

PBAB Minutes 11-17-22

Present: Amara Dunn (chair) (AD) Andrew Spink (secretary) (AS), Michele Neary (MN), David Strickland (alternate) (DS), Stefanie Newcomb (city comptroller) (SN)

Absent: Jonathan Millis, John Lynch, Frank Gaglianese (city council liaison)

Motion to approve the amended minutes from both September and October, 2022. Motion approved 3-0.

Topic: DCJS study:

The DCJS study is located here:

<https://cityofgenevany.com/DocumentCenter/View/963/Completed-Administrative-Study-2022-PDF>

DS: Has there been any public response to the DCJS study?

SN: the report says we need the number of police we actually have. The Chief was relieved by the results.

DS: It seemed like a validation of what was going on.

SN: Yes.

AS: To clarify, the DCJS studies says we need 6 officers, but don't we have 6 vacancies.

SN: We have 9 openings, but some of those will be filled by promotions, so we really have 6 vacancies. We're getting 2 transfers from Seneca Falls PD, which is great. They don't need to go to academy. They have significant on-the-job experience. There was a leadership change in Seneca Falls that caused them to transfer.

MN: Is that 2 of the 6 that will be filled?

SN: Yes, but we'll also have retirements coming up.

MN: How soon will the transfers be working?

SN: One starts the first week of December. They have to go through another psych evaluation. We're hearing good reviews of them. It's cost saving for us. We're bringing them in at higher salary than a new officer but we don't need to pay for them to go to academy. We do pay for the medical evaluations. There are not a whole lot of rumblings about the DCJS study from City Council.

AS: So once we fill what City Council allotted, does that put us consistent with where the study says we should be?

SN: Yes, within one officer. When we count uniformed officer, we're counting the school resource officer, but DCJS doesn't count him. But it's good to know we're where we should be.

AS: That's good because I remember the Ontario County Sheriff DCJS study showed them understaffed.

SN: There was some concern that we would have issues, since the Ontario County Sheriff DCJS had them understaffed, but it's good. We're relatively where we should be. The Chief was relieved. And it didn't shake anyone too horribly.

AD made a google doc of questions. AD read her first question:

Page 8 - Report states that "department personnel often times generate calls for service directly into the agency's records management system thereby bypassing the 911 Center." What would cause a call for service to be generated by GPD personnel, rather than through a 911 dispatcher? How else do calls come in? In the next paragraph the report talks about reactive calls that are generated by residents, proactive calls that are generated by officers, and "administrative activity". So maybe it's the proactive and administrative calls that are referred to here?

SN: 911 is dispatched through county. You can call 911 or call the Geneva police department directly. Some people will call police department directly when they need assistance and there is no emergency. A GPD officer will enter that to show they're responding to something.

AD: It would be great to get data of number proactive calls versus reactive calls, and by geography.

SN: This would be hard to pull right now, but it will be easier with new data system. There's probably a way to use GPS data for location. We kind of want info like that anyway to determine where to place cameras in the city.

AD: read another question:

Some GPD calls for service were classified as "administrative activity". And the DCJS study still multiplied the total hours for calls by 3 as a buffer for "time for routine and/or directed patrol activity" (p. 9). And on p. 7, this list of what accounted for in the "buffer factor" is lengthier ("time spent on preventive patrol, directed patrol, inspectional services, report writing, vehicle servicing, personal needs, etc.") How are the "administrative activities" different from the tasks accounted for by the buffer?

SN: I'm not sure but I will get back to you.

AD: read her next question:

Page 10 - The GPDs Assignment/Availability Factor is 1.78. How does this factor compare to other departments? In particular, how do we compare to other departments in

terms of sick leave, personal leave, and training time (maybe also compensatory time? what is this)? These could be related to overall culture or health of the department. In some ways, this factor is a measure of productivity (or burnout?). Although of course no one should work 365 days/yr, presumably a larger value means a reduced availability of personnel in a department to work (for many reasons).

SN: That's something we should reach out about. We had a contact at DCJS we could maybe ask for clarification from.

AD: read her question:

Page 11 notes that the DCJS recommended number of uniformed officers (not sergeants or other supervisory personnel) for the GPD is 20. According to the last 10 years of GPD annual reports, the GPD was understaffed in 2021 (17 officers), and was down to 14 officers at the time data was collected (started in late 2021, but unsure when/if this number was updated), but has been at or above the recommended staff prior to that (at least as far back as 2011), assuming needs have been constant for the last 10 years.

