

PBAB Meeting Minutes

Present: E. Buisch, A. Dunn, R. Maclean, J. McCorkle, I. Rodriguez, A. Spink (alt.), A. Blowers (comptroller), F. Gaglianese (CC liaison)

January 20, 2022

6pm on Zoom

Agenda:

- Approval of December minutes: approved unanimously
- Appointments for 2022-23

Irene will be stepping down. Andrew as the alternate will be stepping in.
Adam will investigate into and recommend that CC select another alternate to replace Andrew.

The Board recommends that Amara Dunn be reappointed to a two-year term.
The Board also recommends that Andrew Spink be appointed to a two-year term.

The Board elects Amara Dunn as the new chair.

- City liaison

On behalf of the Board, Irene thanks Adam, who is departing, for his hard work in supporting this Board.

Adam: thanks the Board for its work. It's difficult timing, as it was when the Board was sat in the summer. In the interim, we will continue to have Councilor Gaglianese and Chief Passalacqua as resources. Erica Collins will replace Adam as our main contact with City Hall. Finance reports and meeting scheduling can be handled through her. Adam will connect with Amara and Erica to set that up.

Unfortunately, the planned "budget academy" will have to be cancelled.

- Future meeting planning

In lieu of the planned budget session, how should we proceed? Keep to our regular schedule. We can't have the budget academy next month, but we can keep it in mind.
Next meeting February 17.

- Financial review

Adam's last day is not until February 1st—Board members should feel free to reach out to

him with questions about the latest financial reports.

Q (AD): We have inquired into occasions where certain expenses are paid from unrelated budget lines. (E.g. psych evaluations showing up under office supplies, or the like.) Better to have that charge listed in the right category. Does the Board want to recommend an accounting change? How can we go about requesting that change?

Adam: The problem is some things don't easily fall into existing categories, but I can certainly pass on recommendations.

IR: This practice is City-wide isn't it, not just the PD?

Adam: Yes and we've been trying to change that from my department. It often works Ok in January, but when we get around to Nov., Dec., departments are trying to find room in the budget for expenses.... From my point of view, we'd start with the PD and change practices across departments. I often recommend adding another line item, but say with the PD with so many different line items that can be difficult.

AD: Can "physical exams" be changed to "medical exams" for clarity, and so psych evals and the like would have a place to go?

Adam: The deputy comptroller will have a hand on it. That could be an easy change in terms of the software we use.

IR: In a future meeting review the accounts so far and make suggestions.

AD: We have all of 2021 so we can evaluate the whole data, make recommendations about how expenses are categorized.

- Discussion of Topics for Upcoming Meetings

RM: advocates program of broad political education on the problem of policing. Contrasts the period of struggle that provided the impetus for this Board with the current period of ebb tide in the movement, stasis, and government breakdown at every level. In a period of widespread demobilization or despair, the Board ought to educate itself and try to stay committed to a program of assessing policing and public safety from a critical citizens' point of view.

AD: Readings or videos? Read or watch something in specific to discuss. We have to be strategic in what we pick. And we also have to be realistic about our capacity for large amounts of reading.

EB: Going back to thinking of number-wise. We're like a little hive in the whole machine. But we are budget. Our hands are tied a lot. We can recommend things to the council. We don't want to veer off of remembering. We only have a small bit of control. We mainly should focus on understanding budget processes. We're looking at whether

the City is spending money wisely, not to make a reform. We should focus on the numbers.

JM: I would want to know, how do you spend money wisely? How is that defined?

EB: I think we've already looked at all these reports. DCJS. Why request all these things? We're taking baby steps. We're questioning a lot of things. Looking at it like it's our own personal budget. I think sharing articles is great, but with Adam being gone, we have to focus on learning more about the budget process. That has to be the focus. So many different things on the numbers side that we don't understand why things are done that way. Adam can suggest things we can look at as far as learning more.

Adam: There are certainly two sides to it. Things that don't tie directly to the budget. It's important to not lose sight of those things. Most important thing would be to follow and review these monthly reports. Best way you're going to learn how the police budgeting process goes. We'll see what time of year certain things happen. I'm continuing to ask questions about why. Why do computer costs go up in the summer, if they do. Why is overtime higher in February than in March, etc.? Outside of that, there isn't much education that is done about the budget process. It appears publicly like it's a couple weeks long, but it really goes on all the time. I'll do some thinking about that. I'll do a deep dive on the reporting to make sure you're getting good quality information down the line.

FLG: Is it possible that we could pay you a fee for a weekend to do the budget academy? Because it's so essential.

Adam: There might be some issues with my new employer, which I might be able to work out. At the very least, I could put together the documentation, get it out and the Board could ask questions.

AD: Could you also send us the line item justifications for the PD from last year?

EB: That should be our homework, to digest the info that Adam provides. Instead of bombarding Erica, we can get our questions to Adam before Feb. 1st.

IR: Wholeheartedly agree that we need to understand more. Learning some of the bigger, macro issues, possibilities for what policing might look like. I do feel that falls under the purview of this Board. You might come to the conclusion in a year that the model of policing we use here in Geneva needs to be changed. That's what I hear from Rob and Amara, and I'd like to see the Board explore that direction

AD: When I make a personal family budget, it reflects values. One of our roles is to ask about budget priorities. It goes beyond the numbers, making the math work. We have to assess whether the policing budget reflects our values.

JM: Rob's suggested reading from before: Karakatsanis, "Punishment Bureaucracy."
Also could we have updates on the status of the union negotiations?

Adam: City and Union have reached tentative agreement, which will be presented at Feb City Council meeting, where it will be voted on.

The Board will focus on financial and budget documents in February, and then move in March to broaden our program of education, perhaps by looking at scholarship or other sources.

- DCJS:

AD: It would be really good to see active vs. reactive responses. That will help us understand community perceptions, which the DCJS isn't really oriented to. I'd love to see further breakdowns, like is it a mental health response, traffic breakdown, etc. It sounded from our last conversation, it may or may not be possible to pull that out from the GPD data within time constraints, but it would be good to have that asked. Once the DCJS study is complete, I think part of our role should be to assess what information is still needed that wasn't covered in it. Our approach was we should do the free one first.

Adam: (in response to question): best to send questions [about DCJS study] from the Board so things don't get lost in the shuffle. Also include Erica Collins on communications.

Amara will write up her question and send it around for others to add to.

Other DCJS questions:

AD: it would be great to have a qualitative assessment of what the community perceives about the police.

JM: speaks to the question of value, that would shed light on what Genevans value regarding policing and public safety. Who creates benchmarks for various assessments? The DCJS is ratified by the association of Police Chiefs. If it was an association of criminologists, you'd have a totally different benchmark. If it was NAACP that'd be a whole different set. We should weigh the different types of analyses and benchmarks re: policing. A long-term analysis from a community perspective—perceptions, yes, but also including other types of analysis.

Adjourned.