

CIVILIAN APPEAL BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 18, 2021

These minutes are a summary of the discussions that took place during the last meeting of the Civilian Appeal Board. They are not a verbatim transcription of the remarks made by any individual.

CALL TO ORDER: 4:07 PM at City Hall Commission Chambers

Members: Present: Huemartin Robinson II (*Chairperson*)
John Weiss (*Vice-Chair*)
Briana Trudell
Michelle Williams
Russell Olmsted
Sophia Brewer

Non-Members Present: Brandon Davis, Director of Oversight and Public
Accountability (*Board Liaison*)
Philip Strom, Deputy City Attorney
Christin M. Johnson, OPA Specialist
Claudette Henry, OPA Exec. Asst. (*Board Secretary*)

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Civilian Appeal Board (CAB) of the City of Grand Rapids was called to order at 4:07 PM on August 18, 2021, at City Hall Commission Chambers by Vice-Chair Weiss. Vice-Chair Weiss welcomed everyone and explained the purpose of the CAB. Vice-Chair Weiss stated that the purpose of the CAB is to act as a review body according to City Commission Policy #800-02 for finding facts made by the Grand Rapids Police Department (GRPD), concerning complaints made by individuals who believe that they have been mistreated by police officers through the use of excessive force, falsification/lying, civil rights violations; and/or conduct committed in a context of racial animosity or prejudice.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was conducted. Members who were present are listed above.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Vice-Chair Wiess called a motion for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board on June 16, 2021.

- Moved by Russell Olmsted and Seconded Briana Trudell.
- Motion carried: Unanimously.

BOARD LIAISON REPORT

Civilian Appeal Board Meetings

Mr. Davis announced that the Civilian Appeal Board has returned to in-person meetings on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00 PM in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall and that the public may attend in person and participate during the Public Comment section of the meeting. Mr. Davis expressed appreciation for the support of the City's Communications Team for livestreaming the meetings so that the public could observe online.

Appeal Cases

Mr. Davis informed Board Members that there were no outstanding appeals and that OPA has not received any new appeal request since the last meeting of the Board. Mr. Davis stated that Board Members will use the time to continue with training [on legal matters], and asked Board Members to inform the OPA Staff in advance of any learning topic(s) of interest.

GOVERNANCE PROJECT

Mr. Davis updated CAB regarding the Governance Project report that the OPA provided to the City Commission on July 13, 2021, regarding the governance and alignment of the City's Public Safety Boards, Committees, Taskforce Teams, and Commissions. Mr. Davis explained that it was a City Staff report intended to convey information about how the City's Public Safety Departments are aligned and to offer recommendations. Mr. Davis stated that the recommendations came from City Staff, but the background, research, and analysis were done by the OPA with support from other departments. Mr. Davis added that a copy of the full presentation and report were provided to Board Members before the Board meeting. After Mr. Davis presented the report, Board Members asked questions and provided feedback regarding the governance report.

Mr. Davis explained that the Governance Project report provided to City Commission was a briefing. Mr. Davis further explained that the recommendations are intentionally broad in scope to be all-inclusive of issues relating to the CAB. Mr. Davis encouraged Board Members to review the Committee of the Whole Meeting held on July 13th to learn individual commissioner's responses. As to the next steps, Mr. Davis stated that the OPA met with Board liaisons to get feedback and discuss the recommendations, and moving forward the OPA will work with Board liaisons to create an implementation plan to provide to the City Commission in September.

NOTE: Agenda was amended to include a closed session, public comment and an open discussion.

ROLL CALL VOTE FOR CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Vice-Chair Weiss to enter into a closed session, according to the Open Meetings Act 15.268, Subsection 8(h), to consider a written legal opinion regarding the ACLU and its partner organizations' proposed changes to the Civilian Appeal Board's Bylaws. Seconded by Russell Olmsted.

VOTE:

Yes

Huemartin Robinson II

John Weiss

Sophia Brewer

Briana Trudell

Russell Olmsted

Michelle Williams

Motion **passed** unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION REGARDING LEGAL OPINION

A closed session was held to discuss a legal opinion and started at 4:59 PM.

Open Meeting Resumed: The open meeting resumed at 5:51 PM.

ACLU's Proposed Bylaws Changes

Motion by Vice-Chair Weiss to ask the City Attorney's Office to provide the Board with an expressed legal opinion on whether the ACLU's proposed bylaws change regarding supplemental investigations by the Labor Relations Division is consistent with City Commission Policy 800-02, as well as legal language for the proposed bylaws change for review by CAB at a future Board meeting. Seconded by Chairperson Robinson.

VOTE:

Yes

Huemartin Robinson II

John Weiss

Sophia Brewer

Briana Trudell

Russell Olmsted

Michelle Williams

Motion **passed** unanimously.

Governance Project – Continued Discussion

The Board Members continued their discussion about the Governance Project and stated that they would like full detail of the recommendations that the OPA will provide to the City Commission in September. Mr. Davis explained that the Governance Project report that was provided to the Board along with the presentation has more detail and explains the rationale for each recommendation. Mr. Davis clarified that the report does not describe what public safety reimagined will look like, but that the implementation plan, if the recommendations are approved by the City Commission, will address the changes and provide a description of the process for implementation.

Motion by Michelle Williams and seconded by John Weiss to support the recommendations made by the OPA with a statement expressing a desire for the reimagining to be more actionable in terms of the process as the OPA works on the implementation plan.

VOTE:

Yes

Huemartin Robinson II

John Weiss

Sophia Brewer

Michelle Williams

Briana Trudell

No

Sophia Brewer

Motion **passed** five to one.

IDENTIFICATION OF TRAINING NEEDS

- Mr. Davis reminded Board Members to e-mail their training topic ideas to the OPA for discussion at the next Board meeting.
- The Board inquired about getting outside training [outside of the GRPD and the City's legal department] on legal issues for a broader understanding. Attorney Strom communicated that he would provide the Board with a legal opinion on this.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Governance Project Implementation Plan

Board Members discussed having OPA provide them with the Governance Project implementation plan for the next Board meeting so that they could review it to ensure it aligns with the Board's priorities. Mr. Davis stated that he did not anticipate the implementation plan being available by the next Board meeting, that it has to go through a City vetting process before it's presented to the City Commission. Mr. Davis further stated that, after the plan is presented to the Commission, OPA could present it to the Board.

Board Annual/Progress Report

Motion by Russell Olmsted and seconded by John Weiss to ask the law department for its legal opinion on the following:

- Legal opinion on annual report process per CAB's Bylaws and City Commission Policy 800-02.
- Legal opinion on releasing a progress report, including a narrative, cases reviewed, and training received in 2020, which could be included in the annual report as well.
- Legal opinion on a framework for creating a subcommittee to write CAB's Annual/Progress Report.

VOTE:

Yes

Huemartin Robinson II

John Weiss

Russell Olmsted

Michelle Williams

Sophia Brewer

Briana Trudell

Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Board will be at 4:00 PM on Wednesday, September 15, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 PM by Chairperson Robinson.