SN: We've been adequately staffed but recently the Chief said it dwindled and was cut. Before there was not a protocol for handling mental health calls, but now that's something we're looking at. Five to seven years ago they felt like they were adequately staffed. It's been a struggle for the last 5 years or so.

AD read her next question:

Later on page 11, there is a discussion about the changes in calls for service over time, and staffing levels. To review these data (going back to 2010, where possible), you can refer to our summary of the GPD annual reports. These show that 2014 was a low point of calls, and that in 2010-2013 there had been between 22,000 and 25,000 calls annually. Unfortunately, where there are data on domestic calls, very little data on mental health calls and none on drug overdose calls are reported in the annual GPD reports. Improved reporting/record keeping in this area would not only be informative for the public, but could be used to help support application for some sort of grant funding to increase staff support for responding to mental health calls. Hopefully the new data management system will help with this? Can request more/different data for the 2022 GPD annual report?

SN: We could also request this info from Ontario County since they run 911. Though we wouldn't get it from people calling the department directly. We can ask what level of calls we're responding to. We should be looking at mental health response training. I feel like we can at least get this data in relation to 911 calls.

AD: The DCJS study had numbers on mental health, though I'm not sure where these came from, whether from tedious extraction or from 911. We don't need them retroactively, but it would be good to have going forward.

SN: What I would like to take from the study is not just the number of police officers, but also other data. There's some data they're looking at that's clearly playing a factor in staffing levels and area of need, and we would like to have those are part of our discussion.

AD read her next question:

The table at the top of page 13 notes that 34 is the number of "total recommended staff" for the GPD. But I don't remember where/how in the report this number was derived.

- 20 uniformed officers (not including sergeants or supervisors)
- 1 police chief
- 1 lieutenant to supervise detectives

How do we know the correct number of lieutenants and sergeants?

SN: We have 1 Chief, 2 lieutenants, 4 sergeants, and 18 uniformed officers counting the school resource officer. We also have 34 but our 34 didn't match the 34 DCJS recommend as to what they should be doing.

AS: Wait, that only adds up to 25 not 34.

SN: I'm counting who we actually have, not the vacancies. Crossing guards and parking enforcement do not get counted. Also there are 3 detectives.

AS: It sounds like 1 Chief, 2 lieutenants, 4 sergeants, 3 detectives, and 18 uniformed officers, that makes 28, plus 6 vacancies makes 34.

SN: Yes that's right. The lieutenant is the shift decision maker. They like to have 2 sergeants on every shift. The second lieutenant is in charge of the detective bureau. Two of the detectives are also SWAT trained so they can be pulled if there is a SWAT situation.

AD: The study says 2 sergeants per shift is effective.

SN: Yes, so if one needs to go out, we have another.

AD: They recommend extra civilian support staff, and this seems reasonable.

SN: They'll be back to 2 full-time civilian staff in the front office soon. That was already in the budget.

DS: The Chief says they spend \$163,000 in overtime due to shift mandates. Will the new hires reduce those numbers?

SN: Yes, we're trying to get City Council to understand that shift mandates require us to have at least 3 people, and we're over budget for overtime. It is leading to burnout. Some officers are not feeling well, but feel guilty for being out. Overtime will decrease, but actual salary paid out will decrease.

DS: Do shift mandates eat up most of the overtime, compared to say, SWAT teams?

SN: SWAT teams get paid out of separate pot. Sometimes we need specific officers for certain things in situations (for example, a suspect turns himself in and wants to speak to a specific officer who needs to be called in from off-duty) but most overtime is due to shift mandates. The GPD is welcoming of transfers and recruitment suggestions.

MN: What are they doing differently for recruiting?

SN: The GPD has “stay stipends” which is a recruitment retention thing that a lot of cities are doing, that says once you make it through academy and make it six months, then you get a one-time stay stipend because data has shown that once you get someone in the door and committed for six months, you can kind of tell whether they will work or not work. The bucked for this is \$20,000 but that’s for all city departments. The most a stipend would be would be \$1,000.

MN: What other departments are having recruitment issues?

SN: The Department of Public Works is having issues. And the Rec Department just got fully staffed. We’re having retention issues, especially because the private sector is offering signing bonuses. The stipends are first-come first-serve mostly, trying to take discretion out of it. Though the stipend to a Department of Public Works worker is not the same as that of an officer due to different duties.

MN: What can you give a police officer as an enticement to come or stay in Geneva?

