



# POLICY AND SERVICES COMMITTEE SUMMARY MINUTES

Regular Meeting  
February 8, 2022

The Policy and Services Committee of the City of Palo Alto met on this date in virtual teleconference at 7:00 P.M.

Present Virtually: Stone (Chair), Cormack, Tanaka

Absent: None.

## Oral Communications

Ken H requested that the Policy and Services Committee (Committee) be diligent in discussions regarding the Cubberley concept and acquisition of land. Palo Alto Unified School District has been disappointing.

Aram James was concerned about Police Sargent Wayne Benitez going on trial for the attack on Gustavo Alvarez. He hoped for a transparent search for a new Police Chief and public opportunity to interview multiple candidates.

Jennifer Landesmann was encouraged to learn how safety and leaf blower code enforcement priorities have clearly identified needs. She encouraged the Committee to schedule the topic of Airplane Noise as soon as possible.

Winter Dellenbach realized her comments regarded an Agenda Item and chose to wait until the item was before the Committee.

## Agenda Items

1. Receive an Update on Recent Race and Equity Work Since September 2021 Including an Update on a Records Management System (RMS) Contract for Police Data Collection and Provide any Recommendations on the City's Race and Equity Work.

Deputy City Manager Chantal Gaines presented a quarterly update on race and equity efforts. The report detailed updates on the seventeen assignments given by the City Council in November 2020. Assignments B, D, and H have been completed since September 2021. Assignments C, K, and L remain in progress. The Human Relations Commission completed its 100 Community Conversations on Race and the Lived Experience in Palo Alto. Palo Alto Art Center's recent or upcoming exhibits included Art of Disability Culture and

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Creative Attention: Art and Community Restoration. Palo Alto Children's Theatre have focused on diverse show types and multicultural influences into casting. Palo Alto Public Art Program started the Dr. King and Coretta Scott King Artist Residency Program. Rayos Magos was contracted as first artist for the King Artist Residency and his artwork will involve community conversations to guide the art piece. Some events engaged in by the library include Lunar New Year Storytime, Lunar New Year event with Community Services Department, Black History Month Storytime, and updated blogs and reading lists.

## Public Comment

Winter Dellenbach believed the basis of the report was wrong and should instead be the use of force report. The report is insufficient and may need to be amended.

Aram James expressed excitement for the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) and records management system (RMS). The Independent Police Auditor (IPA) report should no longer erase racial data.

Deputy City Manager Chantal Gaines clarified that the Item is an update report. Specific recommendations were not provided.

Council Member Cormack stated that race and equity work is a personal priority. She believed the work achieved by staff last year was significant and should be ongoing. She asked about Assignment D and how a general person would know about the program.

Assistant Police Chief Andrew Binder explained that Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) is a program that pairs an officer with a Behavioral Health Clinician from Santa Clara County. The team is solely dedicated to addressing mental health issues within the City. The Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) is a county generated team of Behavioral Health Clinicians that will partner with officers. A public number is available for community members to reach out for help. Palo Alto Police Department will handle transport for individuals taken for a seventy-two-hour evaluation, but the value of PERT is approachability and will generally transport.

Council Member Cormack asked about the data being published as a report or if individuals will be able to access and sort it themselves.

Mr. Binder Binder stated that the data will be available to the public. Both options are viable, but data publication is still being crafted.

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Chair Stone asked why the City is unable to incorporate what the CHP has done regarding police radio and encryption.

Mr. Binder stated that California Highway Patrol (CHP) lacks the ability to encrypt the radios and staff is seeking a workaround. Personnel within the Communications Center has been a challenge. The agency is open to suggestions and exploring options.

Chair Stone believed it would be worthwhile for the City Attorney's Office to explore a different radio encryption system. He asked about whether there was a change in policy to prohibit officers from speaking to reporters directly.

Mr. Binder explained that department policy always regulated who was identified or had the ability to speak to the media. Watch Commanders were designated to follow-up with the press. The agency tries to be receptive and available.

Chair Stone asked about officer discretion to answer questions asked.

Mr. Binder stated that there is a form available to be completed and submitted for staff to follow-up.

Chair Stone requested statistics be sent to Council. Ensuring the press has access to law enforcement is worthwhile.

City Attorney Molly Stump advised that California Senate Bill (SB) 2 is a new state law increasing accountability for uniformed peace officers. The complex law authorizes the Commission on peace officer standards and training regarding state-level investigative work. SB-2 provides a greater ability to monitor, investigate, and in some cases decertify peace officers. There are increased reporting obligations to post.

Council Member Tanaka asked about the plan regarding racism against Asian Americans.

Ms. Gaines stated that Council cast a wide net for general equity work to be addressed. Policy and Services recommendation to the full Council has not yet been provided, but the effort to include it to Council's agenda is underway.

Council Member Tanaka asked if Human Relations Commission (HRC) is enabled to begin expansion to include Asian Americans.

Ms. Gaines advised that HRC will have a retreat to discuss the work plan. There will be opportunities for Council to engage on efforts regarding race and equity.

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Council Member Tanaka asked about whether hate crime incidents are tracked and grouped by race.

Mr. Binder stated that hate crimes are tracked, and staff keeps reports on hate incidents. Breakdown by race could likely be included into the system.

Council Member Cormack requested that Council Members take training on microaggressions and diversity.

Chair Stone asked if staff could follow-up regarding the instance of a gun being pointed at an individual and having data recorded in use of force reports.

City Attorney Molly Stump stated that staff has worked to map the scope of what the IPA was doing, and documents could be sent.

Mr. Binder explained that the agency created the ability to flag instances into the computer automated dispatch system. Staff also reached out to supervisors to ensure flagging and retrained the department.

**MOTION:** Council Member Tanaka moved, seconded by Chair Stone to recommend the City Council

- A. Request the Human Relations Commission to research the lived experience of Asian American and Pacific Islanders and suggest related workplan items as desired;
- B. Request the Police Department to provide hate crime data over time by race;
- C. Recommend that Council Members commit to complete Micro-aggression training by June 2022; and
- D. Request the City Manager and Mayor schedule a study session to discuss police radio encryption, and how best to allow the public and the media to be rapidly informed for calls to service.

**MOTION PASSED:** 3-0

## Future Meetings and Agendas

Deputy City Manager Chantal Gaines shared that the Committee will hear from Council at a date not certain. Audit items will be presented for March meetings.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 P.M.