



Community and Police Relations Committee (CPRC)

City of Portland, Oregon
Donita Fry, Chair
421 SW 6th Avenue Suite 500 · Portland, OR 97204
503.823.4433 · www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/hrc

Meeting Minutes

Date: September 18, 2013

Time: 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Location: Rigler School 5401 NE Prescott St.

Committee Attendees: Antonio Chimuku, A.C. Mike Crebs, Donita Fry, Damon Isiah Turner, María Lisa Johnson, A.C. Larry O’Dea, Patricia Ford, Capt. Pat Walsh, Capt. Chris Uehara, Officer Deanna Wesson-Mitchell

OEHR Attendees: Jeff Selby, Dante James

Audience: Ten community members

NOTE: Participants had access to headphones with provided simultaneous Spanish interpretation.

Welcome and Introductions

- Chair Donita Fry called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. She explained the history, makeup, and purpose of the CPRC and all committee members introduced themselves.

Receive Minutes and Approve Agenda

- MOTION BY PAT WALSH: APPROVE MEETING AGENDA AND MINUTES.
SECOND: CHRIS UEHARA
MOTION PASSED

Community Discussion (Statements are paraphrased. Identities are noted if known.)

- The Living Room Conversations that were conducted a few years ago helped relations between the police and the community.
- It is worrisome to walk on Killingsworth at night. There have been shootings and drug use. It is not safe for children. I would like more security.
- On Killingsworth and 52nd, during school hours, many cars are speeding through the area. I would like to see more police presence during those hours.
- I also live near Killingsworth and 52nd. I attended a class about police relations and I liked how they explained how to communicate with the police. I like to walk in my neighborhood and there was an indecent exposure incident. I reported it to the police and I haven’t noticed that activity anymore. I’m happy with the police.

- I live at the trailer park at 60th and Killingsworth; police know this area well. We need more police presence at night to deal with noise and traffic issues.
- At 55th and Alberta, there is an abandoned house. There is suspicious activity there. I have found hypodermic needles there. We need more police presence there during school hours, since many kids go by there on their way to school and home.
- **Lt. Larry Graham:** Portland Police Bureau is working on a Cully Initiative that will concentrate on improving relations between police and neighbors in the area. The trailer park at 60th and Killingsworth produces more than 2000 calls to police per year. The initiative will include a Community Board to share with the police what the community wants. This partnership, not just more police presence, will hopefully build trust in the community.
- **Community Member Pedro Moreno:** The community is fearful of the police now. We witness the police grabbing and detaining community members and taking them away. They fear that a simple traffic stop could result in deportation. That is why the community is afraid and does not engage the police. The community does want to ask for help, but they fear arrest. I am grateful that the police want to help. I advise our community to seek help from the police, but unfortunately, when we see someone in a police uniform, they all seem the same. If someone is stopped for a traffic violation, they shouldn't be deported.
- **A.C. Mike Crebs:** Sorry about the issues you've experienced and witnessed. The last thing we want is for people to fear the police. We are your police. We used to take people to the Multnomah County Sherriff and they would report people to immigration. We have worked with their staff to stop that protocol for minor cases.
- **María Lisa Johnson:** The CPRC went to observe the County process and it is true. The Sherriff had a policy to hold people who had been arrested for foreign-born ICE holds. The CPRC made recommendations to stop that practice. The Sherriff announced recently that they will stop reporting people to immigration for lesser charges.
- **Pedro Moreno:** We're still fearful. If someone is stopped for a traffic violation, they shouldn't be reported to immigration.
- **A.C. Mike Crebs:** We do not arrest people for traffic offenses. Some people we stop may have a warrant for their arrest—they are arrested for the warrant, not the traffic stop. That may be what you have witnessed in the past. The last thing we want is for people to fear the police. We are your police (he gave Pedro his business card). We don't get involved with immigration issues.
- **Dante James:** What is the policy for traffic stops is the driver has no license? Is there an ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) hold?
- **A.C. Mike Crebs:** We ask for license and registration for citation purposes. We want to make sure you are who you say you are. If you can convince us of who you are, you'll get a citation. If we don't know, we could take you in.
- **Lt. Larry Graham:** (to the community members) How can we build trust?
- **Pedro Moreno:** There's a committee now. What is your goal? What is your plan? How can we collaborate?
- **Lt. Larry Graham:** There will be a meeting before October 14. You will be invited.

