

**Mayor's Blue Ribbon Crime Advisory Committee Meeting**

Monday, December 14, 2020 at 12:30pm

Virtual Meeting

CITY CLERK

2020 DEC 16 AM 8:38

**Committee Members Present:**

Whitney Lanning, Chairwoman, Bill McMurray, Linda Dotson, Carol Flurry, Chris Connally, Marty Novak, Brad Kerns, Daniel Radke, Jen Osborn, Pat Dillon

**Call to Order:**

Committee Chair, Whitney Lanning called the meeting to order at 12:35pm.

**Mission Statement:**

Whitney restated the mission statement of the Crime Committee.

**Minutes of Last Meeting: September 21, 2020**

Whitney reminded the Committee that the minutes of the last meeting had been sent out with the meeting invitation. Whitney asked if there were any questions or recommended revisions to the meeting, there were none. Mike Cazel made a motion to approve the minutes; Brad Kerns seconded – the motion passed unanimously.

**Updates from Law Enforcement and County Prosecutor**

Chief Chris Connally – Chief Connally stated that despite COVID there were still several events that SJPD hosted or participated in, including National Night Out in October, Implicit Bias Training with the YWCA, and a breakfast event with Midtown youth. Chief Connally announced that through a partnership with Family Guidance a second mental health professional would be embedded in the police department. There currently is one social worker that assists with nonviolent calls and calls involving emotionally disturbed persons. Chief Connally stated that an event called Cops Who Care is coming up and is facilitated by the Fraternal Order of Police. Chief Connally presented updated crime statistics – the majority of categories had declined, likely due to COVID. Aggravated assault is currently up by 6 occurrences from last year and theft from motor vehicles is up as well. Total crime is down by 1,400 occurrences.

County Prosecutor, Ron Holliday – Ron stated that due to a ruling from the Supreme Court, trials cannot take place. SCOTUS implemented a 4 phase structure and trials are only allowed to resume in phase 3; Buchanan County is currently in phase 1 due to local transmission data. Ron stated that he does not expect trials to resume until at least March or April and reported that the last trial that took place was in February, 2020. Ron stated that despite COVID there have been some positives that virtual hearings have provided, to include less time spent waiting for hearings in the courthouse. He did state that his office is really working to prevent a significant backlog in cases, which is inevitable in some cases.

Captain Clark Stratton, MO Highway Patrol – Captain Stratton stated that the rate of vehicle fatalities has stabilized throughout our region and the state. He stated that Buchanan County is currently two officers short of their allocations, but he did recently receive notice that three new officers will be coming to serve the counties of Atchison, Worth, Harrison and Gentry, which will be helpful.

**Sub-Committee Report**

Whitney reported that the sub-committee was created in an effort to assess racial disparities in our local criminal justice system. She noted that Mike Cazel, Bill McMurray and Dan Radke had served on the committee and asked them to clarify any information she was reporting on. Whitney stated that the subcommittee had developed a list of four recommendations to offer to the Crime Committee and on to City Leadership. The recommendations from the sub-committee included 1) body cameras for officers, 2) increase the number of mental health providers to respond to non-violent crimes and issues involving emotionally disturbed individuals, 3) increase the number of offer allocations and implement salary increases and comprehensive recruitment strategies, 4) invest in community resources that address poverty and caret opportunities, especially for youth and in communities of color.

Whitney stated that the sub-committee had worked very hard to come to these recommendations and stated that through this work CAPSTJOE is currently working with City Leadership to add resources, including three staff, to the basement of the Horace-Mann building, also referred to as the Bartlett Center. Chief Connally noted the

additional mental health allocation to the police department. Whitney stated that the sub-committee felt that they'd fulfilled their purpose and did not have any additional meetings planned.

### **Committee Priorities for 2020 – Discussion of Priority 3: Family Trauma**

Whitney informed the committee that the last of the three focus areas that the committee had decided to assess was family trauma. The Committee had already discussed mental health and substance abuse. Whitney asked Jen Osborn to discuss how families come to be involved in Family Guidance services. Jen stated that referrals typically come from school counselors and other school personnel. She stated that Family Guidance is working to provide intervention services as soon as possible, with the goal of staying involved as long as possible. Whitney asked Chief Connally about the process SJPd has for when a family gets involved with the police; Chief Connally stated that once a family has been involved with the police, especially when young children have witnessed violence of some kind, SJPd will notify school counselors as a way to follow-up and ensure there is a professional involved in observing the needs of the child. Ron Holliday stated that cases involving children are always the most difficult and that he and his investigators and other staff work to maintain contact with the family throughout their involvement with the court system. Ron stated that court proceedings can be very stressful for families and that it is very important to provide support and communicate consistently with them.

Whitney asked Ron, Jen and Chief Connally about their perspective on the availability of services that we have in Buchanan County. Chief Connally, Ron and Officer Kerns stated that they feel we have adequate services to address the needs of children and families who've experienced trauma, they spoke highly of the programs and services offered throughout the community. Jen stated that the only gap that she feels exists in services available to families are mental health services for young children, specifically those who are not yet school aged. Whitney agreed with Jen, stating that CAP Head Start has struggled with accessing services for children age 3-5.

### **Committee Officer Nominations**

Whitney reported that Bill McMurray had nominated Mike Cazel for the position of Committee Chair and that he'd accepted. Mike confirmed his willingness to serve as chair for 2021. Bill made the nomination, Ron Holliday seconded; the nomination passed unanimously.

### **Public Comment**

Mike Cazel stated that he'd been in a meeting earlier today with Chief Connally and others where the concept of doxing had been discussed. He stated that Senator Leutkemeyer had pre-filed a bill to make doxing a felony and that he felt like it would be good for the Crime Committee to provide a letter of support. The committee discussed what doxing is, Officer Kerns provided examples of individuals using personal information to harass people. Officer Kerns made a motion to offer a letter of support for the bill once a bill number was assigned; Mike seconded – the motion passed unanimously.

Samantha Baker stated that she is from the Public Defender's Office and asked if someone from that office could be added to the committee. Whitney encouraged her to email Bill McMurray and provide information so that someone from the office could be added to the email list. Samantha also requested that the meeting minutes from the committee be added to the City's website. Bill McMurray confirmed that the minutes would be added.

**Next Meeting:** March 15<sup>th</sup>, 12:30pm

**Adjourn:** 1:17pm

Prepared by: Whitney Lanning