

City of Maplewood

Police Use of Force (UoF) Workgroup Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 5, 2017

1) CALL TO ORDER

The thirteenth meeting of the Use of Force Workgroup was called to order at 6:33 PM by Chair Neblett.

2) ROLL CALL

A quorum of the UoF Workgroup was in attendance at the meeting, including:

- Sylvia Neblett, Chair
- David Singleton, Vice-Chair
- Rita Janisch
- Melissa Sonnek
- Dave Mathews
- William Josten
- Lenna Scott
- Anne Bryson
- Kathryn Hatlestad

Staff Present:

- Paul Schnell, Police Chief
- Cassie Fisher, Admin Assistant to the Police Chief/Police Data Analyst

Others Present:

- Bryan Smith, Councilmember
- James Meehan, Police Civil Service Commission member

Community Members Present:

- Diana Longrie
- Kevin Berglund

Absent:

- Evelyn Combs
- Sarah Lilja
- Juan Wilson
- Mary Schoenborn
- Tzianeng Vang

3) BUSINESS AGENDA

- a. **Approval of January 5, 2017 Agenda.**

b. Approval of December 15, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

c. Business:

- **Recommendation 1:** A framing statement or substantive introduction to the policy manual should include the following concepts, principles, and ideas. The following should also be represented in specific policies as appropriate.
 - Include language from the Task Force on 21st Century Policing Report on the guardian mindset, community rights, and public safety.
 - The importance of cultural competence and willingness to address and work across differences. Acknowledging that our differences in culture, race, and backgrounds inform our perspectives and sensibilities (including implicit biases).
 - Reflecting trauma-informed approaches to law enforcement. This includes being mindful of the potential impact of trauma on those they encounter, and sensitive to the potential impact of trauma on themselves. This awareness should inform officer perceptions and actions at all stages of a response.
 - A commitment to community policing, consistent with the approach described in the Task Force on 21st Century Policing Report.
 - “Responsible, responsive, and respectful”
 - “Things need to be safe for you and me.”
 - We want police interactions to reflect the following:
 - Acceptance of the unique needs and perspectives of all people at specific points in time, to the extent possible.
 - De-escalation from violence and conflict to the extent possible.
 - Using the least amount of force necessary to bring about a lawful outcome.
 - Maintaining the safety of officers and community members. Everyone’s safety is important.
 - Awareness of power imbalances inherent in many interactions.
 - Respect and kindness (even when confronted or treated discourteously).
- **Recommendation 2:** We recommend that departmental policy consistently reflect the following concepts and/or principles with respect to race and identity:

Ranking police department leadership, specifically the Chief of Police, has the duty to ensure the following:

- Officers are responsible for being aware of implicit racial bias and its impact on their perceptions and actions. (Implicit bias is not conscious racism.)
- Officers are expected undertake their best efforts to mitigate the impact of implicit bias on their work.
- Officers are expected to seek and create relationships across differences. This form of community-building is a central objective of policing.

The Department will discharge this duty in part through:

- Ongoing training and professional development that reflects the best understanding of these social factors.
- Active supervision, management, and mentorship of all personnel.
- Operational and supervisory reviews of critical incidents with respect to the potential impact of race or cultural factors in those incidents.
- Interventions including formal discipline and restorative justice and other procedurally just approaches.
- Measurement and public reporting of data and information regarding use of force incidents in ways that can provide appropriate scrutiny and drive continuous improvement. Reporting is to be at least annual.
- Hiring and promotion of command-level officers (including the Chief of Police) who have a strong, demonstrated commitment to racial equity and cultural competence.

These duties must be embraced by City of Maplewood leadership, as well.

- **A motion to adopt the two recommendations above was approved, but not unanimously.** The objection was that some review would be helpful prior to adopting it. We will entertain amendments in the next meeting.

In our conversations we used the following statements used in the Roseville School District, drawn from *Courageous Conversations about Race* by Glenn Singleton (editor).

- Isolate race. While we know that race is not the only thing we need to focus on, we are learning that keeping race in front of us will help us to reach our goals. If we ignore the impact of race, there is a strong chance we will not

see the changes we are hoping to see. Focusing on race allows us to keep the main thing, the main thing, which is public safety with procedural justice.

- Normalize social construction and multiple perspectives. We have learned that race is a made-up concept. We can look back in history and see examples where white leaders could decide who would be a member of the dominant white group and who would be excluded. We each bring our view but we have to recognize that others have perspectives which, while different from our own, are no less real.
- Examine the presence and the role of whiteness. We need to recognize that there are systems in place with historical significance that have created systemic barriers for many groups. We cannot ignore the presence of those barriers and their effects on all of us.

d. Members are to study the identified policy sections, and submit their written thoughts regarding questions and/or comments they have for discussion to Cassie by 0700 the Tuesday before the next meeting. It is preferred that members contribute their written thoughts even if they will not be in attendance of the meeting.

e. The following items are on the agenda for review and discussion during the January 12, 2017 meeting:

- We will consider the third question on our agenda, note below:

*“Policing is inherently inter-personal; officers engage with all sorts of people at all sorts of moments in their lives. The group has also consistently articulated a need for **officers’ sensitivity and competence** with respect to factors that fall into the broad categories of **mental health and wellness, differing capacities (physical, mental, emotional, and psychosocial)**, and what are sometimes called **disabilities, ranging from apparent to hidden**. The impact of **trauma** on all parties has also been noted. We recommend that departmental policy consistently reflect the following concepts and principles with respect to these topics:....”*

- We will then continue with Policy Manual Chapter 3, followed by these questions:
 1. Should the department adopt a commendation to be awarded for officers that do not use deadly force when it may have been authorized?
 2. What other recommendations related to recognizing courageous restraint does the committee have?
 3. What other major issues or topics do you believe should be included in policy? As we conclude our program, what other specific policies do you believe merit careful review?

4) ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Chief Schnell distributed an article from The Denver Post which discusses a draft of the Denver Police Department’s Use of Force policy (included in distribution).

- Workgroup member Lilja suggested an Article from The Washington Post titled, “Study shows deep racial division when it comes to attitudes about cops – but it’s driven by experience.” With approval from Chair Neblett, the article was distributed to members via email, with hard copies available at the next meeting.

5) NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the workgroup shall be held on Thursday, January 12, 2017 at 6:30 PM (to 9:00 PM) at the Maplewood Police Department.

6) ADJOURNMENT

The Use of Force Workgroup meeting adjourned at 8:59 PM.