- I am pleased to hear that those who have been taken away were arrested for previous problems. Police will not take you away for lesser charges—only if you have past issues. I will tell that to my community. The police are supporting our community.
- My husband was stopped by the police when he was coming home late from work. They asked him where he was going. He said he was working late and going home. The police accused him of being drunk. He wasn't drunk. It was weird for me to hear about that.
- **Lt. Larry Graham:** There is a lot of crime in the area. We want families to be safe, we don't want to hassle good people like your husband. Please take my business cards so you can contact me with concerns like this.
- **María Lisa Johnson:** (to the community members) Do you have any suggestions to improve relationships?
- Some things have worked in the past. We need a better connection to the police. There are volunteers who are willing to do the work. You should come to the community; we're not going to come to you. We need someone to trust and to make those connections first. I'm here to listen and report back to my group.
- **Lt. Larry Graham:** Please give me your phone numbers so we can talk. We have interpreters on the force that will help us during our conversations with the community.
- **Capt. Pat Walsh:** I want you to report back to your group that we have a relationship with kids. I am on the Gang Enforcement Team. We want to connect with you and the community. We want to have Living Room Dialogs. We need a good relationship to keep the neighborhood safe. That's why we're working on the new Cully initiative. Please go back to your group with good news.

Public Comment

- Dan Handelman said he is glad that CPRC is hearing from the community firsthand. Sometimes we bring those concerns to you, but they sometimes go unresolved. It feels like a Living Room Discussion. It's important to hear different perspectives and concerns about safety. He mentioned that he was surprised that José Mejía Poot wasn't brought up. He was beaten and shot by Portland Police in 2001. That incident destroyed a lot of trust between the Latino community and the police.
- Officer Deanna Wesson-Mitchell told the audience that the police would like to improve the recruitment of officers of color from local communities. She asked if anyone could advise on community outreach to contact her.
- Irene Konev from IPR introduced her organization. She said their main goal is to accept commendations from the public about good police work as well as collecting and addressing complaints about the police. The office has Spanish-speaking staff available to assist.
- Donita Fry announced the Human Rights Commission-sponsored Free Legal Consultation clinic in Wood Village on October 11th for people who are victims of trafficking or crime. Jeff Selby handed out flyers.

Reflections

- A.C. Crebs said he likes to hear from the community firsthand. It's important. He thanked the community for taking time to share their perspectives.

- A.C. O’Dea thanked the audience and told them the police are there to serve the community. He thanked them for sharing.
- Pedro Moreno said if we work together, we can improve our community. He thanked the committee for listening and said he would take this information back to the community.
- Damon Isiah Turner said that relationship building is important so everyone can participate. He urged the community to get to know the police officers if they can.
- Capt. Walsh mentioned that Capt. Uehara is in the schools and that his (Capt. Walsh’s) job was to combat gang violence. He said he was happy to participate in the meeting and thanked the crowd.
- Officer Deanna Wesson-Mitchell said it was good to see familiar faces. Building relationships is a long process. She stressed that recruitment of local minorities is important so relationship building can happen more easily.
- Patricia Ford acknowledged that it may be difficult for the community to participate in this type of forum because of fear. She suggested next time that the committee should sit amongst the participants.
- María Lisa Johnson thanked the community for taking a risk and coming to the meeting.

More Community Discussion (Statements are paraphrased. Identities are noted if known.)

- Is there an opportunity for a weekly or monthly meeting with apartment residents? It would be good to see police at the After-school Homework Club from 2:30 to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays.
- **Lt. Larry Graham:** We will visit periodically. We also participate in the Hacienda Youth Engagement Program with ONI.
- Hacienda has great programs but not everyone can participate, like trailer park residents, for example. Is there any way to include kids from trailer parks, too? School and church partnerships would work well, too.
- **Pedro Moreno:** If you want to build relationships, we should take a group photo. This is my proof that you made commitments and I will be telling the community that this is the ‘commitment proof.’

Additional

- A group photo was taken.
- The interpreter, provided by Language Fusion, was 30 minutes late.
- Food was provided by Montiel’s Cocina via the Hacienda CDC Micro Mercantes program.
- Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.