

Police Accountability Board - Regular Board Meeting

Date: September 5, 2024

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: 245 E. Main Street, Rochester, NY

Livestreamed on: Facebook (facebook.com/rocpab) & YouTube (youtube.com/rochesterpab) & X (Twitter)

Attendees

- **Board Members:** Lawrence Knox (Chair), Rabbi Drorah Setel (Vice Chair), William Clark, Mary E. Wambach, Daniel Cadet, Yvonne Wilson, Arlene Brown, Lwam Tecleab
- **Absent/Excused:** Rev. Keith Patterson
- **Staff:** Dr. Lesli Myers-Small (Executive Director), Benjamin Wittwer (Deputy Executive Director), Victoria Harmon (Secretary to the PAB)
- **ASL Interpreters:** Shannon Tracy and Christina Kelley

Meeting Start: 6:06 PM

Welcome & Introductions: 6:06 PM

- Chair Knox called the meeting to order and requested introductions. Board members and the Executive Director introduced themselves.

Approval of Prior Minutes: 6:09 PM

- **August 8 Minutes:** Motion to approve the minutes made by L. Knox., seconded by W. Clark. The motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports: 6:09 PM

Welcome to the New Board Member

- The Executive Director welcomed Lwam Tecleab, a Rochester native with experience on an accountability board in Nashville.
- Lwam Tecleab expressed excitement about returning to Rochester and contributing to the PAB's work.

Investigations:

- The Executive Director acknowledged the Deputy Executive Director for continuing to serve as both the Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel, while also overseeing the Investigations division.
- The PAB aims to publish 30 PAB reports on the website this week along with a draft of "What is Misconduct?" document.
- The Investigate Division rules will be revised by the board this month and voted on in October.
- The investigations division is collaborating with expert attorneys to revise several investigative procedures. The Executive Director acknowledged the team for their hard work and dedication.

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Case Management:

- In August 2024, PAB received 20 complaints.
 - 7 via hotline, 8 online submissions, 3 walk-ins, 1 transfer from PSS and 1 by mail.
 - The Executive Director commended the case management team for their professionalism in handling complaints, often dealing with complex emotional situations.

Policy and Oversight:

- The Cost of Misconduct report will be released on September 9th and will be posted on the PAB website, with a 30-day public comment period.
- Public input sessions will be advertised starting next week, with the first session scheduled for September 12th during the Public Safety Committee meeting at 4:30 PM.

Operations:

- The new Language Access Coordinator started last Friday.
- An offer has been made for the part-time Webmaster position, with the new hire expected to start soon.
- The search for a Director of Investigations is ongoing.

Executive Director Report:

- Five Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been completed, including for onboarding new board members. Drafts have been provided to the board for review, and feedback is expected by September 13th.
- Some board members expressed that it would be beneficial for them to go through the new onboarding process, as SOPs were not in place when they joined.
- During the August 29th work session with City Council, Corporation Counsel pushed back on issues of access to data and transparency. However, six council members voiced support for the PAB's mission and the removal of these barriers.
- A work session with City Council is scheduled for September 30th. The Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director will represent the PAB, and board members are encouraged to attend.
- The president of the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE), Anthony W. Finnell, reached out regarding an article featuring the Executive Deputy Director and expressed continued support for the PAB.
- NACOLE will provide training for staff on trauma-informed care and other relevant topics.
- Board members expressed appreciation for the Executive Director's consistent communication via the Monday Morning Messages and Friday letters, which provide valuable updates on agency activities.

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Chair's Report: 6:32 PM

- The Chair noted recent positive media coverage highlighting the challenges faced by the PAB and raising public awareness of these issues.
- The recent work session was described as both productive and frustrating, particularly concerning restrictions imposed by Corporation Counsel on accessing data, which are seen as inconsistent with the Charter and hindering the PAB's effectiveness.
- The board provided a brief history of the evolution of work sessions to the new board member, noting longstanding difficulties in accessing police databases and the role of City Council in addressing the issue.

Committee Reports: 6:46 PM None

Old Business: 6:47 PM None

New Business: 6:47 PM None

Executive Session: 6:47 PM

- Motion made by L. Knox seconded by Y. Wilson, to adjourn to executive session.
 - During the executive session, the board held a vote regarding two subpoenas. The votes were unanimous.

Adjournment: 7:52 PM

Next Board Meeting: October 10, 2024, at 6:00 PM