

PBAB Draft Minutes 5-18-23:

Present: Amara Dunn (chair) (AD); Andrew Spink (secretary) (AS); James McCorkle (JM); Robert Maclean (RN) (via zoom); Stefanie Newcomb (City Comptroller) (SN); guest appearance Ken Camera (City Council – Ward 4)

Absent: Michele Neary

AD: John Lynch emailed his resignation shortly before the meeting.

KC: Can we clarify the number of board members currently?

AD: The current PBAB resolution says 7 members through the end of 2023 plus one alternate. As of today, there are five members and no alternates due to the resignation of John Lynch.

SN: I don't count in that tally of members.

AD: We cannot approve meeting minutes. Five is a quorum under the old rules, and there are only four here today.

RM: Did we get a clarification as to why a quorum is five?

SN: I didn't get any clarification from legal. It had something to do with not being able to have half a person, which is why it went from 4 to 5.

RM: The current circumstances are we have a board of 5 people and 2 vacancies.

SN: I didn't get the information about the number to be a quorum from Emil Bove, I got it from one of the other members at the firm.

AD: It would be great to have clarity, but the only other thing we're not able to do without a quorum which is approve minutes. We can still post minutes in draft form.

SN: It's more filling the vacancies. We now have two vacancies plus an alternate.

AS: I emailed Councilor Gaglianese, and copied everyone on, asking that a quorum be adjusted to a bare majority, and he expressed agreement, but there was no resolution presented to Council.

KC: I want to bring up the reason why I'm here. I will be out of the country for the next meeting. I would like to write the resolution.

SN: There would need to be two resolutions, 1) make quorum a bare majority, 2) appointing new members. Appointments happen during the end of the meeting during boards and commissions.

KC: I want to work with Frank to present a resolution.

SN: Can you give it to someone to read?

KC: Frank will be there so he can read it.

SN: We should think about what we want the Council resolution about the quorum to say.

AS: The email to Frank had suggested a bare majority of filled seats.

KC: But shouldn't there be a minimum? What if there is only person on the board?

AS: Yes, you're right, since there was a period of time when Amara and I were the only members and that shouldn't have been considered a quorum.

KC: I think there should be a minimum of 5 members on the board.

AS: Under the original PBAB, a quorum was 3 members out of 5.

KC: What's the maximum board members now, 7?

AD: Yes, it's 7 now.

SN: We have 5 members seats filled, and have started collecting applications to get up to the maximum of 7 members, plus an alternate. The PBAB can't pick the applicants, they all go through Lori Guinan (city clerk) and City Council. Frank has emailed 3 out of 5 applicants.

KC: I will tell Frank he needs to come up with 3 people.

SN: Plus Amara will be moving outside the City July 29. Ideally, I would like new members selected at June meeting.

AD: The deadline for applications was March 10.

KC: Can we send an email to the applicants?

SN: Council can, but this board doesn't know who applied.

SN: Sounds like the resolution should say a quorum is a bare majority of filled seats, but a quorum is a minimum of 3 people. And then we'll also have a resolution appointing 3 members and an alternate.

KC: We can present 4 names to City Council.

SN: I will get Lori to present it to the meeting as a resolution for June. If you and Frank can finish the interviews and get a list of 4 people, that would be good.

KC: Your report to City Council was really good stuff. I appreciate that you've moved into other topics like accountability. It will be a better department if it got implemented.

SN: We've had a very productive 9 months.

AD: I'm a little concerned because Frank said we should pass a resolution to reduce the size of the board.

KC: I agree with not reducing. I'm for more people.

AS: The board will reduce from 7 to 5 at the end of 2023. The PBAB originally had a maximum of 5 members plus an alternate. Two members were removed by Council, but then later restored, and the board temporarily was expanded from 5 to 7 per the resolution that City Council passed at the time the members were restored.

KC: I am in favor of getting rid of the reduction and having 7 going forward.

AS: I'm in favor of keeping 7 too.

[KC left the meeting at this time due to prior engagements]

SN: The minutes can't be voted on, but I will post them as drafts. I realized I never sent the monthly expenses. I will get them all to you.

AD: Next on the agenda is police chief search.

SN: We have an internal and external list. There are 3 internal candidates who took the test and passed. On the civil service side of things, if there are 3 qualified candidates that are on the internal list, we cannot go to the external list unless someone on the internal list signs off that they are no longer interested. If all 3 internal candidates remain interested, then we can only move forward with the internal list. But there is an internal and external list, 5 or 6 potential.

AS: Does this mean that the new chief must be one of the 3 internal if all 3 stay interested?

SN: Yes, that is correct.

AS: What if all 3 internal candidates are considered and declined?

SN: Then the process starts over.

AS: With new exams etc?

SN: Yes.

SN: When Chief Passalacqua retires, it will be a dual lieutenant system as an interim, and the City Manager can resolve any disagreements between the two. The City Manager decided not to

have an interim single chief. There will be public town halls, along with an internal and external interview. We're waiting for the county to release the list.

JM: Would the town hall meetings be in the Fall?

SN: Yes, if we get the list first or second week of June, then we would start the interview process middle of July, so town hall meetings would be end of July, August or maybe September at the latest, with a new candidate in place October or November at the latest. We're hopeful we have a good pool of applicants to consider.

AD: Would it be worth spending some time tonight talking about possible questions to ask?

SN: We should wait until June? Depending on who the candidates are, it might drum up different questions.

