or to serve as resources for a board member to attend training.
- e. 2019 Second Quarter Report has been distributed to the Common Councilors, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Police Chief and the Corporation Council; and uploaded to CRB Website. Third Quarter just end and we have a month to complete that report so please expect that to be coming for review.
- f. We still have some 2017 and 2018 cases that are still outstanding from OPS but the cases are getting done. CRB received about 6 cases this week from OPS and steadily moving along the process of catching up on the backlog. A new person was added to office which has increased their production.

- g. Private investigator Gabe Ramos will be retiring; His PI license is expiring and he will not renewing it. He does not want to take on new cases. A previous discussing occurred a few months prior and a request to look into hiring Virgil Hutchinson was made. Peter McCarthy and R. Daniel Grinnals were invited to interview Mr. Hutchinson and Peter McCarthy appeared. A motion request to hire Virgil Hutchinson as another private investigator from Freelance Investigation Services on the grounds that he understands the Police Department, DA's Office and law enforcement in general. Ms. Brunson made motion to approve Virgil Hutchinson as new PI and remove Gabe Ramos, seconded by Mr. Ryans, further discussion was given by Peter McCarthy related to conflict of interest, etc., two (2) abstained, eight (8) agree.

4. Committees

a. Community Outreach

- i. CRB presentation at Hillbrook for youth with respect to knowing their rights and to answer some questions that they may have related to anything.
- ii. Presentation at TNTs throughout the City and we are looking for volunteers to attend.
- iii. CRB to attend and give out informational materials at the SPD Forum which was previously scheduled on October 18th but is now rescheduled for November 12th.
- iv. CRB will do a presentation at Onondaga Volunteer Lawyers Project Office for students attending SU and participating in LGBTQ program with former Board Chair Mallory Livingston. We will explain what the CRB its process and to discuss the current LGBTQ policy of SPD.
- v. Ms. Lori Nilsson completed some research for a CRB on the purchase of a tent to be utilized at outreach and events. A 10x10 tent appear to be acceptable and the price ranges between \$70-300 depending on what you are looking for. The commercial tent had best reviews; we can put a sign on it, comes with wheeled carry bag and four sand bags. Ms. Nilsson recommends and moved to purchase at \$149 on Amazon, seconded by Mr. Ryans, no further discussion, two (2) abstained, all agree and approved unanimously.

b. Board Developments and Training

- i. Mr. McCarthy reiterated to send out polls for March training date.

c. Government Relations

- i. CRB continued meeting with the SPD and Corporation Council related to what they believe the CRB is authorized to receive based upon their reading of the Ordinance, what the OPS report consist of and what CRB is entitled to. Ms. Releford referenced a letter drafted by Kristen E. Smith, Esq., and letter by CRB attorney (Bousquet Holstein) in response to a memorandum. We have requested our Attorney review the letter and requested a meeting be scheduled with CRB to discuss the letters further and decide what we can agree upon. Based upon what has happened historically the CRB receives whatever OPS reviews in their investigation but previously there were some points of contention as to what exactly should be received in terms of Body-worn-camera footage and other documents which these documents clears up. Heading in a better direction with Corp. Council and SPD.
- ii. SPD would like CRB to write a joint letter with them to the Mayor's office acknowledging some points related to the current Use of Force Policy which CRB has made recommendations for years. The CRB is cautious about this letter so we would like everyone to know that we are looking at this

thoroughly, we are looking at the importance of it, we are looking at the ramifications of it and we will not do it if it is not in the best interest of the CRB.

iii. CRB had Police Liaison committee meeting that a few board members attended on September 12th in which some of the contentions were discussed related to the memo and what has transpired between OPS and CRB. We have given feedback to SPD about training and we continue to have open lines of communication between the CRB office the SPD liaison committee.

5. New Business-none

6. Public Comment (6:30 pm)

i. Yusuf Abdul-Qadir from New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) provided a letter dated October 3, 2019 respectfully submitting testimony in support of the passage of two (2) bills collectively known as the Right to Know Act. Ms. Releford asked to receive a copy of proposed legislation and was advised that he would make sure we received a copy. (attachment)

7. Mr. Ryans made motion to move to Executive Session, seconded by MS. Brunson, all agree and meeting continued in Executive Session.

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:

Case Number: 16-002	No Hearing
Case Number: 16-041	No Hearing
Case Number: 19-009	No Hearing

On motion duly made by Peter McCarthy, seconded by Priscilla Santa and unanimously adopted, the Board adjourned its meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Ranette L. Releford
Administrator, Citizen Review Board

RLR/mmd

Enclosure