SN: Some of it is written in police union contract. You have to be careful what you give to a new recruit because of what is given to existing officers. There is wording in the union contract we need to be aware of. New York State also has limits on what we can give to any employee, so it’s not as easy as the private sector. We can’t just randomly give people \$5,000, or reduce health insurance payments, for example. What we can do is mandated by union contracts.

MN: I know through family there are a lot of young recruits in New York City that are very upset but is there anything we could do to offer them? For example, Hobart had made a rule of no off-campus student living, but then reversed themselves. But if housing had opened up, could we get landlords to revitalize things? What kinds of things would be against union rules?

SN: I’m not sure, but we can look into ideas. There are a lot of things we’re not allowed to do because of the state rules. We are hearing there are housing issues around and nothing is affordable, so that’s something we’re looking into. But also some recruits have families, so finding apartments wouldn’t necessarily solve everything, but would help. We want to start looking into this. We want to explore housing.

AD read a note she had taken on the report:

Note on p. 14 that the report recommends regularly revisiting the Police Reform and Reinvention Collective Collaborative plan, and using surveys and panels/focus groups to better understand what the community wants and needs from the GPD.

AD had a question:

A-3 - There were 499 “Police Information” calls for service in 2021. What are these?

SN: I’m not sure. Those could be FOIL requests, which are very time consuming, especially related to police and arrest records which need to be redacted. I have a feeling this is a large part of what information calls are. It could be stuff like car seats checks and things like that, or maybe people calling the GPD for clarification about things. But my guess is that FOIL is primarily what that is.

AD noted: A-3 - There were 15,724 “Property Checks” in 2021. That’s half of the 2021 calls. That was kind of shocking to me.

SN: I didn’t realize until I came here the level of property checks.

DS: Is it because of lake houses?

SN: Some are, and some are rental properties, or neighbors of rental property. It’s frustrating when people call the police for things like tree disputes, which is making it harder to respond to other things. People call for non-life-threatening things which can take up too much time. For example, people call the police when someone leaves the lights on in City Hall if lights are on past 8 PM.

AS: According to Appendix C the larceny crimes far outweigh other types of crimes. Page 12 of the DCJS study has 3 focal areas that the 3 detectives are focused on? (1. Major crimes, 2. Family/juvenile issues, 3. Drugs). Where does larceny fall on that framework? To me as a private citizen I’m more concerned about things getting stolen than say, people doing drugs.

SN: I can get clarification on this.

Topic: Assigning Research Tasks

AD identified four research tasks

1. Recruitment
2. Mental health
3. Improved service contracts
4. What are other police departments doing for funding grants?

SN: We’re trying to hire a grants coordinator. We need to start exploring other options for funding. We do know there are significant grants out there for fire and police but we kind of missed the boat on some of those. Grants are something I’m trying to currently work on, and the

PBAB can look at this. From an administrative standpoint, we're kind of throwing stuff out there and see what sticks. For Department of Public Works we got a NYCERTA grant with a hybrid vehicle. We won't get a hybrid vehicle for police, but there may be other grants out there we can apply for, and not use taxpayer dollars. Finding the grants that are out there is on the list.

AD: Is the city limited by indirect rates on grants?

SN: Not really. Some of the grant money is very general, for example the fire department got a general grant. Some grants don't require a ton of reporting. Some grants are easier than others. They're kind of scattered all over the place.

DS: I would like to work on the task of recruitment, and Michele mentioned interest in that.

MN: Yes, I'm interested in recruiting.

AD: I would like to work on mental health research.

SN: I'm already working on the contract issue. That's something I'll continue to share as I update it. Some contracts we have in place are the result of a mandate, such as body cameras. There was a quick turnaround, and there weren't enough resources to put research into different contracts. The body cameras and GPS tracking have at least another full year on the contract. We can look for 2024 budget. For example, we got a donation of a refrigerator to store evidence. I also want to have people follow news about what other police departments are doing, since that helps us know what to do.

AS: I've always been interested in the mental health issue.

AD: I feel like the Jonathan and John might be interested in other topics, but I can email them.

SN: There are no dumb suggestions or questions. More ideas are better.

AD: Going forward, for December should we update each other on what we found?

AD: Let's plan for the December meeting. Let's stick with December 15. There are two who will be missing on the 15th but three missing on December 8. I probably won't be here in the 15th, maybe remotely. I will probably be driving back from Albany.

SN: I can't be here the 15th.

AD: I think Jonathan Millis said he could make 15th but not the 8th.

SN: I'm excited about what this group can do. I appreciate everyone's time.

Adjourned.