

Geneva Police Budget Advisory Board
Proposed Minutes from Meeting May 19, 2022

Present: Amara Dunn, James McCorkle, Andrew Spink (note taker)

Discussion of approval of minutes from April 21, 2022 meeting. Minutes could not be approved because only two of the members who were at that meeting are currently present. Andrew was not present at the April meeting and didn't feel comfortable approving minutes for a meeting he did not attend. Approval of April 21, 2022 minutes tabled until next time.

Evelyn Buisch announced her resignation from the PBAB by email, and did not attend this meeting May 19, 2022. At the time of the May 19, 2022 meeting the remaining members were Amara Dunn, Robert Maclean, James McCorkle, and Andrew Spink.

AD: Noted that no one is here for public comment.

JM: We should leave public comment as an ongoing thing.

[Note: subsequent to the May 19, 2022 meeting, further review of the resolution which created the PBAB showed that public comment at PBAB meetings is not allowed. The PBAB members did not realize this at the time that public comment was put on the agenda for the May 19, 2022 meeting, but in any event, this unintentional violation of the PBAB resolution was harmless because no one came for public comment].

JM: Sgt. Nolan contacted me about attending the meeting.

Discussion of FOIL requests:

JM: I would want to know the amount that the City paid in police misconduct lawsuits, but aggregated in 5 year blocks, for 15 years total.

AD: Maybe we shouldn't use the phrase "police misconduct" since that is open to interpretation

AS: Maybe instead say something like "all suits against the city of Geneva police department involving police officers."

JM: Expressed agreement with using broader language because some lawsuits might be classified.

JM: How does the city pay for judgments? Is there liability insurance? Or a bond?

AS: Will judgments necessarily indicate whether involved police at all?

AD: Who would be able to tell us the amount of judgments without having to FOIL? Erica Collins? Or maybe Jen the acting City Manager?

AS: To James' question of how the city pays for judgments, we could probably get this information without FOILing. Also, we should probably state a reason as to why we want this information.

JM: Transparency is a good reason, as is professionalism and efficacy of policing. Also, without this information, the full budget information is incomplete.

AD: I'm curious to know the costs of covering liability versus the costs of training, though admittedly this is hard to measure.

JM: Are training costs comparable to lawsuits?

AD: It would be interesting to know how much police time is invested in training people hours, not just dollars for training.

AS: It seems there is valid budget reason to get this information, though I'm concerned about upsetting the City by requesting sensitive information, and don't want to push our luck.

AD: Maybe start with going to the City Manager. There aren't many people paying attention to this board and our FOIL requests would be pretty modest compared to, for example, FOIL requests from investigative journalists.

JM: We are just seeking to understand the budget.

AD: I will draft an email of request for information from City Manager

AS: What if the City opposes a FOIL request? I'm not looking to litigate FOIL requests. That is not a good use of our time.

AD: We should start by asking the City Manager for info.

AS: I'm not really worried someone will sue to abolish the PBAB, more just worried about annoying city government by making them turn over information they don't want to.

Other matters:

AD: We will make another list of questions for the Chief. Should we share by email? Should we invite the Chief to come or just do email?

JM: In-person is good for follow-up though it's a demand on his time. I would prefer he come. It might be better if one person asks the questions and also ask ahead of time.

AS: In-person is nice, but I don't want to make it seem like we're demanding his presence.

AD: Or maybe ask him to answer in the way he prefers, if he thinks in-person is more efficient.

AD: Let's ask him to come in July since August seems too late and will be busy. The DCJS study is coming June or July.

AD: We don't know when budget documents are available to us. Not sure if there will be a comptroller by then. Let's send a preliminary invitation to the chief in July.

AD: I will create a google doc of questions for the chief.

June Agenda:

- Go over questions to the Chief
- Instituting more of Robert's Rules of Order

AD: Robert's Rules of Order, to make sure one person doesn't dominate the conversation. Perhaps use modified rules. For example, perhaps voting to approve the agenda or adopt rules for everyone to speak once before someone speaks twice.

AS: I'm not sure how Robert's Rules of Order work, or if other systems are good too.

JM: It's good to approve the agenda plus minutes, or maybe just approve minutes.

AS: What about an alternate to the PBAB. What will rules say about how much they speak?

JM: It's ok for the alternate to be very participatory given our turnover.

AD: I think it's ok for the alternate to participate.

AS: Alternate is not mentioned the resolution but I don't think anyone will object to letting them talk.

AD: How much should the liaison participate? Perhaps the chair has some discretion there.

AS: It's unclear to me how much the liaison is supposed to participate but I agree the chair should have some control over that so all board members can be heard on an issue.

AD: I will confirm that the vacancy will be publicly advertised.

AS: Erica's email indicated GPD used the minimum staffing approach, though the Chief said that lacked objective standards. Though I could see that in a small city why you would want this because per capita might not be enough to safely respond to a call.

AD: Let's discuss Erica's email next time. I will prepare an agenda, including a discussion of Robert's Rules of Order.

Adjourned.