

**CIVILIAN APPEAL BOARD MEETING**  
**MAY 18, 2022**

*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: 4:02 PM at City Hall Commission Chambers**

**Members Present:**

Briana Trudell  
Michelle Williams  
Russell Olmsted  
Sophia Brewer  
Reginald Howard  
Bryndan Arnold

**Term Expired:**

Huemartin Robinson II  
John Weiss

**Non-Members Present:**

Brandon Davis, Director of Oversight and Public  
Accountability (*Board Liaison*)  
Philip Strom, Deputy City Attorney  
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 4:02 PM on May 18, 2022, at City Hall Commission Chambers by Mr. Davis. Mr. Davis welcomed everyone and requested a roll call.

**ROLL CALL**

A roll call was conducted. Members who were present are listed above.

Mr. Davis noted the absence of Chairperson Huemartin Robinson II whose term expired and thanked him for his many years of service. Mr. Davis noted the absence of Vice-Chair John Weiss whose term also expired and thanked him for his service.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Davis called a motion for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board on February 16, 2022.

- Moved by Russell Olmsted and Seconded Briana Trudell.
- Motion passed.

## **BOARD INTRODUCTIONS – NEW MEMBER APPOINTMENTS**

The Board welcomed two new members. Reginald Howard and Bryndan Arnold introduced themselves, shared their background, and explained why they chose to serve on the Board. Existing Board Members also introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds.

## **GRPD INTRODUCTIONS: CHIEF WINSTROM & INTERNAL AFFAIRS UNIT STAFF**

Grand Rapid Police Department Chief, Eric Winstrom, introduced himself and gave a summary of his background. The Internal Affairs Unit Staff, Lt. Forner, Sgt. Dailey, Sgt. Mead and Lt. Siver (Training Unit) introduced themselves and provided a brief explanation of their roles.

Chief Winstrom and his staff responded to questions from Board Members about the rotation of officers in the Internal Affairs Unit, civilian confidence and trust in filing complaints with the department, strategies for building community trust, the complaint review process, educating the community about ways to file a complaint, budget for community engagement (shared between OPA and GRPD), law enforcement de-escalation, and de-escalation training for police officers.

## **UPDATE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK**

### **Board Terms**

Mr. Kvamme explained that the Civilian Appeal Board membership is a two-year term, expiring the first Monday in May. Mr. Kvamme said that the Board's bylaws stipulate that members may serve until a successor is appointed or reappointed. Mr. Kvamme also explained that the expiration date for each term is fixed and does change based on the appointment date. If an appointment comes after the term begins, the expiration date remains the same.

Members who wish to continue to serve on the Board are asked to complete a Board application and submit it to the Office of the City Clerk for vetting. Application for members in good standing (not in arrears/do not owe money to the City) are sent to the director of OPA and appointing authority (Commission and Mayor as a whole) for recommendation on reappointment or non-reappointment. The process can take up to two months, depending on the length of time it takes to vet the person. Members who do not wish to continue on the Board are asked to inform the OPA and also contact the Office of the City Clerk to complete end-of-term paperwork.

### **Board Vacancies**

There are three vacancies on the Board currently.

## **BOARD LIAISON REPORT**

- **New Member Onboarding and Training**

Mr. Davis stated that all Board Members are trained on various legal and law enforcement topics and that training will be provided to new members. Existing members may participate to refresh their memory. Mr. Davis said the OPA will coordinate with the City's legal department, police department, and Board Members on a training schedule and training will start at the next Board meeting if a schedule can be worked out in time.

- **Communications to CAB**

Rev. Jim Holley, Chairperson for the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC), sent a letter dated April 14, 2022, to former Chairperson Robinson regarding the fatal shooting of Patrick Lyoya. Rev. Holley expressed BOPC's condolences to Patrick Lyoya's family and its offer of prayers, support, and assistance to the Civilian Appeal Board.

- **Reimagining CAB**

Provided under Open Discussion.

## **OFFICER ELECTIONS**

Tabled for next meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **OPEN DISCUSSION**

### **Civilian Oversight and the Reimagining of CAB**

Board Members stated that they were frustrated with the restraints and "rubber-stamp" approach to their duties in terms of not receiving the information needed to further understand what transpired in cases filed against police officers, having had to make decisions with only what was made available. Board Members also stated that because of the police-involved shooting of Patrick Lyoya, the Department is subject to more scrutiny and that this could be used to push for greater transparency, which could lead to fulfilling the objective of the Board. Mr. Davis said that this is part of the reimagining of the CAB and that the CAB has been operating under City Commission Policy 800-002, which outlines what the Board has the authority to do, and that the policy was created before some of the best practices were established.

Mr. Davis also stated that some members of the Board have expressed concern in the past about the limitation of the Board and that reimagining the CAB is a recommendation by the OPA and other City employees to examine best practices and suggest changes to the current policy. Mr. Davis added that aspects of some policies may require collective bargaining, which may influence the success of changing those policies, and that the reimagining will be an extensive process. Mr. Davis said that the OPA will keep the Board informed of the progress.

Attorney Strom stated that the Grand Rapids Civilian Appeal Board is unlike most boards and that it's difficult to find best practices that can work in Grand Rapids because of the complexities of the collective bargaining aspects, constitutional law enforcement policies, and employment law considerations. Attorney Strom said that these factors could slow down the reimagining process because it can be difficult to build consensus with politicians and citizens around certain elements.

Chief Winstrom stated that the success of the Civilian Appeal Board cannot be the failure of GRPD and that the Board does not have to be a rubber stamp – the idea is to build trust in the police. Chief Winstrom further stated that if civilian oversight is to work, and he's very confident that it will, there has to be listening on both sides – it can't be the police department has a problem and the Board is to fix it – success in civilian oversight can't be us against them.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 15, 2022, at 4:00 PM

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM by Mr. Davis.