AD: We could also do some questions over email.

JM: We should do "homework" of questions to ask the chief candidates.

RM: I agree with homework assignment of preparing question for candidates.

SN: I will make sure the PBAB report is shared with the candidates.

AD: How should we prepare the questions?

JM: Let's just email them on an email chain.

SN: I agree with doing an email chain.

AD: The mayor asked if we had talked to Chief Passalacqua before making our report to City Council (in May). For the report, we certainly didn't want to tell City Council what they must do, and we left them broad enough to be flexible.

SN: I had an additional meeting with the City Manager and two lieutenants and noted that the report was supposed to be broad recommendations. It was meant to be different perspective than a police officer. They appreciated the report.

RM: I was wondering if there were any criticisms or discontent with the report.

SN: There weren't really any criticisms, I just brought it up since it was in the newspaper. It was just more getting mental health and dealing with the elderly. It was very positive and there wasn't criticism either. There was a lot of effort put in and we need support. There is work being done and also people lining up to be part of it.

JM: I want to compliment Amara and Andrew for presenting.

AS: I thought Amara's answer to the mayor was good (when the mayor asked about whether we had consulted with the Chief before making the report). We didn't show the Chief the report ahead of time. We didn't mean to exclude the Chief and we had spoken to him at various times over the last two years, but we also didn't mean to give the chief a veto and the report was supposed to be independent.

SN: And I texted the City Manager to clarify this was more of a conversation starter and was flexible than rigid recommendations.

AD: The mayor was interested in seeing a database as to how these mental health programs have worked in other places.

SN: If you're interested in continuing that, that could be helpful. High-level data would be helpful.

AD: The mayor seemed interested in seeing more granular detail.

AD: We also have the list of potential funding sources that Michele and David (former alternate PBAB member) came up with, which is worth revisiting.

SN: Economic indicators are bad right now, so 2024 budget is going to be a very conservative budget.

AS: Just to clarify, that's national economic indicators, not anything that's specific to the City of Geneva, right?

SN: Yes, these is national. Sales tax for first quarter was up, but it was up in January and February and took a giant nose dive in March. Local indicators are agreeing with that, but we're hopeful since Geneva is a tourist town.

JM: Pilots for lakefront development do not looking promising.

SN: We're looking for options to address that, but pilots aren't up until 2026.

JM: That affects police department and diversion away from other things, police department always has first dibs.

AD: My understanding is that the city wishes the hospital, the college (HWS), and Cornell Agritech would offer more money. Would one of these three be interested in sponsoring a mental health position?

SN: It's worth looking into. The colleges are going through their own things with enrollment down, but there is a mutually beneficial aspect of doing this. Having someone on the city staff that also benefits HWS. The idea of shared services is also good. For example, we have shared services with the City of Canandaigua and I feel like things are moving in that direction.

JM: Does the college attorney interact with the city at all?

SN: He is on several committees with city and very involved with conversations. The president of HWS is also very involved in things going on. I would like to see all the major players at the table.

AS: How does policing generally work as it relates to HWS?

SN: Campus safety works on day-to-day stuff. If 911 is called, Campus Safety is simultaneously notified. They don't have the same authority as GPD.

JM: For GPD to come, it really needs to be an emergency. GPD stays off unless there is something major.

SN: If it's on campus, Campus Safety will handle it unless it escalates.

AS: The reason I ask is how would splitting the cost of a social worker work with HWS?

SN: Maybe have an office on campus and not?

JM: Psychological counseling on the campus is really at a deficit. HWS doesn't have enough staff for that. My only concern is that the person would become HWS-centric and focus less on the city.

SN: There have been shared service agreements where we tried to share a communications officer and it didn't really work out.

JM: But also, the idea of the college not being insular but extending outward. How can the college be more part of the community?

SN: I think there's potential to have the conversation. Just because we've always done things one way.

AS: The report envisioned a social worker who responds to calls rather than does therapy. Does the college have different needs than the proposal we made?

JM: They do have a call center.

SN: Yes, students can drop in any time if they're going through something, but can also schedule something. For example, during finals time, there are students that are experiencing crisis and don't know who to call. Some people know to call campus safety and some call GPD. I was surprised by the amount of situations that arise, especially holidays and finals. There's a lot of pressure and stress.

JM: The colleges also have a higher incidence compared to other colleges because it's more supportive of people with mental challenges. We're always given history and information, and

there is a rise in self-harm and depression. Just looking at my classes every year, and number of people who drop or take leave is surprising.

AS: So it sounds like the type of social worker we proposed in the report (that is, a responder to a crisis) would be beneficial for HWS?

JM: And having a walk-in counselor could be beneficial to the community.

SN: There is a shortage of staff. I feel like this person could be beneficial from a procedural standpoint, and people will know what you're supposed to do in that situation. It's not really fully common knowledge what you do to help someone in that situation. There's a need at HWS and also in the city. Maybe there is potential for shared service.

AD: The only other things on the schedule were discussing schedule. It sounds like we should definitely meet in June and July.

SN: Yes, that makes sense. I think if we all agree there's items we want to discuss in a month, then we can do it. And if there's nothing to discuss, we can take the month off. Probably November and/or December is probably off.

AD: For next time, we'll bring questions for the Chief of Police candidates.

SN: Sounds like June will be housekeeping items.

AD: Next meeting is June 15. 6PM.

[Adjourned]